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A brief history of the development of Barrydale - Stephen Dugmore
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## Illustrations

The photographs and illustrations are by the author unless noted otherwise.

## Cover

The design symbolises architecture in a modern African context.

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Introduction

This article was originally a paper written in 1991 as part of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Cape Town (UCT). It is a brief history of the development of Barrydale in town planning and architectural terms. A number of possible reasons for Barrydale's formation are discussed, as well as an attempt to explain why Barrydale looks and functions the way that it does. An emphasis is placed on the early development of the town as it is the author’s contention that it is there that the answers will be found.

The factual information was obtained from the South African Library, the Cape Archives, the African Studies Library at UCT, the Built Environment Library at UCT, the Surveyor-General’s Office in Cape Town and the Barrydale Library.

Figure 1: Map 3320 1:250 000 Ladismith (2000).

Location, climate and vegetation

The town of Barrydale lies in the Tradouw valley approximately 60 kilometres east of Montagu and 50 kilometres north of Swellendam (Fig. 1). The Tradouw valley lies at the geographical point of transition from the Overberg to the Little Karoo. Barrydale is cradled by mountains on all sides - to the south and west by the Langeberg mountains which divide it from Swellendam and on the other sides by the slightly
smaller ‘rolling’ mountains typical of the Little Karoo. The Huis Rivier, or Tradouwshoek Rivier as it is also called, and various smaller mountain streams flow through the Tradouw valley, their sources being mainly in the Langeberg mountains to the south of Barrydale. Being a comparatively small town, Barrydale's sphere of influence has largely been confined to the Ladismith, Montagu and Swellendam areas with Swellendam being Barrydale’s closest and most influential neighbour.

Figure 2: Aerial photograph (date unknown).

Although Barrydale lies on the interface of the Overberg and the Little Karoo, the climate and consequently the vegetation tends more towards that of the Little Karoo than that of the Overberg. The valley lies slightly too far north of the Swellendam mountain range to catch most of the rain that falls along that mountain belt in the winter months. The fynbos, which grows in such proliferation along the Overberg mountain range, effectively ends at the north-eastern foothills of the Swellendam mountains and is replaced by the low shrubs and succulents of the Little Karoo. The ground is generally dry, rocky and hard although the banks of the Tradouwshoek Rivier for most of its length comprise good fertile land. Being in a low rainfall area, 355-400 mm per annum, has meant that Barrydale has traditionally relied on the rivers that flow out of the surrounding mountains for both its drinking and its irrigating water. The availability and access to water has therefore been a significant factor in the formation and development of Barrydale. The degree of its importance can be seen in the considerable attention paid to the control of water rights in the founding agreement signed by the van Coller brothers on 17 January 1878 (see appendix).
It is also interesting to note that, in the earliest records of the Barrydale Village Management Board and right through to the present day, the Tradouw area has frequently been referred to as being drought-stricken.

The origins of Barrydale and reasons for its development

The land which Barrydale occupies was originally a part of the loan farm Tradouws Hoek granted to Adolph Johannes van Coller on 1 September 1832 (Fig. 4). Petrus Johannes van Coller, brother of Adolph, was later to buy a half share in the farm. On 17 January 1878 the Van Coller brothers had the farm officially subdivided and made available a large portion for the formation of a town. Barrydale, as the town was named, was only officially recognised three years later on 6 February 1881 in the Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette - Government Notice No. 129 under the Village Management Act. Although no precise record can be found of the date on which the original town plan was laid out, it is known that M. Kannemeyer surveyed and planned the town sometime in 1878 (see Fig. 5).¹

The reason for the name 'Barrydale' is unclear. It undoubtedly refers to the Barry family who were very powerful traders and business people in the Overberg but it is not entirely clear why Barrydale should have been given their name. John Joseph Barry of Barry & Nephews was a major landowner in Barrydale in the early 1880s but had significant landholdings elsewhere too. In fact one of his head offices was situated in Swellendam at the time. The Barrydale Centenary book published in 1980 states that as well as being traders the company Barry & Nephews were also land surveyors and that it was not uncommon

¹ Reflected in the survey diagram of Lot 198. For some reason he failed to date the general survey diagram more precisely.
for land surveyors to give names to places, often using their own! (Van Niekerk 1980: 10-11). It is therefore possible that the original town plan could have been laid out by a land surveyor from Barry & Nephews and named after John Joseph Barry.

Figure 4: Survey diagram of Tradauwshoek (sic) Farm No. 65 (446/1832).

Figure 5: Original survey diagram of the settlement (Surveyor-General’s Office).
The Barrydale Centenary book gives as a reason for the formation of the town the fact that the Tradouw valley lay too far away from the neighbouring towns of Montagu, Swellendam, and Ladismith for 'dominees' to make the journey to preach on Sundays in the church. While there is certainly a large element of truth in this need for the facilitation of access to a religious centre, it is unlikely to be the only reason. In their studies of 19th century Cape villages, Derek and Vivienne Japha (1991) highlighted a number of other important issues that might have been causal factors in their formation. Some of these factors are outlined below.

The first factor is that it is quite likely that the town was formed because it was an economically attractive opportunity.
The 1865 census reveals that Tradouw must have been a fairly intensive farming area with some 587 people living in the small valley. It would surely have been a practical solution for farmers to sell their produce in a small commercial centre to dealers who would then transport the produce to the larger towns and to the coastal ports, or and in addition, to sell their produce at open markets in a public area. By 1878 Port Beaufort at the mouth of the Breede River was a thriving port, and a town situated where Barrydale is would have picked up on the trade passing to and from Port Beaufort and the interior. The Tradouws Pass had been opened a few years earlier on 27 October 1873 and would have significantly facilitated trade links between Swellendam and Tradouw. By 1878 all trade between Montagu and Ladismith, Ladismith and Swellendam and, to a lesser extent, between Swellendam and Montagu, would have had to pass through Tradouw. A local trading centre would thus have been increasingly necessary as the local population grew in size and the passing trade increased.

Even these factors, however, would not entirely account for the extent of the original town plan, nor for that matter for the patterns of land use that developed in the following years. A town plan derived from these factors alone would surely have focused exclusively on a commercial centre occupying the area abutting the public road to the interior and on the church itself. While there is clearly a focus on these areas, the town plan extends, in addition, all the way across the river and up onto the foothill south of the town. Perhaps, therefore, one of the strongest motivating factors for the formation of a town can be read from the layout of the town and the aspirations of the people who lived there in the 1990s. An aerial photograph of the town and a more recent panorama (Figs. 6 and 7) show the preponderance of agricultural land within the boundaries of the town itself. It is most likely that one of the primary keys to the town's formation lies precisely here - in the agricultural component (Japha & Japha 1991).

Figure 8: A view of the church across the green belt.

What, then, is this agricultural component and what were the aspirations of the Barrydale inhabitants in the 1990s? A limited number of people were interviewed as part of the research. The information gained could well be slanted, but there are nevertheless a few common threads that emerge. Many of the people living in Barrydale owned small pieces of land on which they farmed because they could not afford larger farms elsewhere. Colin Bundy (1988), in one of his many publications on the topic, has pointed out that
the growth of large-scale capitalist-type farms made it very difficult for the smaller farmer to compete in the market. The people spoken to in Barrydale were quite possibly victims of this phenomenon. Colin Bundy has also pointed out that this is not only a late 20th century phenomenon. The process of farm consolidation would have been in operation at the time of the formation of Barrydale.

This, coupled with various other factors including the Dutch custom of splitting farms between heirs, would have meant that many farmers would not have been able to compete in the agricultural market and at the same time carry the cost of running even a medium-sized farm. These individuals would have had to earn their incomes in other ways, often in urban centres. Barrydale, and many of the other Cape villages at the time, would have in a sense offered these farmers the opportunity of occupying the middle ground. These towns lay somewhere between agricultural and urban centres. Owning a piece of land in such a centre may have been a better option than having to move to a city, particularly for someone who wanted to be in the countryside. One of the distinguishing features of Barrydale in the 1990s was that it still occupied this middle ground whereas many of the other towns have outgrown their agricultural origins.

Figure 9:
Women preparing fruit for drying.

Figure 10:
This gargoyle in an old stone wall allows water from a reservoir into the open furrow below.

It is quite possible, therefore, that at least one of the common reasons for living in Barrydale in the 1990s would have applied in 1878 and that as a result the town was still functioning in a similar way. Many of the inhabitants spoken to were not personally born in the area but had had connections or family and
had moved there from the cities, preferring the country lifestyle. They would eke out a living by farming on a small scale or selling home products, dried fruits (Fig. 9) and so on, in order to enjoy the privilege of living in the country.

The same could have been true in Barrydale’s earlier days. A fact that seems to bear this out are the requests made by a number of residents to the early Barrydale Village Management Board for permission to sell ‘allerhande soort klein goedjies’ from their houses, and the frequent references made to (and disputes over) water for irrigation purposes, i.e. for agriculture. Both of these practices were still prevalent in the 1990s and highlight primary concerns.

In conclusion, it is most likely that the prospects for small-scale agriculture coupled with increasing passing trade made Barrydale an economically viable proposition. Both have certainly played a significant role in the definition of the character of the town and continue to do so. While it is undeniable that the church, too, had a large role to play in the formation of Barrydale, as it did in most 19th century Cape villages, it is unlikely that its influence was as extensive as it is made out to be in the Barrydale Centenary book.

Speculation could possibly have played a role in the formation of the town. A speculative venture seems very evident in the purchase of approximately 27 Lots by John Joseph Barry in 1879, (presumably at the first sale) and their subsequent sale to various other individuals over the next few years. Speculation, however, is really just an investment made on the prior recognition of the potential of the aforementioned factors.

Considering its relatively late development as a Cape village (most other villages had their origins in the 1850s), and the way that the town functioned in 1991, it is possible to conjecture that other towns would have looked and functioned similarly some sixty to seventy years ago. Barrydale has not progressed very far along the path of urbanisation, and while this poses certain problems for Barrydale today which will be discussed later, it does help to give a picture of how other 19th century Cape villages might have functioned.

The development of the town plan

As can be seen from M. Kannemeyer’s original plan for Barrydale (Fig. 5), most of the town was laid out in 1878, with smaller extensions being made around 1911, and the coloured township being added in 1959. The town is laid out on an orthogonal grid with eight Lots being allocated to form a typical town block. The orthogonal grid at first seems a particularly rigid device, but when one sees in reality the way that the contours of the town distort the grid vertically it becomes far less imposing.

The fact that all the Lots in the town were marked from the start also seems quite curious when one considers that there were initially only about twenty landowners who bought up large tracts of land. A first response is that it indicates an anticipation of future growth, although in reality what is more probable is that smaller units of consistent sizes were a convenient way of administering ownership of land and any subsequent transfers of portions. It effectively reduced the need for further surveying in the case of inevitable future subdivisions. What is interesting in the history of the town plan is the process of subdivision, and the way in which the ownership of property has changed over time, and the effect that this has had on the environment.

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2 There is evidence of J.J. Barry doing a similar sort of speculative venture in Robertson.  
3 The terms ‘coloured’ and ‘white’ are used throughout this article as they appear in all archival sources, and not as a matter of personal preference.
Figure 11: Ravenscroft view (Cape Archives R236).

Figure 12: Ravenscroft view (Cape Archives R240).
It appears that the Tradouwshoek River and the position of the old public road are the two major defining features of the town plan. The latter because of the passing trade and the need to transport products, and the former because of the more fertile land surrounding it. The town effectively straddles the river with most of the public and commercial buildings and a number of residences/smallholdings concentrated on what is now Van Riebeeck Street (the name changed from Frere Street in 1932). This street was then part of the main road from Montagu and Swellendam to Ladismith.

Figure 13: Ravenscroft view (Cape Archives R237).

Figure 14: Undated diagram showing Lot numbers.
The positions of buildings in the early development of the town are indicated in Figure 16. The locations of the buildings have been derived from specific notations in the Barrydale Rates records and from
obvious jumps in taxes on specific Lots in the Transfer tax records. Therefore the buildings are probably those of a relatively higher status, in comparison with outbuildings or workers' cottages which might not have featured at all in the records. It is clear from this diagram that the main foci of development were along Frere Street (the old public road), around the old church (which was apparently built before the formation of the town) and next to the river where the valley narrows.

Although subdivided into Lots of equal size to those along the main road, the Lots immediately adjacent to the Tradouwshoek Rivier, with almost no exception remained free of buildings from the formation of the town until the 1990s. This is primarily because of their suitability for cultivation. The scattered buildings south of the river were probably houses on smallholdings. This is again verified by the rates records which show that in most cases the Lots adjacent to those with buildings upon them were owned by the same owners. The pattern in 1991 was very similar, although the buildings are now much denser and the agricultural lands proportionally reduced.

The effect this layering has on the town is to divide it into three general zones - to the north, the public and economic 'centre' of the town with the main public road and some residential units, in the middle, a green strip of cultivated land flanking the river, and to the south, a residential/smallholding area. A fourth area is the coloured township over a small rise even further to the south. This stratification of the town is very apparent in the aerial photograph (Fig. 2).

A closer inspection of the Barrydale property valuations for the years 1881-1885 shows that 20 individuals had bought most of the available Lots in Barrydale by 1881 and the church owned almost all of the rest. The General Directory of South Africa for the years 1883-1884 lists 36 inhabitants in Barrydale of whom 34 were farmers and two were traders. What this means is that large numbers of Lots were consolidated into smallholdings for agricultural purposes. An apparent contradiction to this assertion is the fact that some of the owners of the Lots on Frere Street did not seem to own much other farming land. It is possibly because they used these properties as 'tuishuise' for weekend 'nagmaal'. One such example is that of a certain J.P. Fullard who bought Lots 29 and 30 and was registered in the Directory as farming outside of Barrydale at the time. Most of the properties on Frere Street, however, are water-erven measuring 208 roods in extent and would have been large enough for small-scale farming operations. It is very likely that many of them were used as such.

Considering such an obvious emphasis on farming, how could Barrydale have been referred to as a town at all in the 1880s? The clue possibly lies in the church and in the two traders mentioned in the 1883 Directory.

According to the Barrydale Centenary book, the old church was built on Lot no.3 in 1877 before the formation of the town. This would account for M. Kannemeyer indicating the position of the church on his original town layout dated 1878. Following the same line of reasoning, the parsonage was presumably built nearby (as indicated on Fig. 5), and the market (which is also demarcated on the diagram). The buildings in this area of Barrydale are definitely among the oldest buildings remaining. This area suggests a centre of development which might even have predated the development of the town. It would have made sense in functional terms to have had the market (and thereby the commercial centre) near the church for the occasions when people from outlying areas gathered for church services.

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4 These records are available at the Cape Archives.
5 This is immediately apparent in the aerial photograph.
6 Barrydale Valuation Book, Division of Swellendam 1881-1885 in the Cape Archives.
7 These inhabitants were all male and probably heads of families.
As early as 1885 there are signs of a second centre of development which, to a certain extent, would have moved the focus away from the church and parsonage. This centre is distinguished by a significant difference between the valuation of Lots on the corner of Frere and Bain Streets (namely Lots 41, 42, 61 and 62) and the general value of other water-erven in Barrydale. This value difference is explicable if buildings had been erected on these Lots. The fact that Lots 41 and 42 were owned by Adam Helfrich and Lots 61 and 62 by Max Alexander, who together constitute the traders mentioned in the 1883 directory, indicates that this corner was almost definitely the commercial centre of Barrydale in 1885 if not earlier. The reason for the exact location of this centre must have something to do with its central position on the old public road, then known as Frere Street.

The years 1885 to 1891 saw the lengthening of Frere Street and the start of more development in Tennant Street immediately behind it. By far the greatest number of Lots owned by an individual on Frere Street were those of the aforementioned Adam Helfrich. In 1891 a shop is listed in his name on Lot 31, a stable on Lot 32 and a building on Lot 37. It is clear that he was one of the more prosperous citizens of Barrydale and that he must have been satisfying a need for trade-related activities. This is further substantiated by his subsequent additional land purchases and also, more importantly, by the fact that most of the properties he owned in Frere Street had buildings on them by 1895.

The General Directory of South Africa for the years 1896 and 1897 does not list the farmers in Barrydale, but what it does show is that there had been a considerable expansion in the types of occupation of the inhabitants of the settlement, which would account for the increase in the number of buildings over the preceding years. The following job occupations are listed: a postmaster, 2 boarding house-keepers, 4 general dealers, 3 blacksmiths, a wagon-maker, 2 carpenters and a wheelwright. Interestingly Adam Helfrich and Max Alexander are not listed, both having sold off all their assets in the preceding years.

The relatively rapid growth of the village in the early 1890s tailed off slightly towards the turn of the century. However, almost in contradiction, there is a marked increase in job differentiation. This is evident in the General Directory of South Africa for the years 1902-1903. The following list of occupations is given: 10 agriculturalists, 1 miller, 3 carpenters, 3 transport riders, 2 ?FCs, 2 farriers, 4 store-keepers, 1 wagon-builder, 1 book-keeper, 1 water-bailiff, 3 blacksmiths, 2 masons, 1 minister, 1 shoemaker, 1 photographer, 1 gaoler, 1 hotelkeeper, 1 teacher, 1 butcher and baker and 1 Issuer of Process. Of particular interest in this list is the mention of the gaoler and the hotelkeeper. Based on this information, it is possible to determine that the court-house and jail, shown in Figure 17, might have been built sometime between 1897 and 1902. They do not remain today. The first hotel, which was situated on Lot 38 where a newer hotel is today, must also have been built during this period. The hotel is probably the building on the right in Figure 18.

Figure 17:

*The Magistrate’s Court (Cape Archives R228).*

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*8 The church was later moved closer to this new centre.*
Figure 18:

Scene from the Boer War (probably around 1900) which shows a number of double-storey parapet buildings in Frere Street (Cape Archives AG10714).

Figure 19:

An early parapet cottage in Frere Street.

Figure 20:

Parapeted cottages on the edge of the grid (Cape Archives R241).

It is difficult to determine when and where the new buildings were erected to accommodate the occupants mentioned above. Most landowners owned more than one Lot and the rates records for the period 1895-1909 link all the Lots owned by an individual under one figure. By 1909 there is definite evidence of only another five Lots having buildings erected on them. The Ravenscroft photographic
panoramas (Figs. 11-13 and 20), however, indicate a greater number of smaller cottages than the composite diagram (Fig. 16) indicates. Besides this difference, the overall density does not appear to be very different. What is clear is that the rapid development that occurred before the turn of the century had slowed down somewhat by 1910. What is of further interest in the Ravenscroft photographs are the number of smaller cottages lying on the Lots behind Frere Street, some of them even single-room dwellings. The parapeted cottages in the foreground of Figure 20 seem to be lying either on the topmost ‘droe-erwe’ or even on village commonage. These could quite easily be the cottages of coloured families.

The South African Directory for 1919 does not reveal a significant expansion in numbers or types of occupation from that of 1902-1903, with the exception of some administrative-type professions - 2 bankers and 2 attorneys. By 1920, the year in which Barrydale was granted municipal status, the public and commercial zone of the town closely resembled the configuration of today. What we see in Barrydale in 1991 is really an intensification of the infrastructure already existing in 1920. The major differences would be the increase in the density of the buildings and the style of some of the later buildings.

With the exception of the south-western corner of the town, there appears to have been almost no formal development in the second zone, namely the green cultivated strip, from 1878 to the 1990s. The rates records indicate a few buildings in the south-western corner as early as 1885. Just why they were built there is difficult to ascertain. The owners of the land were all farmers. Perhaps it was because of the shelter offered by the higher valley sides and the proximity of the water that made this a desirable spot on which to build. The rest of the green belt was left as agricultural land.

It is worth noting a strange anomaly in this zone that is marked on the original layout for Barrydale. Upington Street runs right through the centre of the green belt. There is no sign of this road having been built at all because it would have been impractical to have done so. It is strange that it was indicated in the first place.

The third zone of land-use (ignoring for the moment the coloured township which was formed much later) is very closely linked with this green belt in functional terms. The rates records show that most of this zone was also predominantly farming land owned by a limited number of farmers. In all likelihood there were very few buildings above the status of labourer’s cottages. It is only in the years 1891-1895 that there are records of buildings in this zone, and even then only four. It is possible that owners of one-roomed houses did not pay rates. The rates documents, therefore, do not give a very accurate picture judging by the number of small cottages that appear by the time in Ravenscroft’s photographs, of around 1910. What is clear, however, is that this zone was not nearly as built up as the zone that included Frere Street. Even in 1991 there were numerous fields interspersed amongst the houses.

The major changes that did occur within this zone, and for that matter in the green belt as well, occurred at the level of ownership of property. The rates records of the late 1880s reveal a splitting off of various individual, and sometimes groups, of Lots from larger consolidations. They were often purchased by owners of other properties. What was really happening is that they were merely being reshuffled amongst existing landowners. This process started to change in the late 1890s as newcomers began to buy into Barrydale. New names start appearing in the records during this period, many of which do not seem to be connected to existing families. These newcomers often bought out existing farmers completely, but there are also instances of subdivisions occurring. So much so that by the early 1900s there were very few individuals owning more than four Lots, most having sold off either individual Lots or more often groups of four (four being half a town block). This process of subdividing never reached the same level as that in other Cape villages, where many people own only the Lot on which they live. In Barrydale in 1991 there
were three or four landowners descended from the early Barrydale families who each owned up to 12 erven. Presumably most of the cottages evident in the Ravenscroft photographs would have been built during the period of subdivision.

Figure 21:
One of two barns which possibly date from around 1885.

Figure 22:
A cottage near the old school.

Spatial segregation
Considering the fact that throughout Barrydale’s existence there have been as many or more coloured than white families living in the area, it is unfortunate that so their history is so little documented. It is consequently very difficult to ascertain exactly where the coloured community lived in the early days. The Barrydale Centenary book states that prior to their removal to the location there were two ‘squatter camps’. Rooikamp and Kiemieshoek, as they were called, were situated on the southern and western peripheries of the town respectively (Van Niekerk 1980: 132-133). The name Rooikamp was given because there were a number of un-plastered brick buildings there. This may have been to save building costs.

It would seem therefore that the coloured community were kept to the outer limits of the town where they were forced to reside on municipal land for which they each paid 5 pounds rental. This was until their later forced removal to the new location. Prior to this it is possible that a few of them with ‘bywoner’ status may have resided within the town’s limits but there is no factual evidence currently available to confirm this. The Barrydale Centenary book states that during the ostrich boom many of the farmers who farmed ostriches allowed ‘bywoners’ or ‘deelsaaiers’ as they were also called, to plant and grow
vegetables on their land, a portion of which they could keep. The book does not specify, however, their racial classification.

In 1991 there were a number of families living as 'bywoners' on farms immediately outside the town, in buildings which probably date from Barrydale's earliest days. There is a reference in the letters addressed to the Village Management Board in around 1912 which expresses concern about having school children too close to the coloured houses east of the town. One of the 'bywoner dwellings', illustrated in Figure 22, is located very close to the school. It is possible that this was therefore a coloured residential area as well. The general picture therefore seems to be that the coloured workers were accommodated in general on the perimeter of the town, even from the early days. There is, however, insufficient evidence within the scope of this research paper to be certain.

The township which was formed in 1959 is quite pointedly known as 'Steek-My-Weg'. It is obvious that the township is located with concealment as the primary objective. It lies behind a hill to the south of the town and is not visible from any point within the town. There can be no other reason for its position, as the provision of water to the township involves a complicated system of pipes and pumps which would have been totally unnecessary had the township been placed elsewhere.

The configuration of the township is determined directly by the contours of the hillock on which it lies and the access route from the town. There are two shops in the location but other than that no focal point whatsoever. It has obviously not been designed with the intention of creating any central public space around which the community could organise itself. The streets of the location are nevertheless far more active than those of the town, serving as the public 'living room' for the residents.

The census reports do not specify what the occupations of coloured people in Barrydale were and it is therefore difficult to say with any certainty what the status of the coloured community was in that regard. The census for Swellendam, however, shows that most people were employed as labourers or domestic servants, and this probably applies to Barrydale as well. The same was true in 1991. There were a number of shop assistants, hotel staff, petrol attendants, and so on, but no higher-status jobs were filled by coloured people. Unemployment was a huge problem. Most of the farm labourers became redundant at certain times in the agricultural cycle and were then forced to live off the pensions of elderly people or move out.

With little information on the coloured community currently available, it is very difficult to determine their influence on the formation of the town.

The Barrydale Centenary book does make an interesting reference to a certain Marthinus Phillips, one of the convict labourers who built the Tradouw Pass and then went to live in Barrydale. He apparently became a stonemason and, according to the Centenary book, some of his stone buildings still stand. The building depicted in Figure 23 could possibly have been built by him. Marthinus Phillips is registered in the 1883 Directory of South Africa as a farmer but there seems to be no record of where he lived or of what his standing in the community was. Cornelius Gideon Kleinhans is reported to have been a clothes-maker and Jacobus Windvogel a 'tuiemaker'. There are also no records of whether they owned any land.

The coloured community would appear to have been much poorer than the white community, but it is incorrect to think that there were no 'poor whites' in the early days. According to the Barrydale Centenary book there were, at one stage in 1895, 22 white pupils in the 'sending' school, i.e. the coloured school. Their parents were apparently too poor to send them to a white school. Funds were raised and their
numbers were soon reduced to two pupils. There are also a number of letters in the Barrydale records from white families requesting exemption from rates and taxes on grounds of poverty. This suggests that there might have been closer links at the lower status levels between the coloured and white communities than the records show.

**An overview of the architecture of Barrydale**

The buildings of Barrydale for the most part are not particularly outstanding examples of period architecture; the architecture of Barrydale is mostly simple. Fransen and Cook (1985) suggest that besides one double-storey parapeted house there were no exceptional buildings remaining (see Fig. 25). This is not entirely true. Fransen and Cook tended to place greater emphasis on high status buildings of which there are admittedly few in Barrydale. There are a number of buildings of lower status which are noteworthy and many buildings which, although not exceptional in themselves, nevertheless give a definite character to the town. It is the pattern of land use and the town plan itself (with architecture operating in a supplementary way) that gives the 19th century Cape villages their characters. This is certainly true of Barrydale. Its unique character is defined more by the way the simple buildings are organised than by the great significance of individual buildings.

The other important point to stress about the architecture of Barrydale is that the early buildings belong to a later period than the early buildings of most other Cape villages. Derek and Vivienne Japha (1991: 28) viewed 1885 as a point of transition in other Cape villages, from ‘regional vernacular’ buildings, "inspired mainly by rural models", to buildings which had more to do with urbanity. This was about the time when buildings in Barrydale first started appearing.

Most of the older buildings in Barrydale date from as late as the 1880s and 1890s. Because the town developed somewhat later than others in the area, such as Montagu, Robertson, Swellendam and Ladismith, there are few buildings remaining from earlier days. Barrydale’s early architecture therefore falls more into that period where 'Britishness' was a stronger determinant of style than the earlier ‘Cape Dutch’.

The architecture of Barrydale also reflects far greater consistency in the status of the buildings than seems to be the case in other towns. Most of the buildings seem to have been defined more by practicality than by a need for hierarchy. This is not to say that there were no differences, merely that there are fewer buildings that can be considered of high status. While this could be a deception caused by the ‘blurring’ of visual distinctions, which the Japhas state was a result of, among other things, the availability of a whole new range of building components, most of the buildings are of similar scale and proportion. It is quite likely that there could not have been enough wealth to allow indulgence in more opulent types of buildings.

The two original farmhouses on Tradouws Hoek, indicated in Figure 2, may have reflected more of the earlier ‘Cape Dutch’ style, but they do not exist any longer and no records can be found of what they looked like. In the upper part of the town, along Tennant and Van Riebeek Streets, there are a number of gable-ended and parapeted cottages which are among the oldest buildings in the town (see Fig. 26). It is possible that some of these could date from the 1870s but the rates records indicate that most of them date from the 1880s. The Ravenscroft photographs (which probably date from around 1910) show that there were a great number of these buildings by that time. Many later buildings had stoeps with modest ‘broekie-lace’ detailing added (see Fig. 28). Only four or five buildings in the whole town still had thatched roofs in 1991. This is partly because many of the buildings would have been built with corrugated-iron sheeting which had been available from 1860.
Figure 23:
A stone cottage, possibly dating from as early as 1891 if not earlier.

Figure 24:
An early double-storey parapet building with later stoep addition.

Figure 25:
A double-storey parapet building dating from 1891 or possibly earlier.

It is ironic though understandable that the buildings that in their day must have been considered the least important architecturally, i.e. the outbuildings and labourers’ cottages, are today perhaps the most
important because they best retain their original character. It is also interesting to note from the Ravenscroft photographs the number of two-room and even one-room cottages. In contrast to other Cape villages there are relatively few double-storey buildings, another indication of less access to capital.

The best preserved of the older buildings is one of the few double-storey parapet buildings (Fig. 25). It is located in Van Riebeeck Street and was built at least as early as 1890. In 1991 it still had most of its original detailing but the interior was in urgent need of repair. This building in fact comprises three living units and might have been used as ‘tuishuise’ on the weekends.

Figure 26:
One of the earliest recorded gable-ended cottages, but with new windows and doors.

Figure 27:
One of the old rectangular cottages in the northeastern part of the town, which was in fact the old school and possibly dates from as early as 1885 if not earlier (original photograph very discoloured).

Figure 28:
A typical rectangular gable-ended cottage with stoep addition.
Figure 29:
One of the two existing villas with return on the stoep, which seems to have been a clipped gable cottage.

Figure 30:
A hipped roof villa with typical loft space access.

Figure 31:
The parsonage (Cape Archives R23).
Besides the modern buildings, which date from the 1940s to the present day, the majority of the remaining buildings are what Derek and Vivienne Japha refer to as ‘villas’. Most of these date from around the turn of the 20th century. Many of these are gable-type cottages with stoep additions (as in Fig. 29). Here again, by 1991 few had most of their original detailing intact and the Ravenscroft photographs do not show many of their facades. It is therefore difficult to comment on them architecturally. The phenomenon of closing in the stoeps seems to have been as popular here as elsewhere. Many of these buildings have had their doors and windows replaced, which decidedly alters their character. The villas are mainly rectangular or asymmetrical, with one stoepkamer. There are only two villas with returns on their stoeps (see Figs 29 and 34) and no double-storey villas. There are three villas with hipped roofs discernible in the Ravenscroft photographs. By far the most common type of window used in the early
buildings was the six-pane sash window. This was later replaced by two-pane sash windows of larger proportions.

Most of the original public buildings have been demolished and those that remained in 1991 dated from the 1930s or later, the church being an exception. The old church, which was built in 1877, is the oldest recorded building in Barrydale. It is the building with three window openings on either side of a central door in Figure 32 (left). The Barrydale Centenary book states that the contractor for this building was W. Fullard (snr) and his assistant was Adam Plaatjies. The present church was completed by 1908 and cost just over 5000 pounds, by far the most expensive building at that time. The church had to sell off a number of Lots to raise the funds.

The parsonage indicated in Figure 31 is untraceable, which is a pity as it indicates what some of the higher status houses in Barrydale might have looked like before alterations. The rates records report three different parsonages, presumably of increasing status as the town grew in prosperity. The present parsonage (Fig. 36) is of lower status than the one depicted in the Ravenscroft photograph.

Figure 34:
Apart from the new windows, a well preserved villa with a return on the stoep.

Figure 35:
An asymmetrical hipped-roof villa with new window replacements.
Figure 36:
The present parsonage, an old rectangular parapet cottage with a new stoep addition.

Figure 37:
One of two barns which possibly date from around 1885.

Figure 38:
A very old cottage in the Barrydale area.
Materials and methods of construction

With regard to the type of materials and methods of construction used in the early buildings, the Barrydale Centenary book contains an interesting oral account (Van Niekerk 1980: 36-37). Although it is an oral account given by an old resident and should therefore be treated with caution as a piece of factual information, it is nevertheless still relevant to a greater understanding of those earlier buildings. A translation from the Afrikaans reads as follows:

"It didn't cost much to build a building in those days. There was plenty of river-sand to pour in a layer for your foundation bases once you had dug them. The sand just had to be collected and brought to the site. The clay was cut out, thrown in a pile, covered in straw and trampled by animals - horses, mules or donkeys - which walked in a circle with harnesses attached to their necks and driven by a man in the centre. When the clay was well trampled the bricks were made and after being wind-dried, they were packed in an oven. It was a type of procedure that everyone knew because they had watched and learnt it from older people. The brick-oven was packed and ventilation passages built in. A layer of sloppy clay was spread on top of the oven and the bricks were burnt with wood gathered from the surrounding mountains or even with guarri-wood from the Karoo. So apart from labour the bricks cost you nothing. The stone for the foundations was ‘nabankklip’ which you just broke up right there. Doors and windows were made by the people themselves or there was someone nearby who could do it for you. Yellowwood was plentiful then. Even the hinges for the doors and windows and the 'bolts' for the roof timberwork were made up by the smith for you at a very low price. And if you wanted to save even more on this then all you needed was an iron peg and some tough ox-leather to make a hinge. In place of a screw you could drill a hole and knock a wooden dowel into it. It held almost better than a screw which would later rust. The rafters for the roof were mostly poplar beams which you sawed yourself.

And with the roof itself, there was only labour involved and no expense. The thatch was cut and put into water to get rid of the greenness. Reeds were pulled out in the river - not cut, but pulled out - to make the twine to bind the thatch. These reeds were beaten with a yoke and well softened. Just before use they were wetted. I would say that they held better than machine-made twine or any other twine.

And if you wanted to test your bricks you put them in water in the evening and if they looked as good in the morning and no part had dissolved then they were right. The laying of bricks was also not the work of an artisan. The people taught themselves. And no cement was necessary, just well pounded clay. The same went for the plastering. If you wanted to whiten your walls you needed chalk. It didn't cost much and you could get it yourself from shells at Witsand or other places at the sea. You burnt the shells to get chalk. The man and his family took a holiday at the same time.

The floors were made of clay which had been pounded extra well or 'knitted'. For a shiny floor you added raw linseed oil and later polished the floor with the same oil. An even more durable floor was a peach-pip floor. The pips from the peaches dried in the summer were kept. If you needed more you paid your neighbour's children by the paraffin-can full. But making a peach-pip floor is back-breaking work.

There is nothing better than beeswax to polish your woodwork. Yellowwood looks especially good when polished well with beeswax.

Then your building was finished and all you needed was furniture and window-panes."
It is obvious that the references to cost in the above translation are not to be taken seriously, otherwise the information seems to be fairly reliable. It should also not be forgotten that this is a description of only one particular type of construction.

**Conclusion**

It would seem that Barrydale arose out of very similar circumstances to those that Derek and Vivienne Japha have highlighted in their studies of 19th century Cape villages. The major distinguishing features of Barrydale are a result of its having started somewhat later than most other Cape villages. This lends it a particular academic interest, not least because Barrydale’s pattern of land-use in 1991 seemed, in many respects, to be similar to the patterns that could have been operating in other villages much earlier in their development. Of significance is the role that agriculture has played in most Cape villages and the role that it continued to play in Barrydale in the 1990s.

Barrydale is quite possibly a living picture of some specific stages in the development of other Cape villages from which valuable deductions can be drawn.

**Bibliography**


Donaldson & Hills, Western Province Cape Colony Directory, 1902-1903.


Cape Archives: Barrydale Valuation Book, Division of Swellendam, 1881-1885.

Appendix

Original Agreement

VOORWAARDEN

Waarop de Bezitters van Tradouw's Hoek een overeenkomst zijn en gedeeltelijks hun landplaat en aangrenzende Grond in Erven te verkopen, ten einde een Nieuw Dorp te stichten.

Zij het kennelijk dien het moge aangaan.

Dat wij Ondergetekenden, PETRUS JOHANNES VAN COLLER en ADOLPH JOHANNES VAN COLLER, als Bezitters voornamelijk aan de een kant, en DE WEL-KEREN HEEREN A. MACGREGOR, S. HOFMEYR en den Onderling den Heer JAN DANIEL DE WEIT, als Commissie tot vermeerdering van Gemeenten in den Swellendamschen Ring aan den anderen kant, overeengekomen zijn:

Ten Eerste. De Ondergetekenden nemen aan, de Erven van het Nieuwe Dorp met den Weigron, zoo als aangewezen is, te doen opmaken en verkooopen voor hunne eigene Rekening.

Ten Tweede verbonden zij zich om den vollen stroom Water van de plaats Tradouw's Hoek af te staan aan gemeld Dorp Drie en een Half dagen (3½) en Drie (3) Nachten, beginnende met Donderdag Morgen tot 6 Ure tot Zondag Middag tot 12 Ure van Elke Week, het Water te leveren bij de Dammen in de Rivier Verder zal in de overige dagen en nachten der Week Drinkwater naar het Dorp moeten hooppen, als volgt:

In de Watervoor aan de Noord Zijde van het Dorp Twee en een Half Duim (2½), en in de Watervoor aan de Zuidzijde van het Dorp (1½) Een en Een Half Duim door Sluiteren, waarvan de Gaten minstens Zes Duim onder de oppervlakte van het Water moeten geplaatst worden, en de Watervoor niet breder te zijn dan Twee Voet.

Verder verbonden zij zich om den Dorpbewoners toe te staan de Watersloot over de plaats loopende tot naar de Dammen schoon en in goede reparatie te houden tegen Waterverspilling, en beloven daarin behulpaam te zijn.

Ten Derde verbonden zij zich om de noodige Erven voor Kerk en Pastorie af te staan aan den in der tijd te kiezen Kerkeraad der op te richten Gemeente, of ten dienste door den Ring te benoemen Commissie.

Ten Vierde verbonden zij zich elk Erf te verkopen met eene jaarlijkse Belasting van (10s.) Tien Stilling's Sterling per Erf, ten behoeve van het Predikants Salaris in der tijd, betaalbaar van afd den Verkoopdag.


De tweede Ondergetekenden keuren bij deze goed, op bovengenoemde Voorwaarden het aanleggen van een Dorp, op de Plaat Tradouw's Hoek, door bovengenoemde Bezitters. Aldus overeengekomen te Tradouw's Hoek, op heden, den 17den Januari, 1878.

Als Getuigen:

Get. M. KANNEMEIJER,
J. S. P. BRUWER.

Geteekend:

P. J. VAN COLLER
A. J. VAN COLLER,
A. McGRGOR,
S. HOFMEYR,
J. D. DE WEIT

Eerste
Ondergeteekenden.

Tweede
Ondergeteekenden.
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### Deed of Transfer, Lot 198

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