

VEXILLOLOGY OF THE ANGLO-BOER WAR - BOER FLAGS

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Abstract :

The paper deals with the use of flags by the Boers during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899 to 1902. The introduction briefly sketches the origins, conduct and consequences of the war, as background to the discussion on the flags employed by the Boer Forces.

The origins of the national flags of the republics of ZAR and the OFS are presented in some detail. Some of the unity flags developed as an expression of public solidarity between the republics and then discussed, followed by the known unit colours employed by the Boer commandos and foreign volunteers in the field.

INTRODUCTION

The Anglo-Boer War

The Anglo-Boer War raged from 11 October 1899 to 31st May 1902 between the whole of the British Empire and two small Boer republics, the Republic of the Orange Free State (OFS) and the South African Republic in the Transvaal, commonly known as ZAR (*Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek*). The origins of the war are to be found in a resurgence of the imperial ambitions of Britain which coincided with the discovery of the largest gold fields in the world in the Transvaal in 1886. The Boer republics were in the way of British imperial ambitions in Africa and it was inconceivable (to the British of course) that control of this source of wealth should not be in British hands.

It was the first of the modern wars of the 20th Century, and although insignificant when measured against the later conflagrations of this century, it still committed Britain to the largest overall effort since Napoleonic wars, and in fact forced her to send overseas the largest army in her history up to that time. The outcome and aftermath of the War have also ruled the political landscape of South Africa for most of this century and plays a role even today in the new South Africa that came into being in 1994.

Pretext for War

The failed Jameson Raid in December 1895, a conspiracy by Rhodes and Joe Chamberlain with a group of Johannesburgers to overthrow the republican government, brought an end to Rhodes' political career as premier of the Cape Colony and a new British High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner to South Africa, with specific instruction to solve the so-called Transvaal problem even if it meant war. The two republics now realized that war with Great Britain seemed to be inevitable. They concluded an alliance of mutual defence and started arming; importing modern Mauser rifles from Germany and Creusot and Krupp artillery pieces.

The final pretext of the war was the issue of voting rights for the foreigners (called *uitlanders* by the Boers) who had flocked to the gold fields. The republic required long residential periods to qualify for the franchise, as they feared being swamped. The majority of these *uitlanders* were of British extraction and the British government insisted on shorter qualification periods with the hope that the Kruger faction in the ZAR would thereby be outvoted and a government brought to power more favourable to British interests. As the British pressure increased, the Transvaal government made concessions until, at a final conference in August 1899, called by the President of the OFS in Bloemfontein in a last desperate attempt to avert war, they offered a five-year period of residential qualification for the franchise without even the requirement to assume republican citizenship. This was still not acceptable to Milner and the conference dispersed with the certainty that war was now

only a matter of time. Kruger's last words to Milner were: 'It is not the vote you want, it is my country' (Fig. 1 - Political Map of South Africa in 1899).⁷

Outbreak and Conduct.^{3,5}

The British Government mobilized an Army Corps, which is what the War Office estimated, would be needed for a three months' campaign to overrun the republics. The Boer rank and file was equally optimistic about driving the Khakis into the sea in a few weeks. What happened instead, was a most destructive war, which lasted 32 bloody months and changed the face of South Africa forever. In the face of the mounting British concentrations on their borders, the republics took the initiative after an ultimatum to the British Government to withdraw and turn back the large reinforcements then at sea. They invaded the colonies of the Cape and Natal with the objective of driving the enemy as far as possible from their borders and then holding them there while efforts were made to get foreign help, or if the British tired of the war as they did in the first Anglo-Boer War in 1880-81 when the Transvaal regained its independence.

In this the Boers succeeded at first; inflicting a series of humiliating defeats on the British on all three fronts, until the British reinforced their forces overwhelmingly and changed the supreme command. Towards the end of February 1900, they broke through on all fronts and started advancing. For the Boers the war now became one long retreat until both their capitals were in British hands by July 1900. Towards the end of that year, the formal conventional set-piece war ended and the Boer commandos dispersed to their home districts where they resorted to the hit-and-run tactics of guerrilla war. This phase of the war lasted until the end on 31 May 1902 and was the most destructive phase in life, as well as property, for the Boers. The British built extensive systems of block house lines to confine the commandos and carried out massive drives to pin and destroy them against these lines. At the same time, they carried out a scorched earth policy aimed at denying the commandos the succour of their farms and families. The farms and livestock were destroyed and the families, along with the loyal servants, dumped in concentration camps where they died like flies from disease, hunger and neglect.

These measures eventually proved successful, for by the first months of 1902, the republics were devastated and the whole Boer population, civilian as well as those still on commando, in a parlous state. In April 1902 the Commandant-General of the ZAR, General Louis Botha, after consultation with the Free State Government, asked the British Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, for a free conduct for the Boer governments in the field and their commanders to confer. The representatives of the two republics met in a place called Vereeniging on the Vaal River in a camp provided by the British in the beginning of May 1902. Three weeks of heart-rending discussions followed. The Boers regarded themselves as militarily still undefeated. But with the means to continue the fight almost non-existent by then, and afraid that their nations would be exterminated because of the horrific death rates in the concentration camps, even the most stubborn had at last to admit, that the end had come. The so-called Treaty of Vereeniging was signed in Pretoria at Lord Kitchener's headquarters on the evening of 31 May 1902. The republics surrendered their sovereignty and, once again became British colonies with the promise of representative government as soon as possible and protection for their language and culture.

Cost of the War⁵

The Boers put approximately 80,000 mounted men into the field, including some 10,000 rebels from the Cape Colony. Their losses in the field and in the POW camps from combat and disease, amounted to just over 7,000. Some 22,000 of them laid down their arms in June 1902. The British eventually had over 45,000 men under arms from both Britain and her colonies around the world and suffered over a hundred thousand casualties, of whom 22,000 dead. Of these, 6,000 actually fell on the field of battle while a further 16,000 died of wounds and disease.

A sad sideline of the war was the death of some 500,000 horses and mules. The British imported horses from all over the world, particularly from the pampas and prairies. It is said that the wild Mustang herds of the American Southwest were almost decimated by the attractive prices offered by the British Army. Because they imported fodder from all over the world, South Africa today also suffers from the most varied collection of weeds in all the world. The scorched earth policy resulted

in the destruction of over 30,000 (some sources put it at over 60, 000) Boer homesteads and there were no cattle and other domestic animals left in the two republics. The last of the game herds on the South African high veld also disappeared.

Concentration Camps ^{3, 5}

The loss that affected Afrikanerdom the most, however, were 7 000 women and 20 000 children who died in the concentration camps. (Fig. 2 - Map of Concentration Camps⁷). The men who laid down their arms or returned from the POW camps were disappointed at the loss of their independence, but they felt rather proud of themselves for the way they had held so vastly superior an enemy at bay for so long. Even the destruction of their farms and property by the enemy could be accepted as the fortune of war. However, when they went to the camps to fetch their families back to the ruins of their homes and found only their graves, an element of bitterness was created which has had profound political implications for South Africa throughout the 20th century. Afrikanerdom's political purpose became an implacable determination to regain the sovereignty, which they had lost in war, by political means. They eventually succeeded in re-establishing their republic over the whole of South Africa in 1961, but in the process, they committed horrendous political misjudgments that brought them again to the brink of disaster. They stepped back from the edge of the precipice just in time in 1990, and then negotiated their own loss of hegemony to help create the "new" South Africa that came into being in 1994.

This overview of the Anglo-Boer War serves as the background to a short discussion on the flags employed by the Boers during that war.

NATIONAL FLAGS OF THE BOER REPUBLICS

The Orange Free State Vierkleur (2,14)

The Republic of the Orange Free State (*De Republiek den Oranje Vrijstaat*) came into existence on 11 March 1854. Britain had granted independence to the area between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, then known as the Orange River Sovereignty, (which it had annexed in 1848), at the Bloemfontein Convention on 23 February 1854. The first flag hoisted over the Bloemfontein Fort was the Dutch tricolour (Fig. 3 - Dutch Tricolour). It was called, erroneously, the Batavian Flag, associating it with the short-lived Batavian Republic to which the Cape Colony had been returned at the Peace of Amiens in 1803. The actual Batavian Flag was the old Dutch tricolour defaced with a charge in the canton, (Fig. 4 - Batavian Tricolour).

The newly elected President and *Volksraad* (Parliament), wrote to King William III of the Netherlands for the grant of arms and a flag, stressing the connection between the name of the new state and the House of Orange. The King's advisors produced a design which did not find favour with the King, now known as the Powder Horn flag (Fig. 5 - Powder Horn Flag). The horn was wrongly associated with the powder horn as this horn goes back to the founder of the House of Orange, William of the Horn, so called because he had a horn painted on his shield. He was also known as the Sword of Christendom and was granted the Principality of Orange by Charlemagne in the south of France as reward for his success in defeating an attempted Moorish invasion.

Eventually, King William sent an emissary to the Free State with designs for a coat of arms and for a flag containing four orange bars on a white field and with a tricolour in the canton. Somehow, one orange bar got lost and the flag that was hoisted with great ceremony on 23 February 1857, only had three. (Fig. 6 - Orange Free State Vierkleur). It must be a unique event in world heraldic and vexillological history, that a republic had approached a monarch for the grant of arms and a flag!

The Free State *Vierkleur* (four colour), remained the national flag of the OFS until 31st May 1902. That was not its end, however. In 1928, the Union of South Africa adopted a new flag wherein this *Vierkleur* was included to represent the Province of the Orange Free State in the Union. (Fig. 7 - National Flag of South Africa: 1928 1994). The Union was formed in 1910 and consisted of the two British colonies of the Cape and Natal, and the two former republics. This flag flew over South Africa until midnight on 27th April 1994, when a new flag was hoisted to symbolise the new beginning. Even though it is no longer used as a flag in any capacity, it still lives on in the hearts of the Free Staters and can often still be seen at sporting events when the Free State teams compete against other provinces.

The Vierkleur (Four Colour) of the ZAR ^{14, 2}

The Boers living across the Vaal River in the Transvaal took much longer to find unity. Britain had already acknowledged the independence of the Boers in that area at the Sand River Convention in 1852. At the time there were four mutually independent groups centered around the towns of Potchefstroom (southwestern Transvaal), Schoemansdal (in the Soutpansberg area), Lydenburg (eastern Transvaal) and Utrecht (southeastern Transvaal). Their various leaders, which included Andries Pretorius, Hendrik Potgieter and Frans Joubert were mutually hostile and not prepared to take a lead from anyone else. In Potchefstroom, the Pretorius group used their former Natalia Flag (Fig. 8 Natalia Flag). The Republic of Natalia was annexed by Britain in 1843, and most of the Voortrekkers (Boer pioneers) then abandoned Natal and trekked back over the mountains to the Potchefstroom area as they did not want to submit to British rule again. In the Soutpansberg, Potgieter used the so-called *Kruisvlag* (Cross Flag) (Fig. 9 - Potgieter *Kruisvlag*). The origins of this flag is obscured in the mists of time. It resembles somewhat the Burgundian saltire whose dukes once ruled over the Low Countries and there may be a connection there. The Burgundian saltire was, however, raguly (Fig. 10 - Burgundian Saltire). In Lydenburg, a Dutch tricolour was used (Fig. 3 - Dutch Tricolour).

It was only in 1855 that a committee was formed to make proposals for a constitution and flag. A member of this committee, Jacobus Stuart and a land surveyor, Marthinus van der Hoff, both Dutch born, are credited with designing the flag that became known as the Transvaal Vierkleur (literally meaning four colour) (Fig. 11 Transvaal Vierkleur). A representative meeting in Potchefstroom, held on 16 December 1856, approved the flag and constitution. M. W. Pretorius, son of Andries, was elected the first President of the somewhat grandiosely named Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek. Frans Joubert was angry at not being elected to office and withdrew his delegation, refusing to acknowledge the new flag and constitution. It was not until 4 April 1860 that all the Boer inhabitants of the Transvaal recognized the flag.

Only fourteen years later, the flag was under threat and superceded for a short period. A new President, T. F. Burgers, elected in 1872, disliked the *Vierkleur* and persuaded the Volksraad to adopt the old *Kruisvlag*, with the red saltire fimbriated in white to conform to the rules of Heraldry. (Fig. 12 - The President's Flag). This action caused an uproar and six months later the Volksraad reversed its decision, reinstating the *Vierkleur* and designating the saltire as the President's Flag to be flown alongside the Vierkleur whenever the President is present. In 1877, the Transvaal was annexed by Britain, but after vigorous protests and a short victorious war from December 1880 until March 1881, the burghers (citizens) of the Transvaal regained their independence and the ZAR was restored along with the *Vierkleur*. It remained the national flag of the ZAR until 31 May 1902, when the Transvaal became a British colony for the second time.

As was the case with the Free State *Vierkleur*, the Transvaal flag was also incorporated into the Union flag in 1928 to represent the Province of the Transvaal, (Fig. 7 - Flag of the Union of South Africa). It also finally disappeared as a national flag at midnight on 27 April 1994. It is, however, also still in use by right-wing Afrikaner groupings at political gatherings, much as the Confederate Flag is often used by certain groups in the Southern States of the US.

UNITY FLAGS OF THE BOER REPUBLICS

Although attempts were made to unify the two republics from time to time, they remained fiercely conscious of their separate sovereignty and proud of their separate flags. However, when the OFS joined the ZAR in the war against the British, the support for the joint cause often found expression in the design of combination flags, incorporating the colours of both flags. None of these was in any way officially recognized and must be regarded as pure expressions of popular sentiment. In general, the *Vierkleur* of the ZAR, being the dominant partner, served as the basis for these combined colours.

The field of study on these combined flags is by no means exhausted, and the examples following hereunder are only those that I have been able to discover. It is thought that there may be others yet to be found as quite recently I came, quite by chance, in the Cultural History Museum in Cape Town upon an example not previously known. I was asked for my opinion on a faded brownish

cloth item that had been presented to the Museum along with a number of other family heirlooms. (Fig. 13 - *Diyatalawa Unity Flag, as now*). On closer examination, it turned out to be a Transvaal *Vierkleur* with a diagonal orange stripe across it. (Fig. 14 *Diyatalawa Unity Flag, original design*): It is thought to have been intended as a table mat and was knotted from silk strings by a Boer POW, H. J. Steyn in the Diyatalawa P.O.W. Camp in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). The strings must have been hand-dyed with homemade dyes as the colours are by now very faded. It is, as far as is known, the only one of this particular pattern in existence.

The most common version of unity flag was one with an orange bar added below the Transvaal *Vierkleur*. (Fig. 15 - *Taunge Flag*). It is known as the Taungs Flag because it was reputed to have flown over that village in the Northern Cape when it was briefly occupied by the Boer forces at the start of the war.⁹ One example, reputed to have been captured by the British at the Battle of Elandslaagte, is on display in the South African Museum of Military History in Johannesburg.⁹

Another version of unity flag was used by Gen. J. D. Opperman, one of the Boer commanders at the Battle of Spioenkop and it is now in the Fort Skanzkop Military Museum in Pretoria.⁹ (Fig. 16 - *Fort Skanzkop Unity Flag*). The inscription on the green bar translates as 'With God for Liberty'.

A further example is held in the Queen's Fort Military Museum in Bloemfontein,⁹ (Fig. 17 - *Queen's Fort Unity Flag*). The provenance of this flag is not known at present. Another unity flag was reconstructed from the shoulder patch worn by Mrs. J. J. van der Merwe in the Bethulie Concentration Camp to rub her patriotism in the faces of the British Camp guards. It is now preserved in the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein (Fig. 18 - *Mrs van der Merwe's Shoulder Patch*). It is not known if any flag of this pattern, the only one of this particular pattern known, was ever made, but it is thought likely.

A photograph is in existence showing Capt. Henri Slegtkamp, a Boer Officer at Spioenkop holding a *Vierkleur* with a thin diagonal orange stripe. There is lettering on the stripe, but the resolution of the photograph is not good enough for it to be read.¹¹ (Fig. 19 - *Spioenkop Flag*).

A final example of what was erroneously regarded as a unity flag, is the flag of the Afrikaner Bond, a political party in the Cape Colony (Fig. 20 - *Afrikaner Bond Flag*). This party was particularly strong in the northeastern Cape and when the Boer commandos invaded this part of the Cape, many Afrikaners joined them to become Cape Rebels. Two sources named this as a unity flag and I mentioned it, as such in my booklet *Sovereign Flags over Southern Africa*.^{14,4} The error was kindly pointed out to me by Mr. Michael Faul, editor of *Flagmaster*. How it came to be identified as a unity flag is not clear. Gerard mentions specifically that the flag was returned to South Africa from England in the 1930s and presented to the Old Transvaal Museum, the implication being that it had been taken to Britain as a war trophy. An historian of the northeastern Cape rebels informed me that he had found mention in his research of a combined flag used by these rebels, but no description was given.¹³ It is thought likely, although it must be emphasized that this is mere speculation, that these Cape rebels may have used their party flag to distinguish themselves from their republican compatriots.

UNIT FLAGS OF THE BOER FORCES

The organization of the Boer armies was probably unique in the world. The constitutions of the two republics were very similar in respect of the provisions for military service and organization. All male citizens between the ages of 16 and 60 years were liable for military service. When mobilized, each burgher had to report with horse, saddle, rifle, thirty rounds of ammunition and victuals for 30 days, all at his own expense. After 30 days, the Government would take over the provisioning. They received no pay while on campaign, as service in defence of their country was regarded as a civic duty.

The country was divided into districts and each district into wards. In each ward a field cornet was elected from amongst the prominent citizens of the ward. He assisted the district Landdrost (or magistrate) with the administration of the law, registration of births and deaths, and other similar administrative duties, within his ward. His functions resembled somewhat the roles of the sheriff in

the old American West. He had the additional responsibility of also commanding the men in his ward in the field whenever the commandos were mobilized. There were no fixed organizational tables or regimental formations. The whole military organization of the republics was built around the commandos. A commando consisted of all the men eligible for service in each district and therefore varied a great deal in size. When called out, the field cornets came together to elect, from their own ranks, a commandant to command the commando. The commandos were identified by naming them for the districts, towns or cities they came from. There was no military flag, or regimental colour traditions, and they went to war in their work-a-day clothes. The only uniformed formations in the Boer armies were their state artillery corps and police forces, but these also, as is the case world-wide, bore no colours.

It appears that there was nevertheless a desire among some of the commandos to identify themselves, or their home districts. So we find that the Barberton Commando defaced the national flag with their name as an identifying colour.⁹ (Fig. 21 Barberton Commando Unit Colour). How widespread this practice was or if it is the only example, we have not yet been able to discover.

A British war correspondent reported that many of the urban commandos had unit flags presented to them by the ladies of their towns of origin. One such was the Harrismith Commando (Wessels). (Fig. 22 - Harrismith Commando Unit Colour). The inscription on the flag translates as 'Patience and Courage' - the official motto of the Free State. The source for this information states that a captured flag of this design is held in the Queen's' Regiment Museum in Canterbury. I have not been able to discover if this means the original Canterbury in the UK or the one in New Zealand, or perhaps there is another elsewhere that I do not know about. This is the only swallow-tailed flag in Boer vexillology that I have thus far come across.

Some 2300 foreign volunteers from all over Europe and even the USA, joined the Boer forces. Although many of them joined the commandos, quite a few national units, called by the designation "corps", were formed. Thus there were two Dutch Volunteer Corps, a Scandinavian Corps (which was almost completely wiped out at the Baffle of Magersfontein), Italian, German, Austrian, and French Volunteer Corps as well as two Irish Volunteer Brigades. As far as I have been able to establish, only three of these foreign units adopted flags or colours. One was the Johannesburg German Volunteer Corps under the command of Colonel Schiel (captured at Elandsplaagte when his command suffered severe losses). Their colour was a Transvaal *Vierkleur* defaced with a shield in the post-1870 German colours of black, white and red. The shield is in turn charged with the complete arms of the ZAR and the whole framed in oak leaves.⁹ (Fig. 23 Johannesburg German Volunteer Corps Unit Colour).

Another with a defaced *Vierkleur* as a unit flag was one of the Dutch Corps. Which of the two it was, or if it was used by both, is not known, but there is a photograph in existence of a *Vierkleur* with the words 'De Hollandse Korps' on the white bar. (Fig. 24 - The Dutch Corps).

A rabid anti-British Irishman, Sean McBride organized the First Irish Volunteer Brigade in early 1899 when it became certain that war with the British was unavoidable. There was, however, no one with military experience among the volunteers and they approached John Filimore Blake to take command of the brigade. He was a very interesting and flamboyant character. He was born in the State of Missouri, grew up in Denton County in the State of Texas, went to the University of Arkansas in 1872, from where he won appointment to West Point in 1876. In June 1880 he graduated from West Point and was commissioned as a second lieutenant into the 6th U.S. Cavalry, then serving in Arizona Territory against the Apaches. After promotion to first lieutenant, he was put in command of the Apache Scouts and it is probable that he was involved in the last round-up of Geronimo and his band. He next attended the Indian and Cavalry School in Kansas and was thereafter appointed in command of the Navajo Scouts in New Mexico. He then became disgusted with the way the West was becoming tame and civilized, resigned from the U.S. Army, and departed for Africa as being the last wild frontier left. He started off as a gold prospector, eventually became a Transvaal citizen and carried out various tasks for the ZAR government, including surveying large parts of the territory. Blake served throughout the war to become one of the so-called 'bitter-enders', but I have not been able to find any references to his subsequent career and life. He was physically a big man who always went about in a large Mexican sombrero and a frontier jacket, which must have made him stand out among the conservatively dressed Boers. Major Sean McBride became his second in command.

There is evidence that the First Brigade had two different colours. One source stated that the first colour was presented to Colonel Blake by a Mrs Schultz after he was wounded on the Natal Front. Mention of this green flag is made in at least three sources that I have found.¹² It had a golden harp on a green field. (Fig. 25 First Colour of First Irish Volunteer Brigade). In another source there is a photograph of this flag, but the subtitle states that the colour was presented to the Brigade by Maude Gonne.³ Another source states that Maude Gonne organized the presentation of a second colour to the Brigade after it became known in Ireland that their first colour had been shot to ribbons. (The First Brigade contrived to be involved in all the major battles on the Natal Front, often directly opposed to their countrymen in the Royal Irish Regiment and the Dublin Fusiliers. They had the habit of defiantly displaying their green banner very prominently wherever they were placed in the line, thus inciting their enemy to use it as a target). This source also refers to the second colour as being the flag of the Fenian Uprising in 1867. It is described as consisting of three parallel bars with two Irish harps in the top and one in the bottom bar. The source does not, however, state how they were arranged spatially or what the colours of the bars were. ¹⁰ Taking into account Irish republican sentiment, it is presumed that these colours may have been the green, white, and orange. (Fig. 26 - Presumed Second Colour of First Irish Volunteer Brigade). The confusion about these colours was compounded when I was informed by a source in the Irish Society of South Africa that the flag of the Fenian Uprising was in fact the green flag with the golden harp! The matter of the two colours therefore still needs clearing up.

(Maude Gonne was a character in her own right. A well-known actress, she was reputed to be the most beautiful women of her time in the world. She was active in Irish politics and a founder member of Sinn Fein. She later married Sean McBride and was widowed when he was shot by a British firing squad after having been convicted of high treason for his part in the Easter Uprising in Dublin, as well as for fighting for the Boers earlier. She was later elected as a member of the first free Irish Parliament. She was so fiercely anti-British, that shortly after the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, she traveled all the way to the Netherlands to try and interest the Consul of the ZAR, Dr Leyds, in a scheme to mix dynamite in the bunker coal of the ships conveying British troops to South Africa! He reported to his government that he did not consider her to be very reliable).

A second Irish brigade was formed early in 1900 in Pretoria under command of Colonel Lynch. This brigade was Irish more in name than in membership as it is reported that only some 20% were actually of Irish extraction. Lynch was Australian born of a Scottish father and Irish mother. He graduated from Melbourne University with an engineering degree and then went to Ireland where he became a Fenian. He originally came to South Africa as a war correspondent, but he soon asked the ZAR government for a commission to raise a second Irish brigade, as he did not want to serve under Blake.³ Mention is made that the ladies of Pretoria presented the Irish Brigade with a colour. This could only refer to the Second Brigade as the First was formed in Johannesburg and already at the front with a colour. No description has been found of this colour.

The neutral foreign governments discouraged their citizens from becoming directly involved in a combative capacity in the war, as they did not want to have diplomatic problems with the British Government. Despite this discouragement, there are indications that some of these foreign contingents might actually have used their national flags for identification. There is a photograph in existence of a group of American volunteers displaying a small Stars and Stripes.

CONCLUSION.

It is clear that this is an aspect of South African vexillology that requires a great deal of further in-depth research. What I have discovered so far, provides only a tantalizing taste of what is for a Boer-descended South African, a fascinating subject. The approaching centenary of the commencement of the Anglo-Boer War has unleashed a flood of publications on various aspects of the war and ABW societies have sprung up all over South Africa to engage in all sorts of commemoration activities. It is to be hoped that this renewed interest will also throw more light on the vexillological aspects of the war, particularly on the Boer side.

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André Burgers retired from the S A Navy in 1990 as a Rear Admiral (jg) after 35 years of service. Early in his career he qualified as a Signals Communications Officer, which first stimulated his interest in flags. His particular vexillological interest lies in the historical origins and development of flag signalling all over the world.



Dutch volunteers (in the Boer War) unfurl their standard, from Eric Baschet, *Africa 1900 : A Continent emerges*, Zug, 1989, p. 217

André Burgers : Flags of the Anglo-Boer War, Col. Plate I

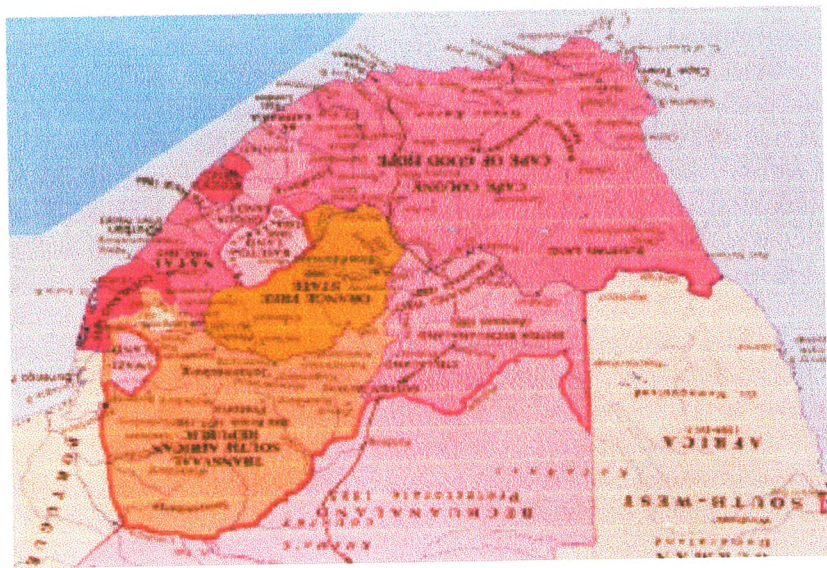


Fig.1

fig. 2

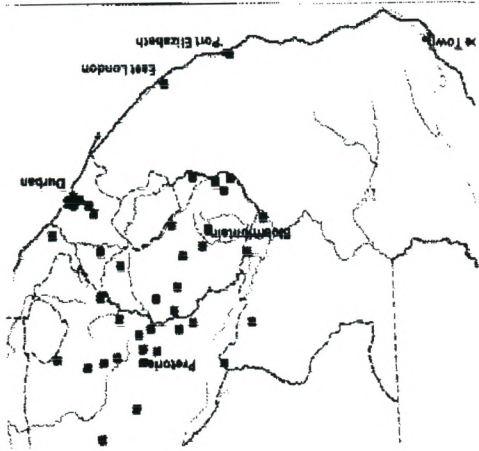


fig. 3



fig. 4



fig. 5

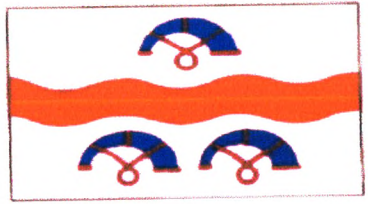


fig. 6

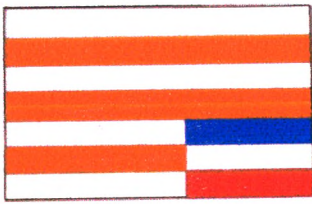


fig. 7



André Burgers : Flags of the Anglo-Boer War, Col. Plate II



fig. 8

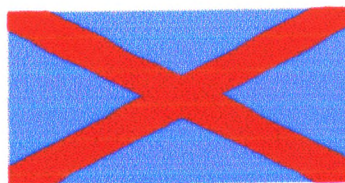


fig. 9

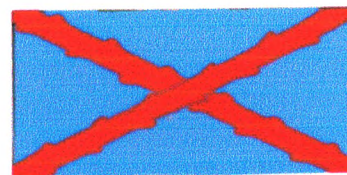


fig. 10



fig. 11

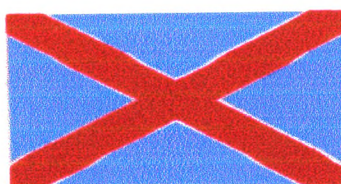


fig. 12

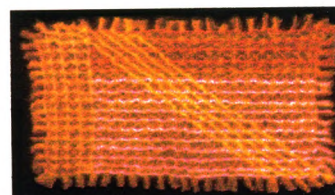


fig. 13



fig. 14



fig. 15



fig. 16



fig. 17



fig. 18



fig. 19



fig. 20



fig. 21

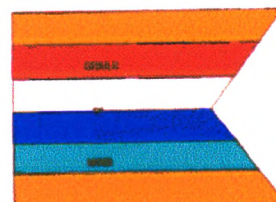


fig. 22



fig. 23



fig. 24



fig. 25

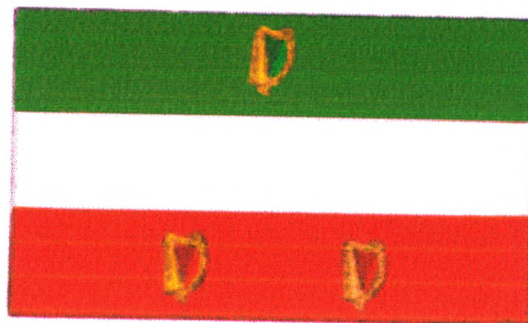


fig. 26