

# Regimental colours in South Africa: 1652 – 1994

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper identifies influential examples of regimental colours in the various periods since the beginning of European settlement in South Africa - such devices not generally being part of the military culture of the Black nations. Potential influences on present-day colours are considered. The paper demonstrates the development of a particular military vexillological culture in South Africa resulting from three hundred years of political and military contact, socialisation and evolution. The adoption of symbols derived from the domestic objects, such as the fauna and flora of the country, is illustrated. Deviations from the British practice from which colours in South Africa are derived are also indicated.

*The illustrations for this paper appear on Plates 15–16.*

## 1 Introduction

This paper is a consideration of the various possible influences on the character of regimental colours since organised armed forces were established on South African soil in 1652.<sup>1</sup> The influences have been sought in the military vexillology of the various forces sent here to conquer or to act as garrisons on behalf of metropolitan powers as well as in the military vexillology that developed and became native to South Africa. Political passions in the country's history have also had to be taken into account as influences on design and symbolism.

It is also important to mention that only recently have historians recognised the defects of beginning all historical accounts as though nothing had existed or happened here prior to the arrival of Europeans in the seventeenth century. The absence of written records, however, makes it very difficult for researchers who are not anthropologists to find material on military customs among the Black

people. Most anthropologists to whom one turns for information on the Black peoples also have had little interest in military organisation and symbols.<sup>2</sup> Thus the concern only with the Europeans and their descendants has been the most convenient approach. Even for the 150 years following the settlement of the Cape in 1652 by the *Vereenigte Nederlansche Oost Indische Compagnie (VOIC)* records are not always easy to trace.<sup>3</sup> The Company governed the Cape as part of the empire in the East Indies and at various times records were moved to Batavia or to the headquarters of the VOIC in Amsterdam.<sup>4</sup>

As far as military affairs were concerned, moreover, few orthodox professional historians in South Africa have interested themselves in military organisation and even less so in military symbols. Records that are available are not very explicit about matters such as colours. In addition, military units took their records with them when they left South Africa. Some regiments were moved to Indonesia, to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), to India, or to the Americas where they were disbanded and sometimes decimated by disease, and so details about them are even harder to find.<sup>5</sup>

When early wars in the country were chronicled, historians focused on political concerns and actual military content was sparse and not especially well-informed. There has been relatively little professional research on early military organisation in South Africa - Black or White. It is probably true that most of the research about war in South Africa has been devoted to the Anglo-Boer War period followed by the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and then once again by historians lacking military education or experience who thus lacked an eye for the significance of military symbols. Research and writing about symbols - badges, medals and colours - as a rule has been the work of amateur historians, often unacquainted with archival mysteries and research trip-wires.

On the subject of military flags and colours there are two South Africans whose pioneering work should be acknowledged and applauded. The first was Dr H.H. Curson, a veterinary surgeon who published a pioneering work in 1948. His book, *Colours and Honours in South Africa 1783–1948*,<sup>6</sup> was the first detailed work on South African regimental colours. However, he did not explore the period prior to the first British occupation very much and sometimes his work was influenced by unfounded assumptions. The second notable researcher was Professor Hugh Smith, a retired economist of Rhodes University, whose three-volume unpublished work on flags and colours (Smith 1980) is extremely thoroughly researched, far more comprehensive than Curson's and long overdue for publication.

## 2 Scope

This paper is the result of an attempt to identify examples of colours and military flags in every period of European history in South Africa and also to find examples of equivalent devices in the military culture of the Black nations. This led to a concern with identifying the development of a particular military vexillological culture in South Africa since the arrival of European colonists in 1652. The range is wide and of necessity the scope has been limited to the various styles of regimental colour in vogue in the South African Army and to attempting to recognise the influences on present day colours. Campaign and battle honours - awarded and designed in the same way as army honours in Britain - form a separate subject not dealt with in this study. The first British honour related to South Africa was that of *Cape of Good Hope* - granted to British units that participated in the two landings on the shores of the Cape in 1795 and 1806. This honour was also granted to the Cape Mounted Riflemen for campaigns in the early nineteenth century. The earliest honours granted to South African Volunteer units were awarded in the Cape for the Gaika-Gcaleka Campaign of 1877-1878 and several others followed, including for the Anglo-Boer War. Honours were granted for campaigns through the First and Second World Wars, for the Korean War, and for the Southern African campaigns that ended in 1989.<sup>7</sup> Battle honours in South Africa are often remarkable much as they are in the post-independence Indian army. Some are borne by regiments or commandos who served on opposing sides during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 - often fighting in identical operations.

With much the same meaning and significance in South Africa as in Great Britain, the term 'colour' refers to a flag of a special design and material. It is consecrated by clergy at a parade at which it is ceremonially presented to a regiment or other unit.<sup>8</sup> Having once been the rallying point in battle, it serves, in Hugh Smith's words, as the "... visible symbol of the honours and traditions of the regiment ... to recall especially the great deeds of ... regiments and units which have served ... their country ... [it] symbolises the spirit of sacrifice and willingness of each member ... to serve..." Or, in the words of King George VI when he presented 14 colours in Pretoria in 1947, they "... call to mind many feats of arms in the history of South Africa. ... For all time they symbolise the honour of the soldier and his regiment."<sup>9</sup>

For the greater part of their history in South Africa, colours were awarded only to the infantry and mounted (now armour) units. From 1966, however, squadrons of the South African Air Force were granted colours while the South African Navy was granted a single colour in 1969. In 1970 the carrying of colours was extended to the artillery and to units of the South African Medical Service and the supporting services. Certain regiments, such as the Cape Field Artillery and the Witwatersrand Rifles, however, have held to the old custom of not carrying colours.

## 3 The military vexillological periods in South African history

From a military vexillological perspective, the military history of South Africa has for convenience been divided into four periods:

**The early colonial period.** This period spanned from the settlement in 1652 of the refreshment station at the Cape, followed by the release in 1657 of indentured employees of the Dutch East India Company as permanent settlers (the so-called 'Free Burgers'), until the involvement of Holland in the War of the American Revolution.

**The American Revolutionary War period.** This is of interest particularly from 1781 to 1783 when there was a French military presence at the Cape after Suffren's victory at Porto Praya, Cape Verde, and also the Swiss and German mercenary regiments in either French or Dutch service, employed to safeguard the Cape against the English.

**The Colonies and Republics.** This period began with the First British Occupation of the Cape (1795-1803), briefly followed by the interlude of rule by the Dutch Batavian Republic (1803-1806), after which there was the Second British Occupation (1806-1910). With this is grouped the Colonial and Republican periods when the Cape and Natal were British colonies and the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were Republics - each with its own forces. The Republics in turn became colonies after the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). In these times there were Imperial forces and Colonial permanent and militia forces in the Colonies as well as regular uniformed permanent, militia and irregular commando forces in the Republics.

**The Union of South Africa (1910-1961) and first Republican Period (1961-1994).** In 1910 the four South African colonies were unified as a British Dominion, in effect a kingdom. The Union participated in the two World Wars and in the Korean War. In 1961 the Union became the Republic of South Africa outside the British Commonwealth - to which in 1995 it returned, still as a republic, after the democratic election of 1994.

## 4 The early colonial period

Hugh Smith's researches found the first reference to military colours to be contained in documentation in the Cape, in the minutes of the *Politieke Raad* (the governor's advisory council) on 11 November, 1664. On that day it was resolved to embody the inhabitants of the Fort and its environs in a militia company of free burgers, VOIC servants and slaves - about 150 in all. A blue colour was

ordered to be made of 'the poor quality sarcenet' (soft silk or taffeta) received from Batavia in 1663 and this was duly presented to the first commander of the company (Ensign Elbert Diemer) on Sunday, 16 November, 1664, at an embodying parade held at the Fort.<sup>10</sup>

On 3 September, 1672, the *Raad* resolved that all the VOIC's servants at the Cape should be organised in five *troupes*, each of which would carry its own colour. The colours were to be plain - of white, of red, of blue, of orange, and a variegated (*bont*) colour, presumably combining several or all of the tinctures. The same meeting resolved that the *Burgher Militie*, composed of free burgers, would be organised as two companies, each also having its own colour. Although no description is given it is probable that the tinctures were repeated.<sup>11</sup>

The *Burgher Militie* grew with the colony's territorial growth. The Council prescribed in 1690 and again in 1734 that the mobilisation of the militia in time of emergency required burgers of the infantry and dragoons to assemble at their colours or standards - without any description of the colours or standards.<sup>12</sup>

## 5 The War of the American Revolution

As Jacques Mordal has written, in "... 1781, the French flag was victorious in many seas." One of the victories was that gained in the Atlantic by Admiral de Suffren - "one of the most dangerous enemies the English fleets ever met" - off the Cape Verde islands. There he defeated British Commodore George Johnstone, who was on his way to seize the Cape of Good Hope. Suffren thus enabled French soldiers to help garrison the Cape while his vessels sailed on to raise the siege of Trincomalee.<sup>13</sup> The French forces remained until 1783, introducing many French fashions and habits so that Cape Town was briefly known as 'little Paris.'

A variety of French and foreign regiments took part in the occupation or served as part of the Company's garrison to prevent British forces from occupying the strategically situated Cape along the route to the east. The French regiments included Colonial Army regiments of the Ministry of Marine, the Régiment de Pondichéry, and the Canonnières de l'Inde, which were put ashore in Cape Town as part of Suffren's garrison. The Régiment d'Austrasie apparently landed at the same time, staying until 1783 when it left with Admiral de Bussy.<sup>14</sup> The *Volontaires du Luxembourg*, raised on 1 October, 1780, were transferred to Dutch service and arrived at the Cape in May, 1782.<sup>15</sup> The Régiment de Waldner, another French regiment, also formed part of the garrison at the time.<sup>16</sup> It moved to Celebes soon after and, according to Prinz, five years later the ravages of disease left even the regiment's name lost to memory.<sup>17</sup>

According to one source, immediately prior to the American War the French regulations for the army changed to provide for the abolition of company colours in favour of two for each battalion. One was apparently known as the colonel's colour - a white field with a white cross stitched upon the field in white thread.

The second colour bore the white cross but with the cantons coloured according to five prescribed patterns. The colours were 162 cm square. The staff would bear cords of white and coloured silks of the tinctures of the cantons and a white cravat tied as a bow indicated royal service. The head of the pike was adorned with a spearhead pierced with a pattern of fleurs-de-lys.<sup>18</sup>

Thanks to the Conservateurs of the Département des Emblèmes of the Musée de l'Armée in Paris, the colours of the Régiments d'Austrasie (Fig. 1) and Waldner (Fig. 2) could be reconstructed from details in their records.<sup>19</sup> Each bore the white cross. That of the Régiment d'Austrasie bore blue and green cantons. That of the Waldner bore green, white, black and red rays in each canton.

After the Peace of 1783, the Cape colony was to be without military protection once the French had left, although the Régiment de Pondichéry remained until 1784.<sup>20</sup> New measures had to be taken.

Firstly, from Switzerland the Régiment de Meuron was engaged. It had been raised in mid-1781 for service at the Cape and in what the Dutch called 'India' by agreement between France, the VOIC and the Count Charles-Daniel de Meuron of Neuchâtel. Two battalions totalling 1200 men were recruited. They arrived at the Cape in February, 1783, where one battalion remained while the other sailed on to Colombo in 1784.<sup>21</sup> The Cape battalion followed in 1786. After the establishment of the Batavian Republic, the regiment was bought by the British government or the English East India Company in Ceylon. The regiment was eventually disbanded in 1816 after having fought for the British in India, Sicily, Quebec, and against American forces. The regimental colour, under the Dutch contract - with which was carried the flag of the VOIC - consisted of a yellow cross upon which there was a motto with nine flames in each canton. After transfer to the British service, a Union Flag was placed in the first canton and orlé such colour (that of the second battalion) is still to be seen in the Neuchâtel Museum.<sup>22</sup>

A single regiment did not suffice for protection of the Cape and it was necessary for the VOIC to find additional subsidised forces; the choice fell on the Duchy of Württemberg where a regiment of two battalions was recruited under a contract with the Duke. The regiment arrived at the Cape in 1788 and remained until 1791 when it was transferred to Batavia.

According to Prinz, the Régiment de Württemberg bore two colours - one was the yellow field of the Duchy of Württemberg itself, adorned with antlers in their glory and a crown in each corner (Fig. 4). The other, made at the Stuttgart Academy, was of white taffeta, with the arms of the Netherlands on the one side and the monogram VOIC on the other.<sup>23</sup>

## 6 Colonies and Republics: From military occupation to sovereign dominion

### 6.1 First flower

The French revolutionary wars and French occupation of the Netherlands brought the British to the Cape in 1795 and the end of the rule of the VOIC. Occupying on behalf of the exiled *Stadhouder* of the Netherlands, the British did not dissolve the *Burgher Militie* until their second and permanent occupation of the Cape, but it remained dormant during the first. For the period of their temporary stay, however, the British residents and officials established a volunteer mounted regiment of their own, called in the English terminology of the time, The Cape Association. According to correspondence with the Secretary of State for War and the *Journal* of S.E. Hudson in April, 1799, colours were presented to the unit by the wife of the Colonial Secretary at the Cape, the famed letter-writing Lady Anne Barnard. Researchers have so far published no illustration but Lady Anne wrote (in the third person) of "... that spirited old corps, the Cape Association ... almost two months old, and commanded by Colonel Barnard..." and that "... her Ladyship, I hear, is soon to present the regiment with their colours, in which the Whitletomb (native of this country) is happily blended and united with the Royal Oak of Old England, ..." The term 'whitletomb' is believed to mean *witteboom*, as the silver tree, (*Leucodendron argenteum*) was called by the Cape Dutch. It is a member of the indigenous protea species which became accepted as the national flower after union of the four colonies in 1910.<sup>24</sup> Lady Anne's term is rather typical of her letters in which there are many strange renditions of Dutch terms - the spelling of which she did not seem to think worth checking.<sup>25</sup>

Assuming the views as to the whitletomb to be correct, this design was significant. It would have been the first recorded appearance of a feature that was later to give South African colours their own distinctive character; the use of indigenous fauna and flora as a significant device on colours.

During the brief return of Dutch rule under the regime of the Batavian Republic from 1804 to 1806, Dutch regiments were posted to the Cape. Generaal en Chef J. W. Janssens had under his command in 1805 the 22e Bataillon Infanterie, 5de Bataillon de Waldeck, a Compagnie Auxiliaire Infanterie, the 9e Bataillon Jagers, the Bataillon Hottentotsche Ligte Infanterie, the Kaapsche Jagers and the Javaansche Artillerie.<sup>26</sup> Reliance was also placed on the militia.<sup>27</sup> It is not clear what the colours of the garrison of regulars in the Cape Town Castle were. Perhaps one may assume that the ordinary Batavian colours, characterised by the revolutionary pattern (e.g. Fig. 3) were in use.<sup>28</sup> The reference to the *Gewapende Burgermacht* of several companies of infantry and cavalry in the *Lyst* says nothing of colours but since the infantry each had a *vaandrig* (ensign) one assumes that they carried colours.

### 6.2 Adding local colour

After the award of colours to The Cape Association, colours do not seem to have been again awarded to any indigenous South African regiment until 1841 when Queen Victoria approved two colours for the Imperial regiment of Cape Mounted Riflemen (Fig. 6) - a Queen's Standard of crimson and gold and a Regimental Guidon of green and gold, both with devices in the four corners as well as in the centre. Both were used until the regiment was disbanded in 1870. The guidon, with the honour Cape of Good Hope for several campaigns, is still to be seen in the Cathedral of St George the Martyr in Cape Town, gradually deteriorating as age claims its due.<sup>29</sup> These flags were of the typical British design and the regimental guidon was embellished with the customary white horse and roses and thistles, not with South African beasts or flora.

Not long after, in 1847, illustrations appeared of either a colour or a flag belonging to the Malay Corps. Two seemed to have existed until 1952 when they disappeared. The flag can be seen in a painting entitled *The Return of the Schooner Conch*, by Thomas Baines. It is in the William Fehr collection in the Cape Town Castle. This again was a pioneering colour - or perhaps it was only a flag - for a colony in which Christianity enjoyed a privileged and relatively exclusive position. On a green field with the Union Flag in the dexter chief there appears in the fly between three gold crescents the words *Allahu Akbar* in gold Arabic lettering (Fig. 5).<sup>30</sup>

The significance of the two regiments' colours was that the British system, which was approaching its final form, was beginning to be adopted in South Africa. The acceptance of a Muslim form of the colour, however, was important for the acceptance of colours recognising particular South African inhabitants.<sup>31</sup>

It was roughly during this time that one could discern a vexillological device in at least one Black kingdom in South Africa. Despite the absence of evidence suggesting the general carrying of colours in the European sense by warriors of the indigenous African kingdoms, during the early nineteenth century 'colours' of a kind could be found in the southern Basotho tribal forces. When Moshoeshoe (1786-1870) was king, he developed an army able to defend his mountain strongholds against incursions both from his Black neighbours and the White immigrant Boers from the Cape. The Basotho war attire was simple and practical unlike the ornate Nguni dress, and they did not fight in the close formations favoured by the Zulu.<sup>32</sup> But in King Moshoeshoe's time chiefs and commanders of military forces began to bear a device which had the character of 'colours.' Much smaller than the Nguni shield, the Sotho shield was shaped rather like the outspread wings of a butterfly (Fig. 7). For chiefs and senior commanders the vertical stick-like hand-grip mounted behind the shield projected about three feet above the shield. This lengthened projection was decorated with a dense cluster of black ostrich feathers which served as a standard and rallying point in battle. Indeed, chiefs had standard bearers to carry the feather standard beside them even out of battle.<sup>33</sup>

### 6.3 The volunteers

Until the Crimean War (1855) and the Indian Mutiny (1857) the colonial garrisons were regiments of the Imperial Army and the colonial forces such as the Cape Mounted Riflemen and the colonial police which had the character of a gendarmery.<sup>34</sup> However, when British forces were needed for the Crimean War and for India from 1854, legislation in the Cape and Natal provided for the establishment of volunteer regiments similar to those in Britain.<sup>35</sup> This lent impetus to the widespread establishment of Volunteer units and thus the adoption of colours on a large scale. Smith suggests that it is doubtful that many were approved by the proper authorities in England. Largely they were the gifts of businessmen or were simply acquired by the regiments themselves. As Smith says, the United Kingdom was far away and even within the colonies control was difficult given the vast distances and primitive communications.<sup>36</sup>

One would have imagined that this in itself would have led to the rapid development of a local vexillological culture. It did not, however. During the nineteenth century the development of colours of a distinctly local character in the colonial forces was slow. The style of the British colours was becoming regulated during this time and, through the presence of Imperial regiments, was well known to the local Volunteer officers. Moreover, while the Dutch colonists, already rooted for some 150 years on the continent drifted away from Dutch symbols, the more recently arrived British colonists preferred British symbols, British uniforms, British usages and, indeed, even British place names in Africa.

Various regiments preferred the Union Flag in the first canton, the British Union wreath of roses, thistle and shamrock, the Imperial crown or sometimes a coronet. Various other symbols reminiscent of the country of origin were common - such as oak leaves and the royal arms. The Cape Town Rifles (1857) used a simple device of initials within a wreath of oak and laurel ensigned with a coronet with the Union Flag in the first canton. The Cradock Mounted Volunteers (1860) received a colour in 1862 with a Tudor rose, thistle and shamrock conjoined within a red circle as a device ensigned with the Imperial crown. The colour of the First City Volunteers of Grahamstown used the city's arms with a wreath of the same plants and a crown while the Prince Alfred's Volunteer Guard (1855) received a colour in 1876 upon which were the Imperial arms ensigned by the Imperial crown and with the Union Flag in the first canton. The Scottish regiments naturally used the arms of Scotland, the cross of St Andrew, and the thistle in their badges.<sup>37</sup> Eight of the more prominent regiments that have survived until today used the Union wreath and some used the Union Flag in the first canton until the coming of the republic in 1961 - even though the British regulations after 1881 provided that no Union Flag would be used in the canton.<sup>38</sup> This was significant in the context of South African politics and the opposition to the adoption of a national flag in 1927. The First City Regiment, the Natal Carbineers and the Rand Light Infantry continued to use the Union wreath after 1961. The Durban Light Infantry and the Natal Carbineers wear

an Imperial crown in their badges as reminders that they once bore the prefix 'Royal.'

### 6.4 The old republics

Colours were never carried by the irregular commandos of the Boer republics. However, there were two features of the republican forces that are of interest. Toward the end of the nineteenth century uniformed volunteer regiments began to appear in the Transvaal, such as the Krugersdorp Vrijwillige Corps, Korps Nederlanders en Oud Nederlanders, Pretoria Vrijwillige Infanterie and the Carolina Vrijwillige Cavallerie Corps. They began to carry informal 'colours' or regimental flags which were usually the red, white, blue and green *Vierkleur* national flag of the republic. On a number of occasions also, during the wars with Black kingdoms bordering the Transvaal, Vierkleur flags embroidered almost as colours were presented by organisations or by the ladies of particular towns, to the commanders leading the forces. It does not appear that these were carried at military assemblies but they might have been. During the Anglo-Boer War a flag of the same kind was presented to General Louis Botha on his appointment in March, 1900, as Commandant-General of the forces of the Transvaal at the age of 37. Some Boer field commanders marked their headquarters with flags and one that has been found was an embellished flag of the Transvaal. It was the headquarters flag of General J.D. Opperman, who had been an officer in the Police before the war.<sup>39</sup>

### 6.5 Striking roots

Gradually the influence of the country in which the colonial regiments served began to be felt. A squadron of the Diamond Fields Horse (1877-1899) received a colour in 1878 which bore a diamond in gold as the device. When the Cape Town Rifles became the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles in 1867 the device on the colour was the star of the Order of the Thistle but it was surrounded by a wreath of Cape protea, arum lily and red disa (*Disa uniflora*), with the name across two branches of the silver leaf. The Grahamstown Volunteer Horse Artillery (1876-1895) adopted the device of the First City Volunteers, the arms of the city, but the supporters were a 'tiger' and a giraffe, and the crest was an ostrich. In 1909, the Zululand Mounted Rifles not only used a rhinoceros statant as its device, with no wreath, Union Flag or crown, but it set a precedent by abandoning the customary Latin in favour of a Zulu motto '*Wa Tshe Tsha*,' although this is incorrectly spelt - meaning 'retreat' in Sotho, instead of 'hurry' (*Wa She Sha*) in Zulu. The Kaffrarian Rifles (1855-) received a colour in 1910 with the Union wreath but with a buffalo head affronté since its headquarters were on the banks of the Buffalo River and it was descended from the Buffalo Border Guard.

## 6.6 Second Colours

In keeping with British usage established since 1747, regiments on the South African establishment also carried Queen's or King's Colours together with Regimental Colours. The first of these regiments to receive a Queen's Colour was Prince Alfred's Volunteer Guard, previously Port Elizabeth Rifles, renamed after providing guards for the young Prince Alfred when he visited Port Elizabeth in 1860. In 1894, however, the colonial authorities ordered volunteer regiments to cease carrying colours and the Sovereign's colour was laid up in the Collegiate Church of St May the Virgin, Port Elizabeth, where it was destroyed when the church burnt down in 1897.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the order of 1894, volunteer regiments returned to bearing colours. King's Colours were presented on the authority of King Edward VII to 28 regiments for service as British forces during the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902). This included the Cape Medical Corps, an unprecedented departure at that time. King Edward VII had desired that the Colours be plain without badge or battle honours but certain regiments added devices on their own initiative.<sup>41</sup>

Consequent to the two World Wars, 25 regiments were given King's colours for the First World War, including six Active Citizen Force Regiments that had served in the German South West African Campaign. Six regiments received King's Colours from the hands of King George VI during his visit to South Africa in 1947. A new Queen's Colour was presented to Prince Alfred's Guard in 1956 - the last to be given before South Africa ceased to be a British Dominion.

The timing of presentations of the colours gave the impression in South Africa that King's Colour was only awarded for distinction or actual war service. However, as is well known, this was not at all true. In 1919 when King George V approved the presentation of silk Union Flags in lieu of King's Colours to war service units for service in the First World War, the authorization included 'each Battalion of Overseas Troops, Rifle Regiments excepted' which had served abroad during the Great War.<sup>42</sup> The Witwatersrand Rifles, as a rifle regiment whose badge served as its colour in the British tradition, was excluded although others such as the Kaffrarian Rifles accepted the colours. Recipients were allowed to add at their own expense 'title and numerals' as for a King's colour. An example of a unit that did add a badge was the 1st Cape Corps whose colour was adorned with the figure of Hope holding an anchor.<sup>43</sup>

After the adoption of a South African national flag in 1927, the question of the nature of the King's Colour was raised in 1933 by the Secretary of Defence who asked the Chief of the General Staff to consider the advisability of adopting as the King's Colour the South African national flag in lieu of the British flag.<sup>44</sup> The national flag was based on the Dutch flag as it appeared in 1652, orange, white and blue. The matter was left in abeyance until 1937 when a King's Colour was being considered for the five-year old Special Service Battalion. The Inspector of Regimental Colours - Garter Principal King of Arms - was asked to prepare a design. Garter's proposal was rather inept, indicating that it had not

occurred to him that the national flag of a Dominion should be regarded as one of the King's badges, as was the British Union Flag.<sup>45</sup> In 1939 the Chief of the General Staff proposed a 'National Colour' to the Minister of Defence "...for every combatant unit of the Union Defence Force..." The proposal was for only the title of regiments to be borne on "...a green circle ...ensigned with the Union [of South Africa] arms." Although this was approved by the Cabinet, 1939 brought more urgent concerns as the country desperately tried to arm for the impending war and the decision was not carried into effect. In 1947, when the King presented colours in Pretoria, the Union Flag was used once again. It was only in 1988 that a National Colour was adopted. It consisted simply of a silken national flag, unembellished except for a gold fringe and gold cords and tassels. All units carrying regimental colours were given National Colours, whether combatant or not. Indeed, this colour was the only sign of the old connection with the Dutch government of the Cape before 1795 in the South African system of regimental colours. It was a time when the government was moved to inspire patriotism by displaying the national flag on every possible occasion. All these colours were laid up at the end of 1993 in anticipation of the impending constitutional changes. Sadly, although this particular flag was the flag which flew over military headquarters in all the theatres of war where South African forces served during the Second World War, the association it developed with the National Party government after 1948 means that it will never be used again.<sup>46</sup>

## 7 Characteristic South African Colours

### 7.1 Uniting for defence

As more regiments were established in the twentieth century, the tendency to adopt devices reflecting the character of the country became increasingly common. With the amalgamation of colonial forces as the Union Defence Force in 1913 some thirty mounted rifle regiments additional to the previous Volunteer establishment were embodied and many adopted local flora and fauna as symbols.<sup>47</sup> Few remained after the war when financial cuts led to the disbanding of the newly established regiments and the Permanent Force South African Mounted Rifles, successors to the Cape Mounted Rifles. Thus most received no colours. An example of those remaining that used local fauna was the Pretoria Regiment, formerly infantry but a tank regiment since 1943, which adopted the impala statant on an aloe-strewn representation of the Magaliesberg that encircle Pretoria. When the regiment was established in 1913 there were still officers who could remember when the valleys were alive with the little red deer.

The units of the Defence Force existing in 1914 participated in the German South West Africa Campaign (Namibia) in 1914–15. For domestic political reasons from 1915 participation in the war in France, Flanders, Egypt, Palestine

and German East Africa was by units specially established in the Imperial Army and not the Union Defence Force; they were nearly all designated by the prefix 'South African'.<sup>48</sup> Several had distinguished records and, although they disbanded after the war, regimental colours were granted to some. Although most regiments had worn a standardised general service badge, some distinctly South African devices were chosen for the colours. The 1st South African Infantry bore the arms of the city of Cape Town, 2nd SA Infantry bore two wildebeest courant at random and four orange trees, while 3rd SA Infantry and 8th SA Infantry each chose a springbok head coupé at the neck. The 8th SA Infantry departed from the British practice by having no wreath and no crown. The 1st Cape Corps received a regimental colour in 1916, prior to its departure from South Africa. This was a light brown or buff colour with the figure of Hope as she appeared on the crest of the province's arms, within a silver leaf wreath. Its seven battle honours ranged from Kilimanjaro in Tanganyika to Megiddo in Palestine. The contemporary colour of the Cape Corps is shown in Fig. 8.

## 7.2 Designs of one's own

The need to have new colours approved to replace old ones led in 1926 to protracted correspondence with the Army Council in London. The outcome was the decision to adapt the instructions for colours to accord with South African requirements.<sup>49</sup> This was not easy. The Inspector of Regimental Colours - Garter King of Arms - had always been somewhat rigid about idiosyncratic adaptations in the Empire and Commonwealth. To an extent this accounted for the adherence to the Union wreath and other British features of colours. He was also rather ignorant of the political considerations. His responses indicated ignorance that the adoption of a South African national flag in 1928 had itself been fraught with acrimonious political disagreement. Nevertheless, the outcome was the decision that a standardised wreath of a pattern with a South African motif - for which Canada had set a precedent - should be used in future together with a regimental badge instead of a mere number or name in the centre of regimental colours.<sup>50</sup>

In 1934 the anticipation of a new war led to the establishment of eight new Active Citizen Force (ACF) infantry regiments to replace those disbanded following the First World War, as well as the full-time Special Service Battalion. The colours designed for them and for other regiments to adopt in future were of a uniform pattern with the regimental badge within a stylised circular protea wreath ensigned by the Imperial crown. While the badges of three of the new regiments were uninspiring the others were original in using devices representative of the origins of the names or of the recruiting areas. Regiment Louw Wepener displayed the mountain fastness of King Moshoeshoe's Thaba Bosigo and - wrongly - a small Nguni shield -, Regiment Westelike Provincie bore the flowering cone of the silver leaf tree (*Leucodendron argenteum*) in gold within a wreath of its leaves in silver, Die Middelandse Regiment (now Regi-

ment Grootkaroo) displayed a ram's head, Regiment de la Rey's badge was an African lion statant, reminiscent of General de la Rey's nickname - the lion of the Western Transvaal - and Regiment Suid-Westelike Distrikte bore a large protea over machine guns in saltire and no wreath or crown.<sup>51</sup> As a regiment recruiting throughout the country, the Special Service Battalion bore a cluster of three protea.<sup>52</sup>

In 1937, in order to stimulate interest in the volunteer Defence Rifle Associations, regarded as the descendants of the commandos, colours were also devised for them upon which were emblazoned battle honours recalling campaigns of the nineteenth century and ending with the First World War - in which many had fought in the German South West Africa Campaign (1914-1915).<sup>53</sup> The fields were crimson, blue, orange and green so as to indicate the provinces from which the commandos came. The Second World War began before the programme had got into its stride and of fifty ordered, Curson says that eight colours were lost at sea when a ship bringing them from England was sunk by enemy action.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless the designs were oriented toward domestic motifs such as the leopard, secretary birds, the steenbok, the gemsbok, sunflowers, the blue wildebeest, crocodiles, elephants, black-maned lions, Afrikaner bulls, a mine headgear, scorpions and the zebra.

The Minister of Defence appointed upon the accession to power of the National Party in 1948 was determined to instil what he considered to be a truly South African character in the Defence Force.<sup>55</sup> To this end he appointed in December, 1948, a committee of enquiry into customs and symbols to examine the relevance of the symbolism of the Boer republics and the colonies to the modern defence force. The outcome was an extensive report in March, 1949.<sup>56</sup> There was really not much the committee could say about colours since the Boer republics had not instituted a system of colours for the Commandos which Erasmus favoured. His advisers did not seem to have known of the Transvaal's uniformed volunteers and their use of colours. Nevertheless, as a first step - without determining whether there was an alternative authority in South Africa - the Minister ordered that South African colours would no longer be submitted for approval to the Inspector of Regimental Colours in London. As a short-term measure he arranged that the Chief Archivist of the Union of South Africa would examine the acceptability of colours. Only in 1954 was the Staff Officer, Military Archives, Captain (later Lieutenant General and also chairman of the Heraldry Council) H. de V. du Toit, sent to the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and elsewhere in Europe, to study heraldry to provide the Union Defence Force with a centre of knowledge on military heraldry.<sup>57</sup> With the authority to determine designs and symbols on colours, Du Toit was intended to place a distinct stamp on military colours in South Africa.

## 8 Quite on our own

The major changes in colours came when South Africa became a republic in 1961. To begin with, it lent force to the argument that colours should not remain entirely British and royal in their appearance. Interestingly, while the two 'Royal' regiments lost their designation and the Duke of Edinburgh's Own Rifles reverted to the name Cape Town Rifles, Prince Alfred's Guard retained its name. Colours with crowns and the Union Flag were laid up and new designs had to be found.

### 8.1 Wreaths

The changes also permitted the abandoning of the rather formal protea wreath of the 1930s in favour of wreaths of the choice of the regiments. Nor were honours, in excess of nine, to be placed on a separate laurel wreath outside the floral wreath any longer. On their new colours the Cape Town Highlanders combined the thistle of Scotland with the silver leaf, the red disa and the red and purple erica of the Cape. The South African Irish adopted two branches of shamrock slipped proper issuing from a protea in base, leaved and proper. The Durban Light Infantry (**Fig. 9**) combined the Tudor rose, thistle and shamrock with the strelitzia and protea. The device in the centre of the colour includes a crest which is a lion passant guardant on three mounts representing the battlefields of Monte Stanco, Monte Pezza and Monte Sole-Caprara. The centre mount is charged with a white pyramid to recall the Western Desert campaign of 1941 to 1943. The Pretoria Regiment (**Fig. 10**), while giving up the suffix Princess Alice's Own, adopted a more natural wreath of protea flowers, buds and leaves and spaced its ten battle honours along the two branches of the wreath. Regiment Grootkaroo (**Fig. 11**), placed a ram's head affronté within a wreath of the typically South African mimosa branches (*Acacia karroo*) with flowers, leaves and thorns. Prince Alfred's Guard (**Fig. 12**), which had borne the royal arms as its badge, adopted a Xhosa shield in gold with a silver bend sinister emblazoned *Umzintzani*, where it had first fought in the nineteenth century. This is a battle honour which, because of its place on the badge, is not borne on the colour. This was probably the first time an African shield was used as the main feature on the colours of a regiment composed of white soldiers. The wreath was composed of the red flowers and leaves of the Msintsana tree (*Erythrina humeana*). On the other hand, many regiments and other units have chosen not to have wreaths at all. This includes the Regiment Suid-Westelike Distrikte and the Regiment Westelike-Provincie, whose colours were so unembellished that they did not need to be laid up in 1961. But it became a trend, especially for many of the newly formed combined Permanent Force-national service regiments (established in the 1960s), to do without wreaths - such as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd South African Infantry Battalions. However, there were still regiments who continued to use the Union wreath of thistles, roses and shamrock with republican

colours. An example was First City Regiment, recruited in Grahamstown and the Albany district in which the first large British settlement took place after the second occupation of the Cape.

## 8.2 Fields, fringes and finials

A degree of uniformity was introduced in the 1960s by compelling the infantry and the armour regiments to adopt fields that would indicate the arm of service. Thus the infantry field became uniformly rifle green, BCC27 in the British Colour Code, and the armour field became blue BCC218. Fringes were also made uniform with black and gold for the infantry - reminiscent of the Régiment de Meuron - and silver and orange for armour. At the same time the finial on the staff which had generally been the Imperial crest of a crowned lion standing on a crown was replaced with a 115-mm high gilded springbok. In 1971, when the decision was taken to allow all services to carry colours, artillery adopted blue BCC49, the engineers took red BCC126, signals light blue BCC194, the South African Medical Corps took ruby BCC38, and the other services adopted a variety of other tinctures. Commandos were restricted to a field of green BCC100 with the provinces indicated by the fringe tinctures.

## 8.3 Broadening the range

In 1966 the decision was taken to extend the carrying of colours to the squadrons of the South African Air Force. The first to receive colours - not standards as the Royal Air Force calls them - were 2 Squadron (**Fig. 13**) and 24 Squadron. That of 2 Squadron - whose mascot and emblem was a winged cheetah - was remarkable for having battle honours reaching from East Africa, through the Western Desert to South Eastern Europe and Korea. The squadron, a recipient of the United States' and the Korean Presidential Unit Citations, is also the only South African unit to carry an American battle honour streamer. The field for Air Force colours is steel blue BCC44 with blue and poppy red fringes. No wreaths are used, although they may be adopted. However, a protea flower embellishes each corner of the colour. Honours are arranged around the squadron badge on scrolls. The finial is a gilded eagle with its wings extended, standing on a ball.

Since 1952 the South African Navy's units have carried ordinary ensigns on parade in lieu of colours. In 1969, however, a colour was granted to the Navy to be carried only on land and only in South Africa. It has no battle honours since these are granted to ships individually. The finial is a gilded lion which is the crest of the national coat of arms.

In 1970 colours were extended in the army to all the services, as already mentioned above. Since that time the South African Medical Service became a separate service on an equal footing with the Army, Navy and Air Force and, for example, the Medical Battalion Groups and 1 Military Hospital have been

granted colours to recognise their role under fire. At various times after the Second World War the four services and the Defence Force as a whole adopted flags or ensigns. These all bore the national flag in the canton and in that respect they have been changed since the adoption of the new national flag. However, since regimental colours have no national flags on them, it has been unnecessary to conform to the new national flag.

## 9 Conclusion

A wide range of foreign forces have served on South African soil: Dutch, French, Swiss, German and British. Furthermore, many South African military personnel have been trained by foreign forces. Though the colours and flags of several countries have been borne by garrisons and on the battlefields of South Africa, ultimately, despite variations in practice and custom, the colours that have had the greatest influence were those of the British forces. The only exception was the National Colour carried from 1988 until 1993, which was based on the Dutch flag of the seventeenth century.

British principles of design have predominated in the services. This is probably because the British armed forces were in the process of regulating their organisations and their own systems of colours during the British colonial period with its military occupations. At a time when a South African military tradition was in the process of creation there was a strong British influence on South Africa. And, of course, after British settlement began, many South African soldiers were of British descent or origin.

Furthermore, participation in Allied ranks during the two World Wars played a central role in cementing symbolic military ties with those whose languages we could more easily understand. Nevertheless, the South African armed forces have developed a system that is recognisably South African through the use of particular devices drawn especially from the plant and animal life of the country - not to speak of local military life and the languages of the country. There is a clear national identity and yet there is still a relationship with the past. Forty-nine years after François Erasmus began his campaign to South Africanise the symbols of the defence force, one would be hard put not to see fundamental likenesses between today's colours and many of those presented at the South African Military College by King George VI in 1947. Smith points to the constitutional changes, unprecedented expansion of the Defence Force and guidance from the Heraldry Council and the Bureau of Heraldry as important influences in the development of regimental colours. Nevertheless, while these influences played a part, observation of the armed forces of South Africa leaves no doubt that colours have become South African as the military itself grew and developed - not because a politician wished to place his own stamp on the military culture of the country.

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## End Notes

1. The term 'South Africa' is used as a geographical expression. After European settlement in 1652 there were numerous colonies and republics. The divisions did not end entirely with union in 1910. The policy of apartheid led to the granting of independence to four territories from 1963 to 1994. Each had its own 'army,' but their military customs will have to be the subject of another paper.
2. Reference has been made to Alberti (1968), Krige (1950), Junod (1936) and Stayt (1931). For exceptions see the end notes to Fourie and Brownell (1997).
3. Colonisation was frequently undertaken by private enterprise rather than by governments. Charters were granted for the exploitation of territories that later became significant political entities such as the original American colonies, Canada and India. An East India Company was set up in England and a Compagnie des Indes in France. In the Netherlands the Vereenigte Oost Indische Compagnie (VOIC) was established to exploit the 'Indies' in 1602, lasting until its bankruptcy in 1795.
4. The *Batavi* were a Teutonic tribe. Batavia was an ancient name used for Holland. During Dutch rule the main town of Java was called Batavia. After independence following the Second World War it was called Djakarta. Between 1795 and 1806 the Netherlands itself was named the Batavian Republic. The Peace of Amiens led to the return to Dutch rule for the brief life of this republic.
5. The Régiment de Meuron, a Swiss regiment engaged by agreement between France and the Dutch, moved from the Cape to Ceylon where they entered British service, going on to serve in India, America and Canada, where they were disbanded in 1816. More is known of them because, the property of a well known family in Neuchâtel, they became the subject of several books.
6. Credit is due to Curson (1948) for opening the way to a great deal of historical information through his varied publications. Some of his unpublished work is to be found in the archives of the Directorate of Documentation Services, Defence Headquarters, Pretoria. Regrettably, as an amateur he relied too frequently on assumptions and one has to treat his material with some caution.

7. *Battle Honours and Theatre Honours for the South African National Defence Force*, Instruction/HSP/D Dok D/1/1996, sets out all honours permitted units of the Defence Force together with criteria for awards of honours.
8. In South Africa the term 'regiment' has the same slightly ambiguous meaning that it has in the British Army. The term is used to designate artillery, infantry, armour, engineer and signals units although the term 'battalion' is used in the infantry to designate the organisational unit.
9. See Smith (1980), p. 97. and Curson (1948), p. 46. Smith gives the essence of the regulations governing colours on pp. 98 and 112 (Chapters 3 and 7) with a summary of the Army Council's rules. Curson, does so in Part 1, pp. 7-17 and Appendix 1.
10. See Smith (1980), p. 70 and also *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke: Kaap No. I: Resolusies van die Politieke Raad: Deel I 1651-1669*, p.22. A resolution of 1 May, 1659, established a militia for compulsory service for the Company's servants released from their indentures after 1657. See Leibrandt (1907) and Theal (1888), p. 91. The regular force in the first part of the century amounted to a mere 270, all ranks (Sleigh 1983, p. 41). The Burgher Militie had grown to seven infantry companies by 1789 and by 1795 there were eight and a half companies of dragoons or Burgher Cavallerie (850 men) according to Roux (1925).
11. *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke: Kaap No. II: Resolusies van die Politieke Raad: Deel II 1670-1680*, p. 97. The Burgher Militie was constituted by a resolution of the 1st May, 1659, and was in fact the commencement of conscription and the foundation of the various forms of part-time militia service among South Africans (Thom 1958, pp. 34-35). At present part-time service continues without conscription.
12. *Kaapse Argiefstukke: Kaapse Plakaatboek Deel I (1652-1707) and Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke: Kaap No. 8: Resolusies van die Politieke Raad: Deel VIII 1729-1734*, p. 380.
13. See Roskill (1962), pp. 61-62, Mordal (1959), p. 150 and Delmas (1992), p. 191. Pierre-André Suffren de Saint-Tropez (1729-1788) went on to gain five more victories in the seas around India before the Peace of 1783; Smith (1981), pp. 107-113.
14. When numbers were accorded regiments in place of their names in 1791, Austrasie became No.8 because it had stemmed in 1776 from No.7, the Régiment de Champagne which had been established in 1569. Pondichéry, established in 1772, on being moved later from the Ministry of the Marine to that of War, became No.107. Bertin (1976), pp. 237 and 239. Pondichéry was a French possession on the Indian coast on the Gulf of Bengal from 1673 until 1954. Austrasie was the name given in the Merovingian period to various provinces on the eastern borders of Frankish Gaul, including Bavaria and Thuringia.
15. Chatrand (1991). Charles-Joseph Pâtissier, Marquis de Bussy-Castelnau (1720-1785) fought in India from 1740 until his death in Pondichéry where he was the French commander.

16. On the eve of the Revolution (1789) the French infantry was organised in three parts - two regiments of guards, one of which was Swiss, 79 French régiments de ligne and 23 foreign regiments - eleven Swiss, nine German and three Irish - there had previously been Scottish, Italian and Swedish regiments. There were also seven colonial regiments under the Ministry of the Marine. Bertin (1976), p. 94. The ban on contracted foreign regiments after the July Revolution of 1830, led to the establishment by the Law of 9 March, 1831, of the Légion Étrangère to give a home to the foreign soldiers left in France. Bertin, *op. cit.*, p. 133.
17. Prinz (1932), p. 162.
18. Blake (1973), p. 472. See also Wise & Rosignoli (1977), plate 38 no. 230.
19. Leluc, Sylvie and Klein, Mireille, Conservateurs, Departements Artillerie et des Emblèmes, letter 210/MA/SL/LS of 10 June, 1997, with sketches of the colours. Unfortunately that of the Régiment Pondichéry could not be found in available documents.
20. Prinz (1932), p. 5.
21. Meuron (1982), Davidson (1936). During this time, York von Wartenburg, the hero of the revolt in 1813 against Napoleon, was an officer in this regiment at the Cape and Ceylon. Details of the French occupation and the 'parisian' character of the Cape appear in his biography by Droysen (1868), pp. 26-33. See also Prinz (1932), p. 79 and End Note No. 34, p. 315 and p. 346.
22. The 'Union Flag' is the flag of Great Britain and (Northern) Ireland, combining the crosses of St George, St Andrew and St Patrick and commonly called the 'Union Jack.'
23. Prinz (1932) describes on p. 30 the consecration of the colours and their ceremonial 'nailing' by the commander of the Württemberg army, the military representative of the VOIC, and representative foreign and regimental officers. This was followed by the reading of a soldier's duties to the colours and the Articles of War and then the taking of the 'oath to the colours.'
24. The protea seems to have come into use by default since, although the *Acacia karroo* was in the process of acceptance in 1911, coins minted in 1925 bore representations of the protea. When the College of Arms prepared a representation of embellished arms in 1932, two types of protea were placed in the compartment. This began a wide-spread official usage in South Africa which gave the protea a status that was virtually official. A commission recommended in 1962 that the *Protea cynaroides* be adopted but this was only officially done in 1975 (Brownell, 1993, pp. 41-43).
25. See Wilkens (1913), p. 209, Smith (1981), p. 303 and Robinson (1973), p. 185. In the *Journal* of S.E. Hudson there is an entry describing the presentation on 25 April, 1799 (p. 303).

26. See the section titled 'Naamlyst der Officieren, behoorende tot het Corps d'Armée en verdere gewapende macht inde Bataafse Volkplanting de Kaap de Goede Hoop in Zuid-Africa, Anno 1805' in the *Lyst*.
27. Theal (1888), p. 130 writes that in 1805 "... the whole population is organised for militia purposes.."
28. See for example Wise & Rosignoli (1981), pp. 16-21.
29. Smith (1980), p. 73 and plates 13 and 14. Cannon (1842) has coloured illustrations. The guidon, barely recognisable, was last viewed by the writer on 28 June, 1997.
30. The words mean 'God is great.' Smith (1980) plate 15 and pp. 74-75.
31. Smith (1980), p. 74-75; Shell (1978)
32. The Nguni peoples include the amaXhosa, amaZulu, Matabele and the Swati whose languages and cultural equipment are almost identical. Their military systems, especially those of the amaZulu, Matabele and Swati were very formalised.
33. Knight (1994), pp. 55, 57, 70, 89 and 92. Moshoeshoe combined the talents of a diplomat with those of an accomplished soldier and welded the Basotho into a cohesive nation which maintained its independence, although it was a British protectorate from 1880 until 1966. Today his country is the Kingdom of Lesotho.
34. For example The *African Court Calendar and Directory for 1822*, which supplanted the *Lyst*, mentions the following regiments as the British garrison the 6th Foot (later Royal Warwickshires), the 38th Foot (1st South Staffordshire Regiment), the 54th Foot (2nd Dorset Regiment) and the 72nd Foot (1st Seaforth Highlanders), while the 1802 edition mentions the 91st Foot (1st Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders) which served in the Cape from 1796 to 1802, in 1806 and in 1879 and again in the Anglo-Boer War.
35. After the Cape governor's acceptance of volunteer forces in 1855, the Burgher Forces Act and the Volunteer Forces Acts were passed by the Legislature in 1856 and 1878. This was preceded in 1854 by the Natal Volunteer Ordinance, No. 8 of 15 November which authorised the formation of volunteer units. The system had begun to be adopted in the Transvaal by 1899 and it was extended under British rule after 1902. In 1912 the Volunteer Forces were replaced by the Active Citizen Force, a compulsory part-time force, with a reserve based on voluntary Commandos. As in Switzerland, the part time forces have constituted the greater part of the army.
36. Smith (1980), p. 97.
37. Eventually, between 1885 and 1939 some seven Scottish regiments were established.

38. The surviving regiments using distinctly British colours as described included the 1st and 2nd Durban Light Infantry and 1st and 2nd Natal Carbineers (both 'Royal' from 1935 until 1961), the First City Regiment, the Kaffrarian Rifles, the Kimberley Regiment, the 1st (but not the 2nd) Transvaal Scottish, and the Rand Light Infantry.
39. Curson (1947) has an illustration (Figure 54) and a note on an embroidered flag given to Commandant-General P.J. Joubert after the campaign against Chief Mapog in 1883. Smith (1980), Plate 8, has an illustration of that given to Botha. The embellished flag used by Opperman, a uniformed police officer before the war, was found in the store of the Fort Klapperkop Museum, Pretoria, by Col. A. Malan, honorary curator of the National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria. Opperman was killed in action in 1901. *Onz Krijgs-Officieren* (1904), p. 58.
40. Smith (1980), p. 76.
41. Smith (1980), p. 80.
42. *Army Council Instruction No.444 of 1919*.
43. The figure of Hope represents the Cape on the national coat of arms. Smith (1980), plate 24.
44. A national flag of orange, white and blue with the flags of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal republics with the British Union Flag in the middle was adopted in 1928 pursuant to the Union Nationality and Flags Act, No. 40 of 1927. This was flown together with the Union Flag until 1957 when the Flag Amendment Act, No. 18 of 1957, made the national flag the sole South African flag.
45. Smith (1980), pp. 83-84. The Statute of Westminster, 1931 (22 Geo. V, c.4), and the Status of Union Act, No. 69 of 1934, by giving effect to a variety of resolutions passed by Imperial Conferences in 1926 and 1930, made it clear that the British Dominions were independent kingdoms of the Commonwealth. This was not well received by every one in the Commonwealth - including in South Africa - and perhaps Garter himself preferred to ignore the change.
46. During the Second World War 406 133 volunteers served in the Union Defence Force at home and in the following theatres: The Army served in East Africa, Ethiopia, the Western Desert and Italy; the SAAF served over the Mediterranean, France, French North Africa, South East Europe and Warsaw; the SA Naval Forces served in the Indian Ocean, the South Atlantic and the Mediterranean and 23 391 South Africans volunteered to serve in the Japanese theatre prior to the surrender of Japan. Numerous South Africans served as volunteers with foreign forces or on secondment to the British forces in other theatres.
47. The Union Defence Force was organised in 1913 in terms of the Defence Act, 1912. It consisted of a small Permanent Force together with the Active Citizen Force and the Coast Garrison Force as successors to the Volunteers. Examples of badges can be seen in Curson (1954), pp. 45-49.

48. South Africa provided 231 209 Black and White volunteers for the various theatres - 52 000 in Europe. Many others volunteered directly for service in the British forces. The Imperial Service Units were made up of 16 infantry battalions, 10 mounted rifle regiments, 12 artillery batteries, several horse transport units and a field ambulance. The pre-war South African Aviation Corps became 26 (South Africa) Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps and remained in the Royal Air Force until 1975. None of its honours are borne by any South African squadron.
49. Colours were only regulated in South Africa when the 'Regulations for Colours in the Union of South Africa' were published in *General Orders* 7673 and 7769 of 1931.
50. The numbering of regiments had ended in 1932. *Government Notice* 167 of 5 February, 1932.
51. Of these it appears that Louw Wepener was only given a colour in 1967 when the shield had been removed and the mountain was ensigned by an eagle displayed.
52. See both Curson and Smith, *passim*.
53. Smith (1980), pp. 150-153.
54. Curson, *op.cit.*, Part VI, 'Commando Colours,' Figures 52 and 53 show examples. In the course of his revision, Smith discovered several of the colours.
55. The party was then known as the Herenigde Nasionale Party (HNP), or Re-united National Party. Only later did it return to using the name of the party which ruled the country until 1933 when it amalgamated with the South African Party to establish the United National South African Party, which ruled the country from 1933 to 1948. The Minister, who had long concerned himself with defence questions in the opposition benches, especially concerning symbolic affairs, was F.C. Erasmus. His career had been that of party organiser and he had never had military service unlike his Prime Minister, who had as a student worn a scarlet jacket in the Victoria College Rifle Volunteers, or his two colleagues E.H. Louw, later Minister of Foreign Affairs, and J. Strijdom, second NP Prime Minister, who had served in the 1914-1915 campaign in German South West Africa (Namibia).
56. *Verslag van die Komitee van Ondersoek insake Militêre Range, Vaandels, Kentekens, ens.*
57. Jooste (1995), p. 43, and sources cited.

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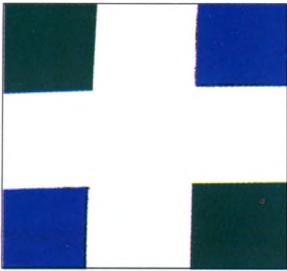


Figure 1

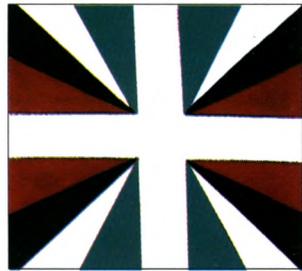


Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

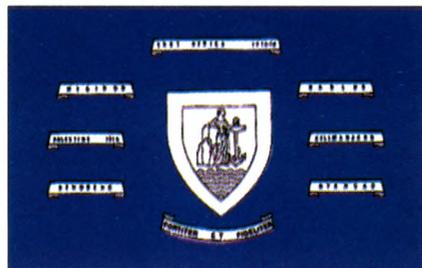


Figure 8

