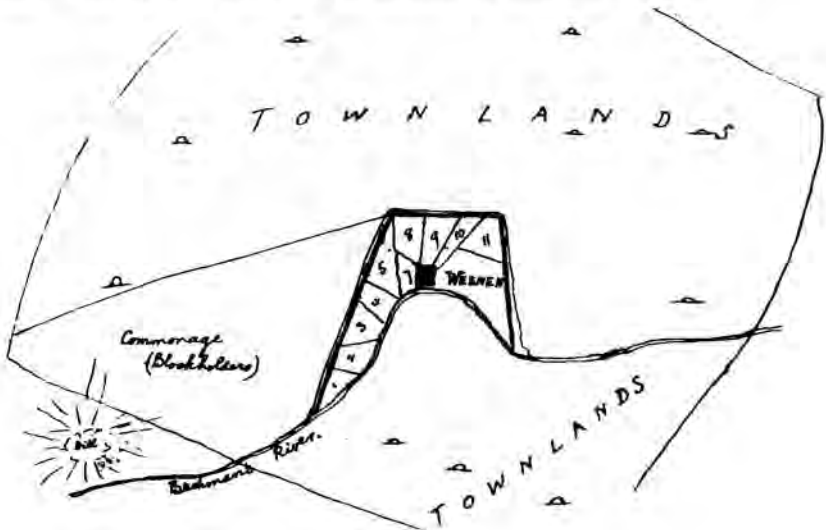


## COLENBRANDER, H. J.

20.12.1900

File 71, pp. 27-9.

- 27 Conversation this morning, about 11.30 to 12.30, with H.J. Colenbrander, chiefly with regard to settlement of natives at Weenen. He was magistrate (acting) and clerk there several years, and had otherwise special cause to interest himself particularly in the matter. He says Weenen was laid out as a township by the Boers in 1845, being called Nobamba after the famous Zulu kraal. The following is from a very rough sketch by Colenbrander:

Notes.

△ = 100 Native Kraals.  
 Blocks = 150 acres each.  
 Commonage and Townlands △  
 = 23,000 acres. —

- 28 There are about 100 kraals on the town lands, situated here and there. The natives, it seems, were refugees from Zululand in 1857 after the Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi fight. Sir T. Shepstone arranged with the Boers living at Weenen that these refugees should be permitted to live on the land round about Weenen (23 000 acres) on condition that they should provide labour to those living in the

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village. Both townsmen and the natives agreed to the arrangement, which was authorized by Sir T. Shepstone on behalf of the Government. This was in 1857.

At first, Mr Macfarlane, the Speaker, had practically a monopoly of the labour. He led a furrow from the river through what are now blocks marked on the sketch as 1,2,3,4,5 to 8,9, and 10 where the chief part of his cultivation was done. The furrow now runs round the main boundaries of blockholders' land, as shown on the diagram. In course of time the 'commonage' was laid off for the benefit of the blockholders. The town cattle are not allowed on this commonage, nor are blockholders' cattle allowed on town lands. There are frequent disputes about this. The natives living on the town lands have to furnish labour both to those in the town and the blockholders. They are paid 10s a month for a man, and 5s for a boy or girl. Formerly it was 5s and 2s 6d.

A number of years ago Mr Paterson, when magistrate at Estcourt, authorized the people at Weenen, townspeople and blockholders, to form a committee to arrange as to how the labour of the kraals was to be allotted. There were two townsmen and two blockholders on this committee. As a result of this there was a general rearrangement or allotment of the native kraals. There would have been and there are now some 60 Europeans entitled to the labour; to some, two kraals, under the new plan, were apportioned; one kraal to another; part of a kraal to another. Under this system it would sometimes happen that a European would not require all the labour his kraal or kraals could give him. He would take, say, a girl, and tell the man he would excuse him from working provided he paid so much. Under the new plan natives formerly attached to certain Europeans were attached to others, which caused confusion. There were applications for ejectment, several of which Colenbrander himself granted.

Colenbrander was directed to report on the matter and submit recommendations. He said there were four alternatives: (a) to eject natives, and three others, named, but forgotten by me. The papers were detained for some months, then Colenbrander went to Moor, Secretary for Native Affairs, and asked how matters stood. Moor, in a huff, said the papers were with T.K. Murray, Minister of ... <sic>. To Murray, Colenbrander went. He looked at the papers etc. Colenbrander said something to the effect that Moor could not deal straightly with the matter as he was an interested party, being Member for Weenen etc. Murray replied that however many votes a Government might lose on account of its policy, such fact did not affect the action of the ministry, and all of them acted together. Colenbrander saw he had made a mistake.

And yet, Colenbrander believes, the natives do go to the wall by Moor's policy. He may or may not be strong, but he has not sympathy for the interests of the native people as a whole, however much he may display for individuals. He will appoint Marwick at Johannesburg to arrange as to pay etc., but nothing is done in respect to the morals of the people. He is very lazy. Colenbrander believes in his do-nothing policy, but thinks steps ought to be taken to improve the natives. The natives are in themselves an enormous power which is a danger unless properly managed. A combination of natives would produce disastrous results. Natives living on the town lands at Weenen pay only the ordinary hut tax. They belong to various tribes,

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there being only five chiefs in Weenen Division. J.W. Cross, Colenbrander says, would have plenty to tell me about Weenen. No rent is paid, the natives giving labour instead.