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Turrell, Rob

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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by: Rob Turrell

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KIMBERLEY'S CLOSED COMPOUNDS: A MODEL FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN COMPOUNDS.

Rob Turrell

While it is by now conventional wisdom that the compound 'provided the framework for the total exploitation of ... black workers',[1] it has often been assumed by historians that the late nineteenth century closed compounds at Kimberley provided a superior material and social environment to their imitators on the Rand and in Southern Rhodesia.[2] This assumption has been based on diamond mine owners' claims to have created an attractive social microcosm in their compounds, in which African workers were forced to spend their non-working lives for the duration of a contract. Moreover, the mine owners argued that it was these model social welfare compounds that compensated for a worker's loss of freedom. And it was a measure of the validity of their claim, they continued, that the mines never went short of labour and thus did not need to resort to labour recruitment.[3]

This view of model diamond compounds in the 1880s and 1890s is a mine owner's myth. In the areas of accommodation, diet and health care, early Kimberley compounds were not markedly superior to the standards found in early Rand and Southern Rhodesian compounds. Van Onselen has compared conditions in these latter two mining regions and shown that, of the two, Rhodesian compounds were worse. The effects of inadequate compounds can most clearly be seen in the high death rate on Rhodesian mines:

> ... if the death rate due to syphilis, phthisis and underground accidents was alarming, the three causes together accounted for deaths in hundreds; but the industry's parsimony over food and accommodation produced deaths numbered in thousands. The greatest killers of all on Rhodesian mines were diseases which could be directly attributed to the inadequate diet and poor standards of accommodation for workers.[4]

The death rate on Rhodesian mines was at its worst in the early twentieth century. Between 1906 and 1915 the mines employed an average of 28,000 African workers and over this period the death rate averaged 43.40 per thousand.[5] It is against this record that this essay seeks to measure the model compounds of Kimberley.

In the 1870s African mine labourers in Kimberley either lived on their employers' compounds, which were a combination of residence and work-place, or they fended for themselves in the numerous camps or locations. In the late 1870s the mine owners attempted to subject migrant African labourers to a more systematic industrial discipline. Part of this process was to separate mine labourers from the townships of Kimberley and to force them to live on their employers' compounds. In 1879 the state endorsed the compulsory board and lodging of servants on employers' compounds. These were open in the sense that Africans were free to go on the town. But at this time the mine owners failed to find the class unity to enforce this measure in the face of African resistance.

In 1882, after the transformation of the mines from individual into joint-stock company ownership, a more detailed compound structure was developed 'It shall be the duty of each employer to house his Native servants', reported a Joint Committee representing the four mines,

> to supply them with food and drink; to surround each compound with a corrugated iron fence; to erect a gate or gates, and to employ a gate-keeper or keepers, whose duty it shall be to prevent any other than the servants of such employer entering such compound ...

Here compounds were simply barracks to accommodate the 20,000 strong African work force. In the early 1880s these remained open institutions and housed the majority of African mine labourers.

At the turn of the decade the mine owners began to talk of transforming open into closed compounds. The original discussion was informed by a description of slave labour control on the Brazilian diamond fields.[7] In Kimberley, closed compounds were to be the means of maintaining tight control over African migrant workers, who would be confined for the duration of a contract.

In April 1885 the first compound was closed by the Kimberley Central Diamond Mining Company (DMC), the richest company in Kimberley mine. In late 1885 the De Beers DMC, the premier company in De Beers mine, began to build a compound for its free workers and closed it in June 1886. In the poorer mines of Bultfontein and DuToitspan the pioneer in this field was the Bultfontein Mining Company. By March 1889, when the controlling interest in all four mines had been acquired by De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, the mine work force of 10,000 Africans was

confined in seventeen closed compounds: three for Kimberley mine, two for De Beers mine, seven for Dutoitspan mine and five for Bultfontein mine.[8]

The prevention of diamond theft and the elimination of illicit diamond buying (IDB) have been the most common explanations among historians for the development of closed compounds at the Kimberley mines.[9] As has been argued elsewhere,[10] this view is too simple, abstracting one factor from a complex process of capital accumulation and class struggle. Rather, the construction of closed compounds in the 1880s was integrally related to the development of industrial capitalism in the diamond mines and was one of the ways in which the mine owners restored profitability in the crisis of 1882-1885. Closed compounds were critically linked to the development of underground mining, which required the investment of large amounts of capital. The rapid concentration and centralization of capital that underground mining required also dictated a more rigorous control of migrant labour, the unregulated scarcity and abundance of which had persistently hindered the process of accumulation. In fact, the closed compound system was the effective form in which the diamond mine owners came to terms with migrant labour.

Crucially, the development of the productive forces through underground mining entailed a fundamental change in the social organisation of production and in particular in the exercise of authority and supervision in the work-place. It is not, however, the purpose of this essay to describe this re-organisation of production. Nonetheless, it is, perhaps, worthwhile to summarise the major features of those changes that were affected by the introduction of closed compounds.

Closed compounds had a complex impact on the employment of Africans in the labour process and a number of points can be made. Closed compounds were, in part, a response to a growing concern over the inefficiency of labour. 'Raw' Africans, unaccustomed to mine work, had to be driven by overseers in the open mine. But underground, super-vision was more difficult and mine managers resorted to piece-wages to increase output. The move from time-wages to piece-wages required greater endurance and skill from African miners. In this connection, compound coercion contributed to regular employment or regular re-employment which provided a pool of labourers who knew mine work. Moreover, not only was supervision difficult underground, but discipline also posed a problem for mine management. White contractors, who organised excavation and extraction underground, were assaulted by labourers resisting super-vision and greater output demands. In this respect, closed compounds acted to contain violence in the work-place. And finally, the establishment of closed compounds had a depressive effect on wages. Unskilled wages were reduced as bargaining was restricted and consumption collectively organised by the mine owners.

The introduction of closed compounds also had important effects on the rest of the mine work force. In the 1880s and 1890s this remainder made up between 10 and 20 per cent of all workers. They were European and Coloured workers, largely employed as overseers and artisans. In the period of open compounds their employment was dependent on a constant supply of African labourers. But with African mine labourers incarcerated in closed compounds, this dependence ended. Although the compound system meant the employment of less overseers, it provided regular employment. And regular earnings were the key differential separating the privileged workman from the mass of unskilled manual workers. This differential was further reinforced by the exclusion of European and Coloured mine workers from closed compounds. In turn, exclusion made non-African workers more dependent on management for class alliances, social position and notions of respectability.

Underground mining led to the introduction of skilled underground miners with previous experience in coal, ironstone or metalliferous mining. In this process the balance of numbers within the non-African working class shifted in favour of these new miners, while unskilled open-mine overseers found themselves at the cutting edge of redundancies. Nonetheless, the position of non-Africans as a privileged stratum in the work force was entrenched and they colluded with management in the subordination of African labour. In effect, closed compounds sealed a rigid division of labour between unskilled African workers and non-African operatives, artisans, miners and supervisors, a racial division of labour which was supported, in 1885, by the introduction of South Africa's first legal industrial colour bar.[11]

This essay will deal with three themes in relation to closed compounds. First, it will examine the way in which closed compounds were modelled on convict stations. Then it will analyse Kimberley compounds as a model for labour control where Africans still retained independent access to the land. And finally, it will expose the mine owners' myth of Kimberley compounds as a model of social welfare.

CONVICT LABOUR

Convict labour was preferred to free labour in unskilled occupations in the mining industry. The De Beers DMC, which in 1885 was the first company to employ convicts on a regular basis, pronounced that convicts were 'superior to free labour in quantity, quality and reliability'.[12] De Beers derived three essential advantages from convict labour. Firstly, the length of time convicts stayed as workers increased their productivity. 'It is by far the best native labour we have', reported Gardner Williams, General Manager of De Beers DMC, 'owing to the fact that the convicts are obliged to remain for a considerable

length of time, while the free natives work only about two months at a time'.[13] Secondly, whereas free labourers worked only as hard as they had to, the whiplash of the convict guards coerced more output per unit from convict workers. This was the crux of the advantage that De Beers drew from labour 'so completely under its own control'.[14] And thirdly, it was able to prevent theft far more rigorously with convict than with free workers. So advantageous was the employment of convict labour that De Beers DMC increased the number employed from 220 to 809 between 1885 and 1894 and continued to employ convicts until 1932.[15]

Moreover, convicts were less expensive to maintain and discipline than free labour. In 1885 Charles Rudd, a director of De Beers DMC, announced that 'convict labour was not very much cheaper than free labour',[16] having recently built a convict station and taken over 200 convicts 'completely off the hands of the government'.[17] In 1887 convicts at £58 a year per man, including guards, food and clothing were a little cheaper than free labour at £65 a year. In 1889 convicts cost De Beers £52 a year per man and free labour a little more; in 1891 convicts cost £54 10/- a year per man and free labour £46 16/-; and in 1894 the cost of convicts was reduced to £39 10/-, which equalled the cost of free labour.[18] The decline in wages of free labour from a high of over 30/- a week to 12/- a week in 1894 was a direct consequence of amalgamation, compounds and the use of convict labour as a constant reserve of workers. In fact, convict labour had the most depressive effect on wages in 1890 when the number of convicts employed was doubled to 700, which resulted in a 'large decrease in the number of free labourers'.[19]

Convicts were employed breaking up the *blue* (the diamondiferous ground) on the De Beers DMC floors (where the ground was laid out to weather after extraction from the mine) and at the sorting tables. They worked thirteen hours in summer and nine and a half hours in winter, a labour time which was two hours longer than the hard labour regulations of the Prison Department, but no longer than the hours worked by free labour. They were controlled by government-appointed, but company-paid Zulu guards, initially one to every five convicts, a ratio which widened to one to every ten convicts by 1891. However, discipline was impossible to impose simply through physical force and convicts were paid rewards of -/3 to -/10 per carat on found diamonds. 'A convict who has been punished for a misdemeanour', wrote R.G. Scott, De Beers Convict Superintendent, 'has it so completely in his power to revenge himself on his employees either by sweeping the diamonds from the sorting tables or burying them in the soil with his heel from which he is now deterred by thoughts of his own interest'.[20] Nonetheless, parliamentary compaints began to be made when it appeared that convicts left their terms of labour with more money than free

labourers. In 1892, the 1886 percentage rates were reduced to four and a half per cent per carat or a maximum of £15 per term of service.[21]

De Beers DMC began its negotiations with the Cape government for convict labour in October 1884. They asked for 300 convicts for floor work with an option for as many more for underground work once De Beers mine was one holding. The company built a convict station out of sun-dried bricks. The state provided the labour, while De Beers provided the material at a cost of £5,200. From January 1886 the company was given a government contract for the free service of 300 convicts in exchange for company maintenance and discipline of the convicts in the station. In 1888 the government re-negotiatied the contract and charged the company -/3 per day per man, a sum De Beers was glad to pay. It should be noted that the Bultfontein Mining Company (owned by Ochs Brothers, renowned London diamond broker) was the only other company to hire, but not accommodate, convicts.[22]

The quality of clothing, food and accommodation in the De Beers Convict Station was superior to the same provided in the Kimberley and Beaconsfield gaols. Convicts were issued thick jumpers, moleskin trousers, felt hats, boots 'when necessary', three blankets in winter and two in summer and two sacks sewn together which formed a pillow and pallaise to sleep on. As to diet, meat was the crucial indicator of strength as hard labour could not be performed on a mielie meal diet. At the convict station the regulation diet included 1 lb of meat per man per day. In addition convicts were entitled to a daily ration of one and a half pounds of bread, eight ounces of meal, one pound of vegetables, one ounce of salt and one quart of soup. In the Kimberley gaol convicts sentenced to over three months hard labour were on a less beneficial meal diet, while under that term they were confined to mielie meal diet. In 1884 rations were reduced and 350 long sentence convicts went on strike. As a consequence rations were reduced below subsistence and this in turn led to an outbreak of scurvy. In fact, rations in the Kimberley and Beaconsfield gaols were so poor that bad health kept a quarter of hard labour convicts on the sick list. For De Beers DMC it was more economical to feed its convicts adequately. Similarly with accommodation, although more attention was devoted to searching facilities than to convict comfort. Convicts were searched on entry to and exit from the station. They stripped in the search houses adjoining the station and went naked to their cells where they assumed their blankets.[23]

De Beers DMC had initially asked for 300 long-service convicts, which meant prisoners sentenced to over three months hard labour. However, as the Public Works Department had a first option on convict labour, the De Beers Convict Station seldom accommodated its full

quota before 1888. In June 1887 the company was forced to take convicts sentenced to less than two months. When the convict contract was renegotiated in 1888 a long-service prisoner was re-defined as a convict sentenced to two months hard labour and over. Through this re-definition the state shuffled off into private hands the costs of catering for prisoners in over-crowded prisons, the Kimberley gaol holding 820 inmates when it had been 'designed' for 400 men and women.[24]

The enormous number of pass convictions kept the De Beers Convict Station well supplied with labourers. For many 'raw' Africans their introduction to the diamond city was a transit through the Kimberley gaol to the De Beers Convict Station. There their cheap coerced labour went to swell the growing dividends paid to De Beers DMC shareholders. Between July 1884 and June 1887 an annual average of 6,702 Africans were arrested and 3,096 convicted for pass offences. In the same period an annual average of 8,708 persons were convicted and sent to the Kimberley gaol.[25] However, pass offenders did not become the trained workmen that the company required. By the 1890s De Beers no longer drew its convict labour from Kimberley. Other stations sent their long-term prisoners to Kimberley and the majority came from the Transkei, while others came from Dordrecht and Middelburg.[26]

The tight discipline and systematic searching that was possible with convict labour on the floors provided a model for free labour employed both on the floors and underground. 'In these convict barracks, or branch gaol', wrote the Mine Inspector,

> the perfection of the compound system may be said to have been reached. The only important difference being that between compulsory and voluntary service.[26]

Initially the difference between compulsory and voluntary labour was an important difference, but the primary function of the closed compound system was to obliterate that distinction.

CLOSED COMPOUNDS

The mine owners derived great economic advantages from the closed compound system and presented compounds as the product of their paternalism and concern for the welfare of their workers. Thus, on the one side of the compound coin was the great economic benefit to mine owners of total control over African labourers, while on the obverse side lay the great social benefit of protection from the various forms of vice that pervaded the mining townships of Kimberley. Whenever opponents of the compound system laid the charge of slavery, the mine owners pointed to the moral and material degradation of Africans prior to, and the improvement in their well-being after the institution of closed compounds. To ascertain whether this coin has not

been debased through overuse, both sides need to be re-examined.

The primary advantage of compounds to the mine owners lay in the constant supply of mine labourers it provided. Here re-contracting was the key to the growth of a pool of experienced mine labourers. Contracts commonly ran for two months in De Beers and Bultfontein mines while they lasted for three months in Kimberley. In all the mines Africans re-contracted for additional time, while in the latter mine 'the majority re-engage for further periods up to nine months, in some cases remaining for eighteen months'.[28] This was the best evidence, argued mineowners, that Africans appreciated the compound philanthropy of their masters.

Re-contracting was most often not the choice of African labourers, but the product of compound coercion. The introduction of compounds, without Parliamentary sanction, abolished what vestige of protection the Masters and Servants Acts gave to Africans. Breaking a contract on the part of a servant had always been a criminal offence and Africans had always weighed the pros and cons of entering such a dangerous bond. But the one advantage registration of a contract did hold was that legally contracts came to an end, at which point servants could withdraw their labour from one employer to offer it to another or some could leave for home. Incarceration in a closed compound blurred this choice and by 1890 had obliterated the distinction between free and unfree labour.

Between 1885 and 1891 no compounded African was freely contracted. The Registrar received a list of names from compound managers; he wrote out contracts and then re-delivered them to the compounds.[29] In 1891 the Registrar went into the compounds to contract workers. Nonetheless, numerous Africans remained uncontracted. In the largest compounds, the De Beers West End compound, a compound which grew from a complement of 400 in 1886 to 2,300 in 1888 to 2,900 in 1895 (half the mine work force), at least one-third to a half of the labourers were continually uncontracted.[30]

There were a number of reasons for this. Companies regulated the number of labourers they allowed to leave the compounds. When there were others to take their place all was well. But when competition from the Gold Fields became too strong or seasonal fluctuations too sharp, Africans were coerced into remaining and there was little the Registrar or the Protector of Natives could do about it. Secondly, not all compounded Africans were in full employment. For example, when the Bultfontein Mining Company stopped washing 120 of 500 compounded Africans became unemployed and continued to live on their savings. In 1888 the unemployed proportion in the Kimberley Central compounds was generally 200 out of 1,200 Africans. At the same time Africans in the De Beers compound only worked a four-day week. Thus, not only did compounds give mineowners a constant supply of labour, but they also retained a reserve pool of labour to fall back on in time of strikes or disasters.[31]

The first compounds to be closed accommodated recruited labourers. The Kimberley Central DMC had been recruiting labour since 1881 through Natal from Inhambane under the organisation of Reuben Benningfield, a director.[32] When it compounded its underground workers in April 1885, they were all recruited, the extra costs being recovered through abnormally long one-year contracts. Before De Beers DMC closed its free compound, 'arrangements' were made with chiefs in Basutoland, Bechuanaland and the Transvaal 'for a continuous supply of labourers'.[33] In October 1885 the Bultfontein Mining Company compounded its Zulu sorters, who were contracted for six months. They were not paid weekly like other labourers, but at the end of the contract.[34] Recruitment and delayed payment were part of the repressive methods mine managers used to spin out the length of a compound contract.

The most abrasive aspect of compound coercion was the assumption by compound management of the judicial functions of punishment reserved to the state in the Masters and Servants Acts. This reservation, which had been a partial safeguard against employer maltreatment, became an undisguised blessing in comparison to the private power wielded over Africans in closed compounds. No state regulations circumscribed the conduct of compound managers. They had their 'own way of treating natives' and adopted their own 'method of maintaining order'.[35] Almost all compounds practised a system of fines. Fines were inflicted to protect companies 'against the natural impulse of human nature, white and black, to do as little work as possible and to get drunk whenever occasion offers'.[36] Fines were combined with solitary confinement and authorised and unauthorised floggings.

The De Beers mine compounds had 'a bad name amongst the natives' because of maltreatment and assaults.[37] Seymour Dallas, dismissed Superintendent of the De Beers Convict Station, but later re-employed as the Manager of the West End Compound, gave workers a choice of detention or a flogging by himself.[38] Moreover, compound guards, European or Zulu, compensated for African assaults on contractors underground by assaults in the compounds.[39] However, guard assaults were more often the result of African refusal to work in dangerous parts of underground workings. Although workers could remain unemployed and unpaid under a labour contract, the refusal to work when commanded was a criminal offence, which guards dealt with rather than the Resident Magistrate. In one case, Charles Riordan, Head Guard of the West End compound, flogged a team of twenty-two Africans for refusing to work, confined them in a detention cell for five days and then dismissed them. The Protector of Natives examined the evidence of the thrashing a week afterwards and found that 'the scars or wounds were still raw and about four inches in length'.[41] He pointed out that 'this indignity was perpetrated on men between the ages of 40 and 50 years, Colonial Kaffirs and of the most civilized' bearing. In the view of the Protector lasting

scars were a bitter humuliation for Colonial Africáns, but not for 'Inhambanes or Shangaans' who 'take these things as a matter of course'.[41]

The Kimberley Central DMC closed its compounds to force inexperienced African labourers into underground works. Africans struck, but once William McHardy the General Manager had dismissed the strike leaders he was able to coerce his workers into the mine. Without the convict reserve which gave De Beers a solid position in the labour market, the Kimberley Central was unable to introduce the compounds refinements, such as detention cells and wire mesh, aimed purely at the prevention of theft. Instead it indueed Africans into the compound through the provision of liquor and the promise of a free Sunday each week to go on the town. The Bultfontein Mining Company followed the same policy, which though it had no underground works, was initially necessary when Africans still had the option of an open or closed compound.[42]

By 1888 all African workers were compounded. But compounds were not completely functionally integrated into the organisation of the labour process. The Kimberley Central, for example, had not separated its surface from its mine labourers, while its tram drivers (largely 'Cape boys') remained at liberty. The De Beers DMC was more efficient in its labour management, concentrating the greatest number of workers, introducing detention cells in 1886 and segregating surface and mine labourers. 'Cape boys' resisted compounds and mine work as they objected to being 'treated in the same manner as ordinary raw Kaffirs'.[43] However, in the 1890s a stable compound was set up for 240 workers who were 'mostly Cape Boys and Colonial Kaffirs.' At the same time the monopoly company had two mine compounds (for over 4,000 Africans) and one floor compound (for about 1,000 Africans).[44]

Once all the companies had closed their compounds, and even more so when the monopoly had been established (1889), resident African miners spent the greater part of their lives in compounds. The monopoly company continued to recruit 'raw' Africans and to have a migrant turnover in its compounds, but part of the work force was made up of African miners, who devoted their lives to mine work. In 1888 Arthur Davis, Manager of the Bultfontein Mining Company said he had African workers in his company who had been with him for seven or eight years. In 1902 Gardner Williams wrote that some Africans had remained in his compounds continuously for ten years. However, the established pattern of life for the resident miner was an alternation between mine labour and location 'resting'. In 1894 location landlords lived well off miners who rented rooms to recuperate for two to six weeks before returning to the compounds.[45]

Thus the one side of the compound coin remains unsullied: they were a great advantage to the mine owners in reducing wages, the elimination of drunkeness, greater labour

productivity, the prevention of theft and in easing the passage to a controlled proletarian work force. But where did the advantages for labourers lie? Gardner Williams, General Manager of De Beers Consolidated, spoke for De Beers' workers in an address to shareholders:

> Our natives are better housed and better fed than uncompounded natives and are better paid than the miners in any of the European countries. Those unfit for work, either through sickness or on account of injuries received in the mine are taken free of cost in the Company's hospital which adjoins the compound. There are fewer accidents under the present system than there were in the open workings. A very large majority of the accidents in the mine is due either to the carelessness or the stupidity of the natives themselves. A large percentage of the deaths in the compound had been caused by receiving natives who come in companies from countries north of the Transvaal, many of whom are so starved and emaciated as to be beyond help.[46]

The complacency of these statements is remarkable, coming from a man who had dictatorial control over African workers' lives, which were lost through a death rate unequalled in Southern Africa and a mine safety record unequalled in the whole of Africa, then or since.

The number of deaths from accidents had reached critical porportions before the development of underground mining, but the latter made a miner's work even more dangerous. 'Anything over 3 persons killed per thousand' wrote A.E. Sawyer, a Mining Inspector from Staffordshire, 'is now a days considered bad'.[47] In England and Wales, between 1884 and 1891 the death rate was under two per thousand.[48] On the Witwatersrand the death rate averaged a little over four per thousand between 1896 and 1905.[49] In Southern Rhodesia the mine death rate never went over five per thousand between 1907 and 1933 and for the latter half of this period averaged around two and a half deaths per thousand.[50] Worst of all, the Kimberley death rate was nine and a half per thousand between 1881 and 1889, with De Beers mine as the most dangerous with a rate of 18.3 per thousand.[51]

In part this high death rate was the product of the novel and treacherous nature of underground mining in diamondiferous ground. Vast caverns were excavated in the *blue*, transforming the Kimberley and De Beers mines into gigantic honeycombs. The *blue* left as pillars was inherently unsafe, as it disintegrates on exposure to the atmosphere and to water. There were also greasy slides between large blocks of *blue*, which slipped without warning. Consequently the roofs of underground workings were constant sources of danger. Furthermore, fire-damp was a threat while candles were the

major means of underground lighting. And finally, mud rushes became the most feared underground hazard, bursting into tunnels and filling them up with terrifying speed.[52] However, despite these manifest dangers to life, the Mining Inspector concluded that 'the majority of employers of labour in these mines look upon regulations for safety as mere harrassing restrictions'.[53]

The novel nature of mining and the treacherous qualities of the *blue* were exacerbated by competition to increase production. The De Beers DMC pushed its workers to the limit to catch up with the greater production capacity of the Kimberley Central DMC so as to improve their stake in the amalgamation struggle. In doing so the De Beers management flouted safety regulations with catastrophic results.[54] In July 1898 a fire broke out underground and out of a work force of sixty-seven Europeans and 625 Africans, twenty-four Europeans and 178 Africans perished.

The Commission that investigated the disaster found that there were no fire extinguishers in the mine, that there was a lack of adequate ladderways and that as the shaft that was supposed to be the escape shaft had been closed at the time of the accident, the management should have discontinued mining. Those who survived were rescued through opening up a tunnel into the open mine. Although Gardner Williams received absolution from the Chairman of the De Beers Consolidated Mines at its first AGM, he was implicitly held culpable by the Commission of Enquiry. However, it was Captain Hambly, as the government appointee responsible for mine safety, who was pilloried for this mine disaster. Stow, a Life Governor of De Beers Consolidated, (which absorbed the De Beers DMC) referred to the Commission report as an 'unqualified indictment against the old company and its Managers'.[55]

Accidents accounted, however, for only a proportion of the high mortality rate on the Diamond Fields: disease took the lion's share of lives. Perhaps the contribution of compounds to mortality can best be exposed through a general comparison with the Kimberley gaols, the companion institution for the 'benefit' of Africans. For as the Rev. James Poote remarked, in one of the few public disclaimers made by an African against the advantages of closed compounds, there were two gaols at Bultfontein and one of them was the Bultfontein Mining Company's compound.[56]

As the prisons functioned as pauper hospitals, a comparison with compound deaths reveals little: prisoners and patients were shuffled between the two institutions. A comparison between open and closed compounds is difficult as large open compounds were in their hey-day during the depression and the small-pox epidemic (1882-1885). Both exacerbated mortality and its true extent was successfully concealed by the mine owners.[57] However, the Kimberley death rate in 1888 with a decreasing population and closed compounds was far worse than the death rate in 1878 with an increasing population and open compounds. These two years

Diering, a major liquor wholesaler, protested bitterly that the depression had reduced the liquor trade by 70 per cent and that deaths were caused by inadequate accommodation provided by companies. 'The farmers make better provision for their cattle', he said, 'than the companies for their natives'.[65] And once closed compounds had been established Dr. Watkins, in an authoritative analysis of the increase in the number of deaths in the late 1880s, concluded that the 'increase was general to the whole population and far greater in proportion in the case of children, (showing) that it was due to causes wholly apart from the drink question.'[66]

Overcrowding and insufficient protection from the cold were worse in the closed compounds of the late 1880s than in the superceded open compounds. Both open and closed compounds were, however, improvements on the Kimberley and Beaconsfield gaols. There appalling conditons and overcrowding remained unchanged from 1874 to 1882 to 1887, the three times they came under investigation.[67] Less than 400 cubic feet per man/woman in a sleeping compartment was decidedly injurious to health. In 1880 there was 164 cubic feet per man in the European cells of the Kimberley gaol, while in African cells the overcrowding was worse.[68] In 1887 in one part of the Kimberley gaol known as Coleman's compound there was fifty-one cubic feet per man, while the women's yard and the Beaconsfield prison were worse. 'Prisoners have not had sufficient room to lie down', reported the 1887 Commission, 'without lying on one another ... '.[69] Moreover, overcrowding, which was largely the product of pass arrests, was exacerbated by the fact that 'the prisons are asylums for lunatics, hospitals for prisoners and chronic sick paupers and refugees for the destitute whose presence in the gaol ... greatly interferes with discipline'.[70] As if this was not enough, the Kimberley gaol was located on a site of 'old cess pools' and whenever it rained the cells were swamped.

In the face of these manifest disadvantages, in terms of shelter Africans were better off in open and closed compounds. However, all the evidence points to severe overcrowding of most open compounds, although the epidemic of small-pox exacerbated the effects of this.[71] In late 1883 Doyle found that sickness was four times as bad amongst compound dwellers as amongst night soil collectors. He also found that compounds were more congested than the space requirement per man of 350 cubic feet, with ample ventilation.[72] But clearly some compounds provided better shelter than others. In 1886 Doyle found that the death rate of fifteen in a thousand in Kimberley compounds was acceptable, but the De Beers DMC and Victoria DMC had a death rate which was 'excessive', while the convict station came out with the best sanitation and shelter.[73] In 1891 space per man in the sleeping quarters of the monopoly company's compounds was less then the desired 300 cubic feet.[74]

Closed compounds grew rapidly in size in the late 1880s and with the development of systematic shift work, their capacity was doubled. In addition, the wide open space in the centre of the rectangular compounds (De Beers West End compound covered five acres) disguised the overcrowding in the sleeping compartments. But the most damning evidence against improved material conditions in closed compounds was provided by the 1888 De Beers fire disaster. 'We are told that the natives for the night shift', reported the Commission of Enquiry.

> were in the habit of going down into the mine early in the afternoon because it was warmer there than in their compound, and that they would be about the mine smoking or sleeping, but always with lighted candles near them.[75]

This lack of warmth was a structural feature of De Beers mine compounds. Africans slept on the ground in blankets in quarters without doors and with an open space around the top of the walls. While this aided ventilation during summer and during the day it did not exclude the intense cold at night and during the winter. Although De Beers was proud of providing 'free' wood and water, the quantity of heating and water facilities were inadequate. Moreover, the Protector questioned whether 'in the face of the great amount of profits made out of these natives that they receive anything for nothing.'[76] In fact, wood and water were included in the costs of compound maintenance and recovered through the 'percentage placed on the goods' bought in the compound stores.[77]

The greatest iniquity propagated by Gardner Williams in his Itemisation of compound benefits to Africans was the assertion that medical care was provided 'free of cost'. Throughout the whole of the 1880s and 1890s Africans provided the largest subsidy to the Kimberley Hospital through the hospital tax they paid on registration of a labour contract. When employment declined sharply during the depression the hospital went into the red and had a choice of either to raise a loan or the hospital tax. The Hospital Board decided to do the former.[78] On the provision of free medical care, the Protector put the view of the African worker:

> As to medical comforts and food supplied free, this may be correct from the company's point of view, but certainly not from the natives for each native in the compounds pays 12/- a year hospital tax and having done this is entitled to medical attention. It matters not how this money, which reaches a very large sum is appropriated, it is paid by the natives so it cannot be said that they get it free.[79]

The rudimentary health care in the prison hospital was a

better service than that provided by companies in their closed compounds. In fact the quality of the gaol hospital and the Kimberley Hospital was depreciated by companies sending Africans to hospital 'merely to die'.[80] The Kimberley Hospital 'threatened proceedings against compounds managers', said Dr. J.R. Mackenzie.

> if they continued to send men to the hospital quite moribund; and did so, the companies sent them in so that they remained in hospital a few weeks or a month with fever, and then recovered, while before they were only there a few days and died.[81]

Indeed, the Kimberley Hospital improved its service in the late 1880s, doubling the number of its African admissions between 1885 and 1888, while proportionately its death rate declined.[82]

This was a savage indictment of the sort of health care Africans could expect in compound hospitals. Clearly different compounds varied in the standard of medical care on offer to Africans. The Kimberley Central made no 'special provision' for sick Africans as the compound manager believed they were better cared for by their 'brothers' in their quarters.[83] De Beers West End Compound provided a better service with a visiting doctor, dispensary and five or six nurses.[84] Nonetheless, Africans were not paid while they were ill and compound managers ignored the Employers' Liability Act, which had been rushed through Parliament in 1886 by the commercial Parliamentary representatives of Kimberley. The consequence of this ignorance was a 'plethora of lame Kaffirs', who if they were not given light work in the compounds, were 'thrown out into the streets without a crutch ... in a most disgraceful fashion and allowed to starve'.[85]

The quality of African diet was generally dependent on food prices and the state of the mine economy. During the depression prison rations were cut and an outbreak of scurvy was the consequence. Combined with overcrowding the appearance of this malady was not surprising. The next major outbreak of scurvy took place in the closed compounds of De Beers during the siege of Kimberley (1899) and was similarly the product of a cut in rations and overcrowding exacerbated by a war regime.[86]

Nonetheless, when crisis conditions did not prevail, Africans who chose to feed themselves were better off in open then in closed compounds. In the same way as 'board wages' were an improvement on an all-inclusive wage, eating houses and higher wages in open compounds provided a better standard of living as compared to bulk bought meat and meal and lower wages in closed compounds. Moreover, not only lower wages but less work. 'You could never ration them', said F.R. Thompson, De Beers DMC compound manager,

> because we work 900 men in 2 shifts .. to work 900 men we want 1,400 or 1,500 men for natives won't stand the whole week with the white miner. They work for four days, and then we have to have a batch of men to go on, so that it would be impossible to ration them. If you were to ration the natives you would either find them all sick, or not wanting to work, because they would get their food all the same, whereas now they say we must work to get food.[87]

African consumption was socialized through the operation of food-clubs composed of from three to four men. They bought their provisions from compound stores, whose managers became bankers, as they put it. The food clubs gave their wages to the store managers who operated a credit system with steady workers.

Mine managers argued that closed compounds enabled African workers to save more. Estimates varied from twenty-five to forty per cent more than before, estimates based on European conceptions of Africans as spendthrifts. Only 'raw' Africans, novices in the consumption of liquor, were excluded from this generalisation. James Clifford the Kimberley Central compound manager estimated that the average saving after six months service was £14 10/-. Thus compounds taught Africans the virtues of the Protestant work ethic and thrift. But what managers did not include in this wonderful benefit to Africans was that they took twice as long to earn this amount in closed compounds as they had under the open regime.[88]

Gaols had only two advantages over closed compounds. Firstly, Africans did not have to work as hard in prisons as in compounds. Furthermore, prison stretches were regarded as occupational misfortunes and convicts were at least fed. Secondly, Africans in gaol did not have to suffer the privation of five days in detention cells before they were released. 'To obviate the smuggling of diamonds by time-expired natives', wrote F.R. Thompson.

> I introduced what was known as the solitary cell system. The cells are buildings with concrete floors and walls and lighted by electricity. The natives about to be discharged were first made to undress and then bathed. They then received blankets and large leather gloves were locked on their hands. In these cells the natives were detained with suitable precautions for five days.[89]

This was a serious hardship for, even though they were fed in detention 'free of cost' as the parsimonious Williams was wont to point out, they were not paid wages.[90] In 1903 De Beers wanted to increase the period of detention to seven days, but the Registrar warned against it as he feared there would be a riot.[91]

Closed compounds in the late 1880s and 1890s provided Africans with the bare necessities of life. What improvements companies made were more for surveillance purposes rather than for worker comfort, with the possible exception of the swimming pool in the West End compound. The use of electric light was turned first on the compound and only after the fire disaster used to illuminate the underground works. Nonetheless, compounds were worth substantial sums of money, ranging from £2,000 to £5,000. This was, however, little indication of the quality of amenities. Even the Kimberley gaol, floating on cess pits, would have fetched £6,000 in 1887 for use as a compound.[92] Compounds were essentially corrugated iron enclosures designed to keep workers secluded rather than content. African miners were seldom asked to describe the quality of their lives for their rulers in commissions or newspapers, but the odd occasion when an African was given a voice the experience of compound coercion left a simple preference for the freedom of the towns. And why? 'Because life is more pleasant'.[93]

In conclusion, the assumptions made by historians that standards of accommodation and amenities improved with the introduction of closed compounds is an acceptance of management's view of itw own benevolence. Van Onselen has called this the 'board-and-lodging myth'[94] and in Kimberley, as in Southern Rhodesia, it was used to rationalize coercion and reductions in wages. Kimberley's compounds differed from its imitators on the Rand and in Southern Rhodesia in being closed, whereas they in various degrees were not. But the greater compound self-sufficiency that this entailed did not lead to a higher standard of material life for Kimberley workers. Kimberley's compounds surpassed those mine compounds further to the north in encouraging a death rate of enormous proportions. And that crime has been hidden for far too long under the greater weight of capitalists' claims to their diamond property.

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NOTES

1. C. van Onselen, *Chibaro African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia*, 1903-1933, Johannesburg 1980), p. 157.

2. S. van der Horst, *Native Labour in South Africa* (London 1946), p. 83; G.V. Doxey, *The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa* (London 1961), pp. 34, 35.

3. The classic exposition of Kimberley compounds as models of social welfare is to be found in G.F. Williams, *The Diamond Mines of South Africa* (New York 1902). In 1903 a Commission of Compound Managers and Engineers from the Rand and Southern Rhodesia visited Kimberley 'with a view to the application of their system to the Witwatersrand mines if deemed advantageous'. *The South African Mines, Commerce and Industries* 25 April 1903, p. 145. As a result the Commission, taking Kimberley compounds as a model, specified an 'Ideal Compound' or, as it was dubbed a 'Kaffir Valhalla' in their report and recommended its construction on the Rand. See C. van Onselen, *Chibaro*, pp. 131, 132.

4. C. van Onselen, *Chibaro*, p. 51.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 50. His highest death rate was 75.95 per thousand in 1906.

6. University of Cape Town (UCT), Smalberger Papers, *Report of the Joint Committee Representing the Mines ... and Draft of Searching Rules and Regulations*, 12 May 1882.

7.

8. 'Inauguration of the Compound System', *Daily Independent* (DI), 28 April 1885; 'De Beers DMC Annual General Meeting', *DI*, 8 May 1886; 'Miners Union Meeting', DI, 12 June 1886; Cape Archives Depot (CAD), Na 455, Leary to Under Secretary for Native Affairs, 9 March 1889; Cape Parliamentary Papers (CPP), *Blue Book of Native Affairs*, G4 - '90, p. 57.

9. S. van der Horst, *Native Labour in South Africa*, pp. 79, 82; G.V. Doxey, *The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa*, p. 34; J. Smalberger, 'IDB and the Mining Compound System in the 1880s', *South African Journal of Economics*, 42, 1974, pp. 398-414.

10. Rob Turrell, 'Kimberley: Labour and Compounds, 1871-1888' in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds.) *Industrialisation and Social Change: Essays on Class Formation, Culture and Consciousness. 1870-1930* (London 1982).

11. The rules and regulations of the 1883 Mining Act, promulgated in December 1885, introduced discrimination with respect to blasting. In every case blasting was to be 'carried on under the supervision of a European experienced in blasting' and 'no persons under eighteen years of age and no native is to be permitted to manipulate explosives or prepare the same for blasting or other purposes'. Four years later the regulations stated bluntly: 'No native shall work or be allowed to work in any mine, whether in open or underground working, excepting upon the responsible charge of some particular white man as his master or "baas"'. South African Library, Kimberley Central DMC, General Regulations, 'Special Rules for Regulating Blasting Operations in the Kimberley Mine', 27 February 1886, p. 26; CAD, LND 1/285, General Rules and Regulations for the Working of Diamond Mines, 1 July 1889, f 1563.

12. CPP, *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, G2-'88, Second Report, p. xlii.

13. CPP, *RIDM*, G. 22-'89.

14. CAD, CO 3556, No. 28, Judge to UCS, 19 July 1887.

15. R. F. Sieberger, 'The Recruitment and Organization of African Labour for the Kimberley Diamond Mines, 1871-1888', M.A. thesis., Rhodes University, 1976, pp. 129-131.

16. 'De Beers DMC, AGM' *DI*, 8 May 1886. From November 1884 to May 1885 the company hired convicts but did not accommodate them.

17. CPP, *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, 62-88, Second Report, p. xllll.

18. CAD, CO 6427, No. 46a, Inclosure in R.G. Scott to Law Department, 18 March 1890; CPP, *SC on Trade and Business in GLW*, A7-'91, Evidence of G.F. Williams, Q4245; *Labour Commission*, G3-'94, evidence of R.G. Scott, Q 17318, 17322.

19. CAD, CO 6427, No.49, Scott to Law Department, 18 April 1890.

20. CAD, CO 6427, No. 51, Scott to Law Department, 22 April 1890.

21. *Hansard*, 1892, p. 10, Innes.

22. CAD, CO 3454, No. 244, Stow telegram Graham (Sheriff, Cape Town), 4 Oct. 1894; CAD, CO 3454, No. 244,

Wright telegram Graham, 11 Oct. 1884; UCS to Judge (Civil Commissioner, Kimberley), 12 Jan. 1886; CAD, CO 3556, No. 51, Judge to UCS, 4 Oct. 1887; *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, First Report, evidence of A. Davies, Q 2600, p.iv.

23. CAD, CO 3526, No. 166, Judge to UCS, 14 April 1886; *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, evidence of S. Delios Q. 1037; CAD, CO 6396, No. 58, Scott to Visiting Resident Magistrate, 14 May 1888; 'Convict Strike'; *DI*, 9 August 1884, CAD, CO 3454, No. 227, UCS telegram Judge, 18 Nov. 1884, CO 3556. No. 70, Bradshaw to Judge, 6 Dec. 1887; CAD, CO 6396, No. 115, Macleod Robinson to UCS, 13 Aug. 1888.

24. CAD, CO 3556, No. 28, Judge to UCS, 19 July 1887; CO 6396, 4 Oct. 1887; CO 6410, No. 23, Scott to High Sheriff, Cape Town, 18 April 1889. In 1887 there were an average of 2,238 convicts in the Cape Colony, of whom 870 were in Kimberley alone (*Hansard*, 1888, pp. 58-59).

25. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, First Report, p. 11; ev. of D.G. Healey (Superintendent of Kimberley gaol), Q. 32.

26. *Labour Commission*, ev. of R.C. Scott, Q. 17446.

27. CPP, G40-'86, *RIDM*; p. 12.

28. CPP, G22-'89, *RIDM*, p. 6.

29. CPP, *Commission... into the Diamond Trade Acts*, G3-'88, ev. of J. Gifford (Kimberley Central Compound Manager), Q. 2200: 'Every Saturday as the shifts come in from work, every boy's pass is examined and if it has expired it is taken from him; if he wishes to stop on he pays three shillings for re-registration, for which I give him a receipt, and I take the names to the registry office, and a clerk is sent down with passes, and as they hand in their receipts for three shillings they receive their passes. Those whose time has expired and who don't wish to re-contract are discharged.

30. CAD, NA (B1475), Stephens to Civil Commissioner, 17 May 1895.

31. *Commission .. into the Diamond Trade Acts*, ev. of J. Gifford, Q, 2222; ev. of F.R. Thompson, Q. 180; ev. of A.W. Davis, Q. 2849.

32. *DN:* 4 March 1880; Report for Seventh Quarter; UCT, Smalberger Paers, Kimberley Central DMC, Directors Minute Book 1, 5 July 1881, f 112; 20 Feb. 1882, f 236.

33. Rouillard (ed.) *Matabele Thompson*, p. 42; *Commission on Diamond Trade Acts*, Q. 104: 'I have been to the native chiefs in the interior and they all send boys down to the compound with a headman and they are rather pleased because the boys take home sums of money'.

34. *Commission .. into the Diamond Trade Acts*: ev. of A.W. Davis, Q. 2607.

35. CAD, NA 455, J.G. Leary to USNA, 7 Oct. 1889.

36. CAD, NA 455, J. Davis Allen (Manager of the Anglo-African DMC) to Leary (Protector of Natives), 2 Sep. 1889.

37. CAD, NA 455, J.G. Leary to GN De Beers Consolidated, 12 Feb. 1891.

38. *Labour Commission*, ev. of Dallas, Q.17407-17415; CAD, NA 411, Barnes to SNA, 13 July 1896.

39. The situation became so bad at one point in 1890 that the Mine Inspector feared an African uprising underground and the murder of white supervisors. Contractors and supervisors did not bother to charge Africans with assault or disobedience as conviction in the face of African witnesses was improbable. Besides imprisonment with hard labour meant less effort than in underground work and punished the company through the loss of workmen. However, there were also numerous white assaults on black miners. CAD. LND 1/346. Captain Erskine to Chairman of De Beers Consolidated, 29 May 1890; CPP, *RIDM*, G27-'92, p. 11. Compounds certainly acted to contain violence although they did not necessarily prevent its outbreak. In 1894, there was a dispute in the Wessalton compound over work and wages which 'grew to such proportions that a riot ensued, during which the natives were fired upon by the police and others, with the result that three of them were killed and seven wounded'. CPP, *Blue Book on Native Affairs*, G8-'95, p. 20.

40. CAD, NA 411, Barnes to SNA, 13 July 1896.

41. HA 411, Barnes to SNA.

42. By 1887 town visits were stopped. 'Miners Union Meeting' *DI*, 12 June 1886; *Commissioner .. into the Diamond Trade Acts*, ev. of J. Gifford, Q. 2205.

43. *SC on Trade and Business in GLW*, ev. of J.P. Kriel (Dutch Reformed Minister) Q. 1804.

44. CAD, NA 411, Craven to SNA, 23 June 1896.

45. *Commission .. into the Diamond Trade Acts*, ev. of A. Davis, Q. 2846; G.F. Williams, *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*, Vol.11, p. 57; *Labour Commission*, ev. of W.H. Powell, Q. 17188, 17182, 17183.

46. CPP, *RIDM*, G22-'89, p. 9.

47. *Mining at Kimberley*, Newcastle-under-Lime, 1889, p. 39.

48. H. Thomas, *Cornish Mining Interviews*, Camborne, 1896, p. 299.

49. J.J. Van Helten, 'British and European Investment in the Transvaal with Specific Reference to the Witwatersrand Gold Fields and District, 1886-1910', unpub. PhD. ICS 1981, Appendix IV, Table 18.

50. van Onselen, *Chibaro*, p. 50.

51. R.V. Turrell, 'Capital, Class and Monopoly: the Kimberley Diamond Fields, 1871-1889', unpub. PhD., School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1982, Appendix II.35, Mine Accidents: Number of Deaths per thousand, 1880-1889. The accident death rate between 1890 and 1899 declined to 6.23 per thousand.

52. Williams, *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*, Vol. 11, pp. 40-43.

53. CAD, LND 1/220, Captain Erskine to Secretary for Lands and Mines, 9 April 1886.

54. 'The GM De Beers has always been recalcitrant (on safety regulations) and will probably be more so as the Company acquires private power'. CAD, LND 1/327, Department Memo, 8 July 1889 f 3330.

55. Maggregor Museum (Kimberley) Stow Letter-Book IV, Stow to Playford, 5 Sept. 1888; University of Cape Town, Judge Papers, *Commission of Enquiry into the De Beers Disaster*, 4 August 1889; Williams, *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*, Vol. B 47, 11, p. 39.

56. 'O'Leary Election Meeting', *DI*, 24 April 1886.

57. The epidemic lasted from October 1883 until January 1885 and the official number of deaths was 700 out of 2,311 cases. In Cape Town 4,000 people died in the space of a few months as a result of the epidemic. Turrell, 'Capital, Class and Monopoly', pp. 258-261.

58. Although the number of deaths is known for this period, the mortality rate is difficult to calculate for certain as the population of Kimberley was so difficult

to estimate. The figures presented here apply to Kimberley alone and do not include the smaller mining township of Dutoitspan, known as Beaconsfield from the 1880s. Moreover, they do not apply to compounds alone, but to the whole of Kimberley. Therefore, they are not strictly comparable with van Onselen's Rhodesian mine death rate. However, it should be remembered that the African population of Kimberley was overwhelmingly male, that African males were predominantly employed in the mining industry, and that the death rate was highest among African male adults.

The 1878 figure was provided by Dr. Matthews and Dr. Shillito, in a survey of Kimberley's sanitation. They found the African death rate of 80 and the European of 40 per thousand,

> a rate which is sufficiently large to rank Kimberley among the most unhealthy towns in existence. This is about three times the proportionate rate of mortality in London and is considerably greater than the average number of deaths per 1,000 in large and crowded cities of the East. 'Report on the Sanitary Condition of Kimberley' Diamond News, 29 March 1879.

The total population was taken from the 1877 census as 14,169 (6,574 European and 7,595 Others).

The 1888 figure was calculated from a Kimberley population of 28,000 (12,000 Europeans and 16,000 Others). R.V. Turrell, 'Capital, Class and Monopoly', Appendix 11.9, Populations Statistics: Urban, Kimberley and Dutoitspan, 1876-1891, and Appendix II. 34, Mortality: Kimberley, 1876-1895.

In 1897 the deaths in the mine hospitals began to be officially recorded. From 1897 to 1906 the compound death rate was 53.57 per thousand, a figure which surpasses those recorded in Southern Rhodesia. In contrast, deaths in the De Beers Convict Station were not nearly as numerous. From 1891-1899 it was 17.79 per thousand, increasing to 22.48 from 1900 to 1905. (Statistical Registers of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, 1890-1906).

59. CPP, *Commission on Liquor Laws*, Gl-'90 ev. of G. Hudson C. 6532.

60. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, First Report, p. 11.

61. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, ev. of Bradshaw Q. 1449-1454; ev. of D. Grimmer, Q. 688-699. See also Commission Appendix G, and K.

62. CAD, CC 3556, No. 13, Report of District Surgeon, Charles Budler, for 1886.

63. CPP, *Report of the District Surgeon*, G3-'86, p. 22.

64. 'Report on the Sanitary Condition of Kimberley'; CPP, *Report of the District Surgeon*, G19-'87, p. 18; *DN*, 29 March 1879, *Commission on Liquor Laws*. Appendix 1, From Dr. A. Watkins, 20 Nov. 1889, p. 1058. Throughout the 1890s pneumonia continued to be the biggest killer in the compounds. In 1900 Dr. Stoney reported that, 'the disease will continue to be our most serious cause of death in the ordinary course of events, so long as overcrowding in the compounds continues; until they are extended and re-modelled with an increased air-space, proper lighting and impermeable floors, this terrible disease amongst the natives will continue its ravages'. *Blue Book on Native Affairs*, G52-1901 p. 74. In 1902 pneumonia accounted for 60 per cent of compound deaths and after twenty years of closed compounds De Beers was forced to reconstruct its compounds. CPP, *Blue Book on Native Affairs*, G29-1903, p. 91.

65. Kimberley Town Council, *DI*, 11 Aug. 1885.

66. *Commission on Liquor Laws*, Appendix 1.

67. CAD, GLW 74, *Letters of Inspector of Convicts*, Report of D'Arcy, 5 Oct. 1871; CPP, *Report on ... Kimberley Prison*, G95-'82, *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*.

68. CAD, GLW 153, No. 829, Maxwell to Colonial Secretary, 29 March 1880.

69. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, First Report, P. i.

70. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, p.ii

71. UCT, Smalberger Papers, Kimberley Central DKC, Directors' Minutes Book 11, 9 Aug. 1883; Board of Health; *DI*, 10 Nov. 1883, *DFA*, 9 Aug. 1884, KMB.

72. Board of Health, *DI*, 17 Nov. 1883.

73. Kimberley Town Council, *DI*, 12 Feb. 1887.

74. CAD, LND. 1/369, Craven to Commisssioner of Crown Lands, 16 Oct. 1891, L 550.

75. UCT, Judge Papers, *Commission of Inquiry into the De Beers Fire Disaster*, B 47, 4 Aug. 1888.

76. CAD, NA 411, Barnes to USNA, 13 July 1896.

77. *Commission into De Beers Fire Disaster.*

78. CAD, NA 198, No. 5, Judge to USNA, 26 Jan. 1884.

79. CAD, NA 411, Barnes to USNA, 13 July 1896.

80. *Commission on Liquor Laws*, ev. Dr. J.E. Mackenzie, Q. 6871.

81. *Commission on Liquor Laws*, Q. 6886.

82. *Commission on Liquor Laws*, Q. 6887.

83. *Commission .. into Diamond Trade Acts*, ev. of J. Gifford, Q.2186, 2199, 2218, 2219.

84. *Ibid.*, ev. of F.R. Thompson, Q.113; *Labour Commission* ev. of S. Dallas, Q.17440.

85. *Labour Commission*, ev. of F.D. Smith (Diamond Fields Union) Q. 17561.

86. CAD, NA 508 (A234) Dr. Otto to De Beers Consolidated, 13 Jan. 1902; Dr. Marshall to De Beers Consolidated, 10 Jan. 1902; Dr. H. Symonds to De Beers Consolidated, 9 Jan. 1902. It was during the siege of Kimberley that these mine doctors discovered the anti-scorbutic qualities of 'Kafir beer' and added it to the compound diet.

87. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, ev. of F.R. Thompson, Q. 186.

88. *Commission on Liquor Laws*, pp. 1039-1043; BPP, C 1401, *Further Correspondence*, Inclosure in No. 1, Southey to Barkly, 30 June 1875, p. 2,3; *Diamond Mining Commission*, p. 72A.

89. Rouillard (ed.) *Matabele Thompson*, p. 45.

90. Williams, *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*, p. 87.

91. CAD, NA (B1475) Chief Registrar to SNA, 25 Feb. 1903.

92. *Commission on Convicts and Gaols*, First Report, p.v.

93. *Labour Commission*, ev. of Charlie (a Barotse) Q. 16895.

94. van Onselen, *Chibaro*, p. 73.