SALDRU FARM LABOUR CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 1976

Paper No. 11

From Slave Sanctuary to Chicken Battery

M.G. Whisson

Preliminary Draft: No portion of this paper may be quoted without permission of Saldru, School of Economics, University of Cape Town.
From Slave Sanctuary to Chicken Battery

the rise and fall of agriculture in the Noordhoek area

m.g.whisson
From Slave Sanctuary to Chicken Battery
The rise and fall of agriculture in the Noordhoek area

Dr. M.G. Whisson.

Background to the Simonstown District

The land between Fish Hoek, Kommetjie and Noordhoek has a long history of occupation, from perhaps 60,000 B.C. to date. Only in the latter centuries before the Dutch conquest however is there any evidence of domestic animals, if such be a minimal definition of farming. It is probable that this "goodly country inhabited by a most savage and beastly people as ever I thinke God created" (R. Raven Hart, 1967:32) saw occasional herds of Khoi owned stock crossing the saddle at Silvermine and descending into the quiet valley below, but the evidence is scanty (I.C.v.d. Poll, 1961). Van Riebeeck's men explored the area but found little to appeal to them, and their right to control the area was disputed by "Herry" and his friends. By 1676 however, the Company had a cattle post "behind the Steenbergen" with over two hundred beasts (H.V.C. Liebbrandt, 1901 a: 265). Fifty years later it was reported that "there are also various other cattle pastures of the Hon. Coy. beyond the Steenbergen ... Here the Hon. Coy. previously used to keep its cattle for slaughtering, until it had abandoned this ... and from time to time this region was added by Heer Simon v.d. Stel to his estate of Constantia". (Valentyn F., 1726:73) There was little development. Wild beasts roamed the area and men from the growing colony sought refuge from slavery and justice in the hills and caves.

In 1743 the district of Simon's Town was informally born (it received its formal boundaries and legal title in 1814) when Van Imhoff declared that the port should become the official winter anchorage for the Company fleet and gave sixty morgen of good land at Noordhoek to the widow Rousseau together with the farm Slangkop and a large plot in Simon's Town. The land she cultivated with the aid of six slaves (I.C. v.d. Poll, 1964). From then, until the opening of the railway from Cape Town to Simon's Town in 1890, the hinterland of the Company port and later the Naval Station included the Noordhoek valley. By 1768 it was already remarked that it was difficult to grow adequate quantities
of crops near Simon's Town due to the terrain.

Development was slow and with the arrival of the British in 1795, the area was surveyed for its suitability for agriculture. The surveyors report in 1797 commented on the area of "Northhook and Peninsula Southward": "Greatest part of this district might be cultivated, but at present there is only three houses the owners of which just rise to serve themselves. From this runs southward a ridge of uneven mountains. There are in some places spots that might be till'd but mostly they are fit for nothing but sheep pasture". (Willis H.C.: 1970)

With the second British occupation of the Cape in 1806, land became a more desirable asset and there were many requests for grants. In 1797 a memorialist had sought land in the vacant Silvermine valley, noting that none of his potential neighbours had any objection to his being granted the rich soil and permanent stream which make the little valley especially desirable. (B.O. 43/411 of 1797) By the end of the first decade of the 19th century a spate of memorials to legalise de facto occupations and new land grants had created a pattern which remained perceptible until the 1970s - given the eye of faith and knowledge of the background.

The burghers of Simon's Town claimed land or cattle posts in much of the area south of Kommetjie or "behind Red Hill" as they viewed it from the port. (C.f. C.O. 3873 No. 374 of 1808). Some of the stock keepers evidently established rights to pieces of the land where they grew vegetables, mainly for their own subsistence but with some surplus for sale in the town. Most are described as "Bastard Hottentots" in the memorials and though it was said at the time that the "Hottentots" were "more dependent and more in a state of slavery than if actually slaves" (Anon. 1806: 228) there is evidence (Willis, 1963) that it was possible for them to obtain their due.

Indeed the landdrost /Zorn ..................................
Zorn was prepared to argue such an issue with the Governor himself when in 1810 he gave one Adrian Arendse a "Bastard Hottentot" land where "he lives ... with his wife and two children and having no cattle of his own hires himself as Wagon Driver in Simon's Town and his wife earns her bread by washing and taking in course (sic) needlework and carries also sometimes wood to Simon's Town". (C.O. 2569/55 of 23/11/1810) Rebuked by the Governor for usurping the Governor's sole right to grant land, Zorn replied "This class of people generally do wander about the country fixing now on this, then upon another spot, where they build a hut, but which perhaps they are soon after again forced by the farmers to abandon: to prevent this I allowed him to settle with his family on a small spot pointed out by himself which could not tend to the prejudice of any person whatever under such restrictions as will appear from the permit annexed, and which cannot therefore possibly be considered as an actual grant, but merely as a provisional measure to keep these people in subordination". (C.O. 2569/59) Arendse's lack of legal tenure and his various means of procuring a living are typical of many of the family situations brought to an abrupt end by the implementation of the Group Areas Act nearly 160 years later.

The main role of agriculture in the region throughout the 19th century, as indeed it had been from the beginning, was to supply the port and visiting ships with fresh meat, milk and vegetables. Around the town itself and within what is now the built up area, small dairy farms developed, each in turn being engulfed by the growth of the town in the 20th century. Seaforth dairy was active until at least 1928 (3/SMT/418) and Welcome Farm in Glencairn continued to supply milk for another thirty years or so. The farms were all white owned and run, employing very few workers outside the family.

A second small farming area, essentially subsistence farming with a few cattle, pigs and vegetables, developed in the Klaver and Elsies River valleys which run parallel to the False Bay coast behind the first crest of the hills above Simon's Town,
where land grants were sought in the first two decades of the 19th century. The Elsies River passes through what is now the naval village of Da Gama Park and runs down Glencairn to the sea. The evolution of this area was rather more complicated than that of the coastal strip. One area in the Klaver valley was sold to the Royal Navy in 1904 following protracted negotiations (ADM 123/57: 78). One or two farms which had been used largely for timber and for grazing were bought as a catchment area for the dam and water supply for Simon's Town. Another large farm was bought by the S.A. Navy in 1956 for development as married quarters for three hundred families, a move which involved the eviction of twelve coloured families who were living there (Cape Times, 16/6/56). The upper part of Glencairn remained a small dairy farm until the 1960's, but much of it had been taken over by shanty dwellers who earned the greater part of their living in Simon's Town. A part had long been excised as a holiday camp sponsored by Rotary for white youths. The lowest part, originally granted in 1791 to enable the memorialist to grow barley for his horses (Liebbrandt H.V.C., 1901 b: 512) was largely dune covered and unsuitable for agriculture. It was finally bought and developed by a group of Scottish businessmen based in Cape Town about 1900, as holiday homes for themselves.

There remained one large farm at Red Hill which was partly alienated to the Navy and the municipality, but mainly used for accommodation and small holdings by a few coloured families. Dependent for the most part upon employment in Simon's Town, the residents nevertheless supplied themselves with a substantial portion of their fresh vegetables and meat (the latter being chicken and pork) as well as their wood and water from their and the neighbouring land. The area was proclaimed "White" in 1968 and the residents forced to move to the township of Ocean View where no possibilities exist for significant vegetable growing and where livestock are forbidden. The slaughter of their livestock remains for some their most poignant memory of a century or more of living at Red Hill.

/The ......
The farms to the south and west of Red Hill were larger for the most part than those closer to Simon's Town, and once one passed beyond the reach of daily commuting on foot to the docks, one passed beyond the heavy concentrations of squatters. The farms, located on impervious sandstone were good for little but rough grazing and small vegetable gardens. The relationships between the owners and the coloured residents varied and are unclear. There were some coloured families who, according to their elderly survivors, lived virtually independent lives, growing their own vegetables and carrying the surplus, together with a few crayfish, and flowers taken from the mountain slopes, over the hills to Simon's Town. Fishing and poultry keeping provided some variety in the daily round and in the diet. Such independence was part of a long tradition as in 1810 it was noted that "a few families get a living in the (Smitswinkel) area by cutting kreupel bark for tanning and the trees for charcoal" (C.O. 2569/52 of 1810). Others worked for the farmers on a more or less full time basis. Relatively poor transport facilities, especially between the time when the railway to Simon's Town was opened and road transport developed on the peninsula ring road in the late 1930's, ensured the poverty of the area and the ready disposal of much of the land to the Divisional Council as a nature reserve in 1939. By this time conservationists were already concerned that the land might be disposed of as "bungalow plots" by farmers unable to make more profitable use of it.

Thus was the land south of Kommetjie used and divided until the advent of group areas in the district. Poor land, uneconomical for whites to farm, was settled and often worked by poor coloured families who eventually found it more profitable to move to the peri-urban shanty farms at Red Hill and Glencairn. Where opportunity presented itself they gardened rather than farmed and kept what livestock they could. It was not an easy life, despite the nostalgia expressed for it in Ocean View today. Men walked six miles or more each day in addition to their ten hours a day of labour in the docks. Wood for fuel and water / was ...........
was free, but had to be carried home over considerable distances. Donkeys provided some assistance but bicycles were of little value on rough roads and steep inclines. Perhaps the nostalgia is for a situation in which men were free to work out their own destiny under a parsimonious deity. "We never went hungry, and we were never short of a fowl for Christmas", as one old lady put it. If one worked hard there could be fish, fowls, vegetables, wood and water as well as saleable forest products and other surpluses. One did not depend wholly upon the labour market, nor find oneself trapped in the treadmill of wage labour in order to keep a roof over one's head. "Today it is all money", say the elders with regret.

The foregoing is by way of background to a discussion of what was the most important agricultural area in the district - the land from Kommetjie in the south to Chapmans Peak and Clovelly in the northwest and northeast respectively. It is relevant for three reasons. First, it has focussed attention upon Simon's Town which was, until the 1930s, overwhelmingly the most important centre of population and demand for local produce. Second, it indicates the range of options open to coloured people in the area, as well as the trend towards employment in the urban areas. Without actually moving house - though many seem to have done so - it has been possible for a man or family to shift from being a full time farmworker through casual labour on a farm aided by his own subsistence farming and collecting, to being a virtually fulltime urban worker. With the growth of population, and particularly after 1945 when transport became easier and larger scale agricultural operations more profitable, such has been the accelerating trend. Men whose fathers worked the farms in the Elses River valley remained in the vicinity in ever more concentrated shanty areas and worked in town. Third, it indicates the marginality of small scale commercial farming in the district.

The principal agricultural area, while responsive to the trends outlined above, differed in certain respects. It is relatively flat and is situated on granite rather than on sandstone, thus providing a more fertile base which holds moisture better than the rest of the region. It does not lie on the railway line and until the "Ou Kaapse Weg" was brought /over ..........
over the saddle at Silvermine in the late 1960's was almost immune from urban sprawl and the broadening ribbon of commuter suburbs along the railway line. Today the scene is changing fast - ten thousand coloured people are concentrated into one portion of a once famous farm while another portion is being planned as a marina for white gracious living. The sedate town of Fish Hoek has been extended into the valley by the addition of a new low cost housing estate for whites, while on the slopes of either side of the valley the "Cape Riviera" promises spectacular views from the picture windows of "Cape Spanish" homes. Where once the visitor was welcomed through "nicely cultivated gardens growing nearly every kind of vegetable", (Wynberg Times, 3/5/1902), now he is offered chicken manure and eggs from the battery establishments. It is to this transformation and its effects upon the labouring people that we now turn our attention.

The Noordhoek region in the 19th century.

Almost alone in the district of Simon's Town, the low lying areas and valleys between Fish Hoek, Noordhoek and Kommetjie contain much good arable land. In the early part of the 19th century however, commercial interest centred on the natural resources of the area. Andries Bruyns, an enterprising fisherman and farmer from Fish Hoek sought permission from the government to take wood from the Government Woods near Noordhoek (C.O. 3861 No. 19 of 1806) and to clean and develop the Salt Pan which lay between the three largest farms close to the centre of the region. (C.O. 3873 No. 412 of 1809). Although the Salt Pan never fulfilled the hopes of the developers in either the 19th century or the 20th, its contribution to the overall economy of the region is important. Fish which were salted and packed into barrels were transported by wagon into the Boland, the proprietors of the wagons travelling for several weeks at a time between the local harvest and the onset of the winter rains. They returned with raisins and wine for themselves and the local market. In 1970 there survived a few people who had either been on such journeys in their childhood, or who had been told about them often enough for them to believe that they had actually been. The trade, being inevitably leisurely and regular, set up a network of relationships, some of which were /consolidated .......
consolidated by marriage or by the movement of families in either direction. During the period of rapid coloured population growth in the past thirty years or so, links and knowledge created in the earlier period have led many families from the platteland to settle in the region.

The large farm Slangkop (subsequently known as Imhoffs Gift) ran 200-300 sheep, 100 horned cattle and 60-70 horses during the winter months, but in the dry season it was necessary to send all but fifty of each to inland pasture. Labour was provided mainly by slaves, ten of whom were lost to the farm "by the disorder that at that time attended the meazles" in 1806 (C.O. 4827/61 of 1809). In the first census which enumerated Simon's Town as a district (1817) it is recorded that there were 272 slaves, 25 prize negroes (who were "apprenticed" under conditions very similar to slavery), 85 Hottentots and 76 free blacks (most of whom lived and worked in Simon’s Town itself). Conditions were tough according to contemporary writers. "The external appearance of the domestic slaves... gives ample proof of the general enjoyment of a tolerable measure of mere personal comforts" but the slave was a chattel, liable to have his family broken up; unable to marry; had "the power of the lash entrusted to his owner" and "a slave cannot be offended by words". (Wright W. 1831:2) Sundays were left free for the slaves to do as they wished. Writing of Stellenbosch in the early years of the century, Borchards recalled that "though some of the slaves in and about the village were in the habit of spending their Sabbath in working their gardens or in other labour, yet there were several who attended a meeting for their instruction each Sunday. They were also admitted to church. The coloured people had their seats apart from the rest of the congregation". (Borchards P.B. 1861:182).

The influence of the Royal Navy's policy on slaves may also have been significant. Among the Navy Office General Instructions appears a section "Of the government of Negroes" which ordered, inter alia that punishments should be on the same basis as those for the navy; "Their treatment shall be considerate and humane", and "it (is) our intention to have them treated in every respect as white men". (ADM 123/39 of 1/1/1800). /The ....
The slaves undertook skilled labour and became specialists - thereby enhancing their own value and the value of the farms with which they might be sold. Thus, when Imhoff's Gift farm was sold in 1813, with it went "30 male and female slaves amongst whom are very good Waggon-drivers, Masons, two Thatchers and herdsmen" (G.G. Vol VIII, No. 378 of 10/4/1813).

Towards the end of the 1820's, as it was clear that slavery would shortly be coming to an end, the proportion of slaves in the population fell. In 1817 they were 33% of the population, in 1827 only 12.5%, and vastly outnumbered by the other blacks. Investigations by British civil servants suggested, however, that the lot of the free was not vastly better than that of the slaves. Without the Governor's permission only Christians could own property, and many free blacks and prize negroes were moslems. "Hottentots and Bastards" despite their theoretical freedom, were likewise handicapped (Theal G.M. 1897, xxviii:36). The slave curfew was imposed upon them by the police, and "at the end of their contract, Hottentots get a pass from the landdrost or field cornet to enable them to seek work elsewhere - the length of the pass is unpredictable and may be for only eight days". (Theal G.M. 1897, xxxv: 138 & 152).

With the termination of slavery, the slaves became apprenticed to their former owners for fifteen years in most cases. Their change of status in the eyes of the law appears to have changed little else. Between 1835 and 1837 the major farmers and former slave owners in the area appeared before the courts on several occasions following "offences" by their apprentices, of which desertion and disobedience were the most common. In two years, "Africa", an apprentice labourer under Pierre Rocher (the owner of Slangkop and Poespaskraal - later Sunnydale) received thirty or more lashes and periods of up to a month in jail on each of the six occasions that his master brought him to court. Another apprentice, "Cornelius", told the magistrate, "I do not wish to stop with my master, he must sell me", before being sentenced to twenty lashes and twenty days jail for disobedience. Apprentices and other servants who complained to the magistrate about their masters without good cause were also punished with lashes for men and jail for women. (SMT 1/10, 1835-7)

/The ..........
The pattern of trading was well established by this time with the waggons rolling into Simon's Town with their fresh produce in considerable numbers in summer, when the tollgate collected about £6 per month. The winter months - duration unspecified - were less profitable, with only 12/- per month being collected. (Theal G.M. 1897: xxvi: 190). The wage paid to "Kaffres" on the civil establishment in Simon's Town at that time was £6 per annum, a white constable receiving £31/10/-. (Ibid: xxxv:55. Figures for 1826-7)

As apprenticeships expired, wages began to be paid to the workers. In 1848 it was reported that in the Cape Division, within which Noordhoek falls, "in addition to their wages, domestic and predial servants receive board and lodging with which their families are also provided by the master. The rations are commonly calculated for an adult at from 9d - 12d per diem. In some field corneties domestic labour is as high as from 20/- - 45/- per month and in the more distant parts of the division it runs as low as 4/- - 7/6 per month; predial labour from 25/- - 30/- and as low as 6/- per month. In ploughing and harvest time predial servants obtain from 1/6 - 3/- per diem, with rations. Tradesmens' wages fluctuate and depend upon the demand for employment". They varied from 2/6 to 6/- per day in Cape Town. (Blue Book for the Colony, 1848: 441).

Dockyard labourers could earn 2/- per day and artisans 5/- (ADM 123/16: 30) Wage differentials between white and coloured workers varied according to the job. Journeymen and day labourers earned within a penny or two per day of each other. Those employed by the month had wider differentials. A coloured overseer or head shepherd received 60% of the cash wage paid to a white doing the same job, while a coloured domestic servant received 72% of that paid to his or her white counterpart. Day labourers on the farms were earning 1/6 per day (Blue Book, 1854: 468-9) plus food, while the Commander at Simon's Town sought an increase in wages for his labourers from 2/- to 2/6 because they would not work for less (ADM 123/16: 157. 21/2/1854).

With that additional shilling in lieu of rations, the docker could buy 1 lb bread, 1 lb beef, 4oz butter and half a pint of wine. Shoes and trousers were over 6/- each per pair, but a shirt could be had for 1/8d. (Blue Book, 1854: 472-3).
The population in the region grew steadily, nurtured by the demand from Simon's Town for its products. In 1855 the census report showed 90 white and 112 coloured people living in Noordhoek, with 162 white and 155 coloured in Kleintuin (Clovelly - probably including Kalk Bay and Fish Hoek). By 1865 that 519 had become 797, with 391 whites, 243 "Hottentots", 5 "Kaffirs" and 152 "Other and mixed". A room had been donated for a school in Noordhoek in 1861 and gave tuition to any children who cared to pay 1/6d per month. Originally there was a return of upwards of sixty children, but though it was reported that the number then "increased by some new residents among the coloured population here", in 1868 there were forty one on the register, of whom but half attended regularly (Chapman F.P.: 1969). Twenty children were learning English and sixteen Dutch in this pre-dominately Dutch-speaking area.

The area seems to have been very peaceful and virtually self-governing during the latter part of the 19th century. The occasional labourer was taken to court by his employer for refusing to obey orders, and farmers were known to be fined for assaults on their workers, but such cases were very rarely brought before the magistrates. Simon's Town, with its Monday morning parade of arrested drunks and its hard-drinking, loquacious prostitutes was a world very distant from the sheltered valley.

The diamond rush produced a temporary shortage of labour in the district and the Commander at Simon's Town claimed that wages had doubled in two years as a result. "Men formerly in the Yard who received from 3/- to 6/- per day now obtain from 6/- to 15/- elsewhere". (ADM 123/52: 107-8). The response of the Navy to the shortage was to seek unskilled labour from the Eastern Cape, permanent black staff from among the Kru-men of Sierra Leone and Liberia, and artisans from Britain. But by the time that Trollope made his celebrated tour of South Africa the economy had adjusted to the diamond rush. By 1878 wage differentials had increased between white and coloured workers, as those of the former had risen more quickly over the previous two decades. Day labourers earned 3/6 (white) and 2/- (coloured); overseers and head shepherds £3 (white) and £1/10/- (coloured) per month, with /board ......
with board and lodging; journeymen earned 4/- to 12/- (white) and 2/6 to 7/6 (coloured) per day depending upon the nature of and the demand for their skill. Even in Cape Town, the white artisan received 1/- per day more than his coloured equivalent. (Blue Book 1878: 0, 2-3) Labourers in the dockyard earned 4/- per day (ADM 123/52: 117). With those two additional shillings in lieu of rations, the docker could not only buy the bread, meat, butter and wine that he could in 1854, but could have sixpence change to put towards a shirt (1/6), shoes (6/-) or a pair of trousers (9/-).

The white labourer appeared to be an endangered species, if indeed he had ever been plentiful in the region. Noble had observed in 1869 that "the mixed native population of the towns and villages, which constitutes our lower orders and furnishes the ordinary labourers, artisans, coolies embraces individuals of all hues and sizes". (Noble R. 1869:4) Trollope made much the same point nine years later. "Everything about him (the white) is done by coloured persons of various races". (Op. cit.:70) There was no appeal to white working class people to come to South Africa. Higher in the social scale, "the man of means, who has capital ... does not actually wish for a return to slavery. The feelings which abolished slavery have probably reached his bosom also. But he regrets the control over his fellow creatures which slavery formerly gave him, and he does not see that whether a man be good or bad, idle by nature and habits or industrious, the only compulsion to work should come from hunger and necessity - and the desire of those good things which industry and industry alone will provide". (Ibid: 83)

The district remained effectively isolated from the rest of the peninsula in winter and the Navy, for reasons of security and economy, urged the colonial government to extend the railway to Simon's Town. In 1886 the road was "wholly in disrepair and would entail great expenditure in those parts where it traverses Mackerel, Elsies and Fish Hoek Bay". (ADM 123/33:8) The railway reached Kalk Bay that year and four years later finally reached Simon's Town. There was no route other than that which crossed the treacherous mouth of the Silvermine river at Clovelly, round the seaward side of Trappies Kop and so to Kalk Bay.

The market in Simon's Town was clearly growing with the size of the Naval establishment, the population at large and
the sense of civic responsibility. Among the first acts of the
council which was first mooted at a public meeting in 1876, was
the summoning of a public meeting to propose the proper organisa-
tion of the marketing arrangements. Daily markets were to be held under the direction of a Market Master who would be paid from the fees collected under the supervision of the Resident Magistrate. The fees would be 2½% of the proceeds of the sale of "all articles of colonial produce to be sold by public auction."
(SMT 4/11, 21/5/1878). In 1886 the market was taken over by the Village Management Board (later the Municipal Council) and new regulations were sent to the farmers of Noordhoek who had sought modifications to the old ones.

The quit rent records for 1886-90 (SMT 12/7) list 23 farms in the region, 14 of which had come into being as a result of the sub-division of two of the original landgrants. Over 4000 morgen was involved, the bulk of it owned by four families who between them held 18 of the farms. One coloured family had an 80 morgen holding. The De Villiers family held eight farms and provided 18 of the 44 registered voters in the region. The sole occupations of the voters were "farmer" (32) and "labourer" (10). Simon's Town provided all the specialist services for the area, no less than 76 different occupations being listed (3/SMT/428: 1892) for the 229 voters.

It was into this rural backwater that some of our older informants were born. Some were born in cottages attached to the farms, other on the land known as Magdela, the property of the Dutch Reformed Church close to the centre of Noordhoek village, where there were at least a dozen cottages.

The Noordhoek region in the 20th century.

"Nineteen twentieths of the whole of Noordhoek belongs to the family of De Villiers ... there are less than nine families in the district who are not of that name". At Fish Hoek there are "a few good dwellings, a brickworks about a mile from the station". Salt is gathered once a year from the pan, where 132 acres have been worked for 70-80 years. The output has recently been raised from 6½ tons to 65 tons in one year. There are "nice farm-houses scattered all over, intersected ...
intersected by so many main roads, surrounded by nicely cultivated gardens, growing nearly every kind of vegetable... a very fine school and school house, surrounded by fine oak trees. The post office, a shop and the farmhouse of J. de Villiers are to be found in a single building. I. de Villiers, who also has a shop, employs fourteen people and sends produce daily to Simon's Town and Kalk Bay. "Lower down, and close to the beach, is a family of coloured people - the 'Septembers' - who are hardworking gardeners and who also keep a number of cattle. There are lots of very well to do coloured small farmers upon 10-20 acres of land - hardworking and well disposed towards a stranger... I have never seen in all my travels, a prettier place than Noordhoek". (Wynberg Times: 3/5/1902).

Much of the transformation of the region which took place in the years which followed the visit of the enthusiastic reporter can be attributed to outside causes. The introduction of a regular railway service for passengers and goods to Simon's Town from Cape Town introduced an element of competition into farming which had not existed before, although since they concentrated on fresh produce (see Table 1) the farmers were protected for some years. The area was also opened up to holiday makers who would camp at Fish Hoek or at Kommetjie and picnic along the beaches.

Of greater significance in the first two decades were the fluctuations in employment in Simon's Town as first the new dockyard was built, then many workers laid off until preparations began for the naval participation in the war. Among other effects, the dock development brought about the first major influx of African workers on a permanent basis. In 1891 there were 19 "natives" in the district, by 1904 there were over 400. Census reports indicate fluctuations down to about 250 before the outbreak of the war, after which the number rose again to over 400 at the end of the depression. By the end of the second world war there were over 1200 and by the time that the locations were demolished and the people resettled in Nyanga in 1965 over 1600 were affected. Their significance for Noordhoek was initially small, in 1911 there were only 37 living in the "rural areas" of the district compared with 912 coloured people. But they created a new class and category of person who could fill the lowest paid jobs in Simon's Town, who had the reputation of being stronger and less inclined to drink than the coloured people, and who could be disciplined....
disciplined fairly readily with the threat of dismissal and enforced return to the Eastern Cape. It was inevitable, therefore, that they should drift into agricultural occupations at the lowest levels. It was also inevitable that once the white workers had achieved state protection through the Civilised Labour Policy in the 1920s, while the coloured workers were left to compete with an apparently limitless supply of African workers, the differentials between white and coloured workers would tend to grow, and with the growth of those differentials (both in access to advancement and in rewards for equal work) social separation would tend to become greater.

For the white middle class, the process was hardly perceptable, as it had never been in association with a significant number of middle class coloured people. For the largely Afrikaans-speaking poor, it was much more significant. Noordhoek got its first coloured school in 1913, until when all the children had learned together under the guardianship of the D.R.C. Among those who attended the new school was a youth whose grandparents had been white immigrants and whose father, who had married a local girl, had acted as a lay minister to all members of the church in the valley, and owned a small farm of his own. Another youth who started school at the same time had been brought up in the house of one of the De Villiers family "as one of their own children", which he might indeed have been as he denied all knowledge of his father's identity. The farmers, regardless of hue, laboured with their employees as leaders and co-workers in the heavy toil. A woman of a more prosperous, middle class background growing up about the same time viewed the entire area as being made up of "poor white" farmers, with the distinctive gloss that the term has in the South African context of that period. To an English speaking regular visitor to the valley in the 1930s, the farmers were "red hot Nats" - though their wives bathed, fed and cared for the little children of all shades who shared in the living of the farms. One such "red hot Nat" who maintained the tradition of carrying his vegetables to Simon's Town in his cart until well after 1945, is remembered by some of the older coloured people in the district for the pleasure he took in visiting them and sitting on their stoeps to pass an hour in idle chat over his pipe. He /gave .......
He gave an impoverished cart-driver £5 to pay for the funeral of the man's wife and took his black infant son into his own household. Over sixty years later the family retained their responsibility towards their "adopted son".

If one is to understand the labour relations and the rights and obligations on either side of the employment situation prior to the advent of highly capitalised and mechanised farming, and prior to the introduction of African workers, it is vital to grasp the nature of the relationships involved. There was authority and control in the hands of the farmers who for the most part saw themselves as "white". "Coloured" farmers did not employ "white" labourers but otherwise there was a gradation in social status which did not correlate inevitably with pigmentation. All members of the community shared a common faith and a common culture, albeit a culture which identified differences in colour as having social significance. There was however - and the term was used repeatedly in conversation - "respect". It was a respect based upon generations of interaction within the little community and an understanding of what could be sought or given in any relationship.

Two figures who dominated the region between the wars symbolise the transformation which took place at that time. Drummond Chaplin, an English lawyer who was Administrator of Rhodesia under the British South Africa company, bought 155 morgen of land in Noordhoek in 1915 and thereafter steadily increased his holding until the estate was about 1500 morgen. Much of the land lay high in the kloof beneath Chapman's Peak, and was developed as pine plantation, but a substantial proportion was good farming land which ceased to be used for intensive vegetable growing. With the introduction of the 1923 constitution in Rhodesia, Chaplin "retired" to Noordhoek where a splendid house was built for him, from which he commuted to parliament where he sat as the member for the Southern Peninsula from 1924-29. After his death in 1933, the estate which he had developed was extended from time to time, but was neither productive agriculturally, nor a substantial employer of local labour. The local people were forbidden to pick wild flowers on the estate, and the former farm houses were, after some years, refurbished for the occupation of white tenants whose income was not generated locally. The principal economic use of the estate came to be the production and planting of coniferous trees, the labour being undertaken by contract workers from the Eastern...
Eastern Cape. The estate survives as an outstandingly beautiful mixture of nature and the horticulturalists art, but not as an employer of local labour. Chaplin himself was not insensitivve to the needs of the area, and as early as 1918 engaged himself in assisting with cooking and transport during the influenze epidemic. (Long, B. 1941: 252) Later his services as a fete opener were much in demand, not least on account of his generosity. Such trivia are significant in that they reflect the role played in the area by the slowly growing number of middle class English. More generous than the older inhabitants in their gifts to employees and to the community, they are totally alien to it. Whereas a labourer might aspire to cultivate land of his own and to emulate the Septembers, if not the De Villiers of Fish Hoek, between the same labourer and the new owner of much of Noordhoek there was a gulf so great that to think of bridging it from either side was ludicrous. It was as if a totally new social class, or caste, had appeared to rule the region.

While Chaplin was developing his estate at Noordhoek, Van der Horst, one of the outstandingly successful pioneer Afrikaner businessmen, was developing another great estate along totally different lines. Slangkop farm, occupying most of the area from Kommetjie village to the Salt Pan and from the mountains to the sea, was extended and named Imhoff's Gift Farm. Pride of place was taken by the dairy herd, which provided milk for the market. Other stock - sheep, goats, pigs and poultry were produced primarily for consumption in the immediate vicinity of the farm. Vegetables were also grown on a considerable scale for the market and a fine rose garden provided for the needs of the house. A farm school provided for the needs of the employees, whose houses were scattered in various parts of the farm. Most notable in the memory of the old residents on the farm was the encouragement given by Van der Horst to specialised skills. There was a specialised cowman, a foreman responsible for the vegetable gardens, a pigman and a groom. The owner took a keen interest in the farm which became, according to elderly informants, a place of such splendour that people from "up the line" would arrange their Sunday afternoon excursions in order to see it. Eight coloured families actually lived on the farm, in accommodation which they were unhappy to exchange for government housing when the farm was divided, sold and a part developed as the present township for 10,000 people.
Cash wages were 2/6d per day in the 1930's, but housing and nearly all the basic food requirements were free, as was schooling. The farm survived the drought and slump of the 1930s, and remained a landmark of good farming until the death of the owner in 1950. Thereafter, sub-divided, stricken by neglect and by disastrous fire, part expropriated for the Ocean View township, part sold to the developers of a Marina, the farm is but a fragment and a shadow of its former self. Where old folk speak with pride of their association with it during its golden years, when to work for Mr. Van der Horst was a mark of good fortune and an indication that one knew one's job, today the handful of workers are the failures in life. Like the farms which lost their skilled labour in the 1930s, it seems caught up in the vicious circle of diminished scale, under-capitalisation, low wages and low productivity.

The cycle of development, sub-division and decline outlined above in the case of the finest farm in the region, was followed in the cases of the smaller farms between the wars, and particularly during the drought and depression years. One farm of 732 morgen was divided between five brothers in the 1930s, at a time when it was not worth harvesting the cabbages in the field, according to their sister. None of the brothers found farming profitable and the land became covered in Port Jackson bush. The former labourers remained on the farmland, making their own vegetable gardens and paying a nominal rent to the owners. Some went to work as day labourers for Van der Horst, while others found work in the growing town of Fish Hoek or in Simon's Town. Their number grew through natural increase and through immigrants from the platteland - the latter often marrying into an established local family or coming to join kinsmen who had done so.

Table 1. gives some indication of the process of change in statistical form. From 1926 to 1951, the number of farms remains more or less constant, but the area in the latter year is only one third that of the former. Production of nearly all items from the farms decline markedly between 1911 and 1951, milk, eggs and chickens being the notable exceptions. Much of the land which passed out of farming became a part of the Cape Point nature reserve; within the Noordhoek region itself, the farms which were worked became smaller and more intensely cultivated. Table 2 indicates the virtual disappearance of the white farm labourer between 1911 and 1960. Thereafter, as the wage differentials
between white and coloured employees shows, the white worker becomes a skilled technician or a manager. Over the same period, African labour was introduced on a growing scale due, according to the farmers, to the difficulty of getting coloured workers. The wage differentials give a slightly different emphasis to the story. Whereas in the 19th century figures cited above (p10 & 11) differentials were at most 2:1 in comparable farm occupations, the trend in the third quarter of the 20th has been towards a wider and increasing gap between the averages paid to coloured and white (the sets of figures are not strictly comparable) with Africans generally willing to accept rewards rather lower than those earned by the coloured workers. Thus has the cultural and economic gap between top and bottom widened and been transformed so that the whites engaged in agriculture are no longer a reference group or a model of realistic aspiration, but a separate caste whose whole lifestyle sets them apart from and above the others. The availability of effectively unlimited supplies of African labour at much lower cost to the employers has eliminated any real bargaining power which coloured workers might have developed. The Group Areas Act, which denies the ambitious coloured farmer the right to own and occupy land adequate to cultivate in the district, has eliminated the alternative route to advancement. The result, as indicated, has been a decline in the quality and quantity of coloured labour making itself available.

About half those listed as regular employees in the present decade (Table 2) are workers on chicken battery "farms". In 1971, eight establishments under the management of one company employed 30 coloured men, 12 coloured women and 64 African men. Wages ranged from R10 - R30 per week for coloured men as against R7 - R16 for Africans. Three roomed cottages were available for the families of coloured employees. The Africans, mainly contract workers from the Transkei, shared "bachelor" quarters. The average wage paid to the black employees was in excess of the average paid in the district and was augmented with chickens and eggs but no other rations. On each of the mixed farms nearby, there were rarely more than a dozen employees, the majority African, but usually a few coloured workers as well. It was notable that in these small establishments the wages paid to African and coloured workers were on the same scale, but the Africans were invariably housed while some of the coloured workers lived elsewhere. Noordhoek village contained a number of coloured occupied houses on the land of the Church until group areas were proclaimed, and
the residents of the "shanty farms" at Dassenberg and Sunnydale were within walking distance of the active farms.

As Table 1 indicates, the decline in the number and size of the farms has accelerated since 1960. The development of Ocean View township, which has underlined the fact that coloured people can expect no advancement in agriculture and put pressure upon the farmers to drive potential part-time workers (as opposed to full-time workers and their families) off their land; the development of the Divisional Council's "white" housing scheme at Sun Valley; the proclamation of other areas for white urban development; the profit to be made in season from caravan campsites - these factors have brought to an end agriculture on a significant scale in the traditional manner. What remains are essentially peri-urban animal industries - a couple of mink farms, a small dairy herd dedicated to the production of the local cheese, a little market gardening, some riding establishments, a snake farm, a piggery, a flock of elegant turkeys exercised on rented land, and the chicken batteries.

Thus has the agricultural tradition and the community which sustained it passed into history, the victims of increasing specialisation and the growth of urban scale. Nostalgia for the "good old days" is expressed in word by the older folk on both sides of the legal divide, and in deed by the efforts of many householders in Ocean View to develop their tiny gardens. Given the growth of population in the greater Cape Town area and the advances in technology and wealth, the changes have been inevitable, perhaps. To anthropologists attempting to share something of the quality of the lives of our informants, one question has continued to obtrude - inevitable, yes, but need it have been so painful?

Acknowledgements.

The research on which this paper is based was made possible by the generosity of the U.C.T. Staff Research Committee and was carried out with the co-operation of students in the Anthropology Department. I am indebted to the late H.C. Willis of the Simon's Town Historical Society for much of the material relating to the earlier history.

/Bibliography.....
Bibliography.

Archival material. ADM: Admiralty papers, Public Records Office, London. SMT; BO; CO; GG: Cape Archives.
Newspapers. Cape Times, Wynberg Times.
Government publications. Blue Books for the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope.
Census for the Colony/Union/Republic. Agricultural Census.
Secondary material.

Anon., 1806: Gleanings in Africa - a series of letters from an English officer at the Cape. (London)
Borchards, P.B., 1861: An autobiographical memoir (Cape Town. Reprinted A.C.P. Cape Town 1963)
Liebbrandt, H.V.C., 1901: Precis of the archives of the Cape of Good Hope (Cape Town 1901-05)
(a) Journal 1671-74 & 1676
(b) Memorials Vol 1, A-E.
Long, B.K., 1941: Drummond Chaplin (Oxford U.P.)
Noble, R., 1869: The Cape and its people. (Juta, Cape Town)
Raven Hart, R., 1967: Before Van Riebeeck (Struik, Cape Town)
Theal, G.M., 1897: (ed) Records of the Cape Colony 1793-1831. Vols I-XXXV. (Cape Town 1897-1905)
Trollope, A., 1968: South Africa (London 1878, republished 1968)
Valentyn, F., 1726: Beschryvinge van de Kaap der Goede Hoop (vol 1) (V.R.S. 11-2)
Willis, H.C., 1963: Land ownership in the Klaver Valley. (B.S.T.H.S., II.2 July 1963)
Wright, W., 1831: Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope. (London)
### Table 1. Farms, size and output, 1865-1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of fms</th>
<th>Area in morgen</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Chickens</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Goats</th>
<th>Pigs</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Milk gall.</th>
<th>Butter lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13799</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22681</td>
<td>1368</td>
<td>14075</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35752</td>
<td>3358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>15971</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>13510</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>57095</td>
<td>5067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>4351</td>
<td>1129</td>
<td>32444</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4596</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>13676</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3277</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>39447</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1368</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>160558</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>269145</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>85177</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>22118$^a$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0$^b$</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Extent cultivated</th>
<th>Area under grain</th>
<th>Potatoes</th>
<th>Fruit trees</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Grazing</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>46$^d$</td>
<td>211$^c$</td>
<td>11$^e$</td>
<td>3$^c$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1865, Census of the Colony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>262$^f$</td>
<td>99$^d$</td>
<td>84$^g$</td>
<td>6$^e$</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18143</td>
<td>1911, Census Report. Thereafter the Agriculture Census Reports for the years listed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>1328$^e$</td>
<td>149$^d$</td>
<td>81$^g$</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18143</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38$^d$</td>
<td>70$^g$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63$^d$</td>
<td>72$^g$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0$^d$</td>
<td>63$^g$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>2$^d$</td>
<td>50$^g$</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>2736</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>19$^d$</td>
<td>31$^g$</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>12$^d$</td>
<td>3$^g$</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- a. This figure appears to ignore the battery establishments.
- b. From personal observation, this figure is inaccurate.
- c. The category "potatoes and gardens" is listed here under Potatoes, other vegetables specified being under Vegetables.
- d. Throughout the period most of the grain acreage has been intended for cattle feed rather than for grinding.
- e. 9 types of tree are listed, apple, apricot and fig predominating.
- f. This figure includes over 900 morgen of "fallow" which may not always be included in other years.
- g. The census return is of 1670 trees with apple and fig predominating.
### Table 2

Regular workers and domestic servants - numbers and wages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m  f</td>
<td>m  f</td>
<td>m  f</td>
<td>m  f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911a</td>
<td>103 11</td>
<td>83 14</td>
<td>3 1</td>
<td>187 26b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>89 3</td>
<td>116 8</td>
<td>13 1</td>
<td>218 12b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>11 1</td>
<td>106 20</td>
<td>200 8</td>
<td>217 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£25 13</td>
<td>8 4,3</td>
<td>6,5 3,7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>7 1</td>
<td>128 29</td>
<td>163 7</td>
<td>298 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£19 8</td>
<td>7,5 4,4</td>
<td>6,7 5,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>5 0</td>
<td>104 32</td>
<td>140 11</td>
<td>249 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£64</td>
<td>9,3 11</td>
<td>9,4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>7 0</td>
<td>146 24</td>
<td>107 6</td>
<td>260 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R213</td>
<td>R41,5</td>
<td>R20,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>4 20</td>
<td>0 2</td>
<td>4 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dom Wage</td>
<td>R14</td>
<td>R8,9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>9 R277</td>
<td>81c R41,2</td>
<td>108c R35,6</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reg Wage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>9c R26,8</td>
<td>4c R27d</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>10 R341</td>
<td>79 R59,3</td>
<td>122 R38,1</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reg Wage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>5 R32,1</td>
<td>8 R41,4d</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources**
As for Table 1

**Notes**

a. It was also reported that 480 whites and 701 non-whites were engaged in "agricultural pursuits" in the district.

b. The 1911 and 1925 figures do not include domestic servants. The 1952, 1954 and 1960 reported wages paid in kind by group and initially by sex, but not by occupation.

c. In the case of African workers, it can be assumed that the "regulars" are men and the "domestics" women in the latter years. Coloured women feature in the "regular" section with the growth of battery farming.

d. The higher wage paid to African domestic workers is partly a reflection of the hours which they work. More important however is the evaluation of payments in kind, which rise dramatically in the case of African domestics from 3,7% of the total wage in 1965 to 54,5% of the total wage in 1973.