

Chapter 7

Property and Community on Display: A Lubbe Family Auction

Spring is benevolent in the Cedarberg, a good time to travel. The peak blaze of wildflowers is over by November, but some asters and lilies would still have been in bloom, and seasonal streams were likely to be full, making the journey to the farm at Groote Valleij on the Olifants River pleasant for both man and beast. At least 44 people traveled for more than a day to reach Barend Lubbe's farm late in the spring of 1785; a few made the long journey from Cape Town. Certainly some of those who came to bid on items at Lubbe's estate auction traveled with family members—the list of buyers represented just a portion of those who actually attended the two-day community event. 1

Whether in town, in a farming district, or on the frontier, an auction was a social and symbolic gathering, as well as an occasion for economic transactions.¹ Immediate family members, other kin, neighbors, and Company officials all attended this public display and redistribution of a family's possessions. Auctions were a regular part of the colonists' social landscape, organized to settle insolvent estates, to liquidate assets for equitable distribution of inheritance, or at the request of a household repatriating or otherwise divesting itself of worldly goods. Occasionally, a criminal or civil judgment forced an auction, but more typically the proceeds from the sale went directly to some of its participants—the heirs of the deceased. 2

Despite the death that usually prompted an auction, the event was festive, with food, plenty of drink, and socializing. In town, the event created social proximity, physically bringing people together across lines of race, class, gender, and generation as buyers and bystanders.² Frontier communities, however, were more circumscribed than in Cape Town or Stellenbosch. Free people of color claimed land in the Cedarberg, but they did not appear in the few eighteenth-century auction records for the region, whether because of limited cash or credit, active exclusion, or disinclination to participate. Although vexing, the absence of independent Khoisan or mixed-race buyers in Cedarberg auctions is understandable, given their liminal status in colonial society. Indentured Khoisan servants and slaves, on the other hand, must have been at work on Groote Valleij at the time of the auction, but the only record of their presence is the sale of Lubbe's slaves. 3

Labor and race are equally elusive in a narrative account of a late eighteenth-century country auction. Johanna Duminy's description of a 1797 *vendu* in the Overberg, east of the Hottentots-Holland mountains, conveys a party atmosphere, with families arriving by ox wagon prepared to spend the night. Each day of the sale started with a breakfast that included warm meat and butter. Even those close enough to travel home and return the next day chose 4

to stay and enjoy the revelry. Duminy recounts her purposeful decision to remain at the *vendu*, saying to her husband, "No, I want to stay here and see the fun. I have got our bedding and they have given me a big *katel* to sleep on in the room here." François Duminy replied that he would then sleep in the wagon for the night. The "fun" Johanna referred to included a communal meal and dancing by candlelight to the music of violins.

The silences and assumptions in the Duminys' conversation are telling: "I'll have my bed made up in the wagon," said François, when his wife wanted to stay the night at the auction site. Johanna reports on hours of domestic work, without ever actively seeing or doing any herself: 5

At nine o'clock our table was laid . . .
 After the meal, I ordered our bedding to be brought in, and I had my *katel* made up . . .
 At eight o'clock [the next morning] the table was laid . . . the violins were still going strong . . .
 I ordered my lame ox to be slaughtered . . .
 We had our things packed on cousin van Riet's wagon.³

Who made up beds, laid tables, cooked meat, slaughtered animals, packed the wagon, and played the violins? A large social gathering intensified the need for domestic labor as it disrupted some household rhythms. Johanna and her husband slept apart; she shared a bed with a female cousin in a room filled with 24 sleepers. No wonder François preferred the wagon in these unusual circumstances. Despite such departures from routine, this event, like daily settler life, depended on labor so commonplace that Johanna Duminy only remarked upon the results, not on the process or the workers themselves.

Not all of the work presumed in Duminy's account was necessarily that of slaves or Khoisan servants, however. The violin players might have been neighbors. The butcher who slaughtered her oxen could have been a burgher or a bondsman. Kin and neighbors of the bereaved family were present; undoubtedly some helped with the many preparations necessary to entertain so large a crowd. In a society and economy predicated on bondage, the division of the labor that produced a good time for Johanna Duminy was unlikely to have been consensual or equitable, however. Its effacement in colonial sources replicates the social hierarchy imposed by dominant settler interests. 6

Consequently, racial dynamics remain opaque, as ever. *Vendu rolle* like Lubbe's do, however, bring class, gender, and generational dynamics into relief. Barend Lubbe died a rich old man, a longtime frontier farmer who was well-known in the region. He had served as a *veldkorporal* (burgher militia officer) for the Olifants River district. He assumed that post during the period of intense conflict at the end of the 1730s; his sons were subsequently 7

appointed to serve in the colonial administration of the Cedarberg, indicating the family's stable position in frontier society. Given this local prominence, Lubbe's estate auction attracted a wide range of buyers along with others who came, like Johanna Duminy, mostly for the spectacle.

Kin, neighbors, Company officials, and farmers from a wide swath of territory converged on Groote Valleij on November 7 and 8, 1785. The *vendu rol* documents 68 individual buyers, about one-third of them relatives. Another third were neighbors—those whose Olifants River farms were within a day's ride of the Lubbe's. Four of the buyers were masters of the Orphan Chamber, come from Cape Town to oversee the auction. Their duty imposed a long trip on them—at least six days by ox wagon if they proceeded directly to Groote Valleij. The trip would have taken longer if they had other stops to make—or they could have moved more quickly if they traveled on horseback, counting on shelter and hospitality at farms along the route. Whatever their itinerary, they were not mere referees at the event; the Orphan masters' position gave them preferential access to auctions, a privilege that extended from Cape Town to the frontier.⁴ Lubbe's estate was large enough that prestige, family connections, and evident capital from Cape Town still left plenty of room for other bidders. A third of the buyers were farmers from surrounding regions—the Bokkeveld, the Roggeveld, the Swartland, and the Berg River—no relation to the Lubbes, who just came to take a look at a rich man's things and, perhaps, augment their own household's possessions. **8**

How There Came to be Lubbes in These Parts

A Coming of Age

Barend Lubbe arrived at the Olifants River an orphaned young man with a disabled older brother and limited local connections. A half century later, he headed a large, prosperous family firmly entrenched in the Cedarberg. In addition to whatever means he used to claim land and coerce labor, Barend Lubbe had some lucky breaks come his way, including a government appointment and an advantageous marriage, enabling him to establish the basis of expanding settler claims on the frontier. **9**

The youngest of 12 children, Barend was only 11 years old when his father died. Three of his brothers had died young, before their parents. Barend's two eldest sisters were already married in 1723; their husbands were the family's official witnesses to the inventory and subsequent auction of livestock, farm implements, housewares, and a single slave that marked the dissolution of the Lubbe household at Wolvedans.⁵ The inventory stipulated that the four surviving boys and Catharina, the eldest unmarried girl, had livestock of their own among the beasts on the farm; those animals were not sold at auction (with the exception of young Barend's horse, which was sold for him with the proceeds kept separate from the estate). So **10**

the Lubbes were not destitute, but even with the livestock set aside and the settlement from the auction proceeds, none of the nine children inherited resources enough to support themselves individually.

Genealogy Chart: Fig. 7.1. The Lubbe Family

Genealogy Chart: Fig. 7.2. Barend's Siblings

Young Barend, it seems, went to live with his sister Aletta and her husband Paul Keyser at their farm, Welgelegen, near Stellenbosch.⁶ The couple had four small children by this time; they incorporated care for their growing brood with support for Aletta's siblings, all still living near Stellenbosch (Paul and Aletta would go on to raise 13 children, not counting their contribution to Barend and his sisters). Brothers Jan and Frans both died young and unmarried three years after their parents.⁷ Again, Paul Keyser was called to witness the paperwork settling their estates. Brother Hendrik married that year, the daughter of a local farming family. The Lubbe siblings remained in close contact and saw multiple endogamous marriages among their own children, but they chose diverse spouses for themselves. The three younger girls, like their older sisters, went on to marry immigrant men. **11**

Both Johanna and Maria Jacoba married at 17, leaving only Barend as a minor dependent five years after their father's death. Though living with family members, Barend was officially a ward of the Orphan Chamber, meaning he was not legally empowered to make his own financial decisions. As a young man of twenty, ten years after his father's death, Barend Lubbe requested legal majority.⁸ Before Barend applied for *veniam aetatis*, however, his older brother Hendrik became a ward of the Stellenbosch church. In 1730, the church council approved an annual stipend for Hendrik because he was blind in both eyes. Brother-in-law Christian Liebenberg also contributed to his maintenance, but the church saw need great enough that it designated Hendrik for an allowance normally given only to the elderly.⁹ Despite this network of support—or perhaps because the only prospect for real financial independence lay beyond the embrace of his family—Barend Lubbe left Stellenbosch for the Olifants River. There he was appointed caretaker of the Company's post at the Warm Baths (a natural hot springs) near the river, and by the time of the 1739 frontier war, Lubbe was the veldkorporal for the Olifants River.¹⁰ **12**

Part of Lubbe's acclimatization to the Cedarberg certainly came with his marriage to Andries Burger's eldest daughter, Martha. Their courtship is buried, but evidence of Martha and Barend's marriage is clear: 13 children, 12 guided to adulthood. Martha had the first three children—all boys—between 1737 and 1741, a period that encompassed intense violence. Barend served then as veldkorporal; many of their Olifants River neighbors, as well as farmers **13**

near the Twenty-four Rivers and in the Land van Waveren asked for relief from land-rent payments in 1739 because the hostilities made their frontier farms uninhabitable. Barend, Martha, and their babies survived the tempest and went on to flourish.

Securing the Next Generation's Place in the Landscape

Barend's marriage to Martha Burger incorporated him into the network of frontier land claims that already existed when they wed in 1736. Their children subsequently relied upon and reinforced those relationships. Like their parents and their many cousins, the next generation of Lubbe siblings' place in the community helped to secure their place in the landscape. 14

Genealogy Chart: Fig. 7.3. Barend & Martha's Children with Their Spouses

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With the exception of one daughter, all of Barend and Martha's children choose partners within a very small social and geographical circle. Four of the Lubbe siblings married Burgers from neighboring Halve Dorschvloer, children of their mother's first cousin, Schalk Willem. Johanna Catharina and Elsie married brothers Hendrik and Petrus van der Merwe Hendriksz from the Sneeuwberg; Willem married another van der Merwe cousin, Elisabeth Geertruij. Maria Jacoba and Martha married brothers Abraham and Johannes Paulus Mouton Abrahamsz, whose parents farmed behind the Piketberg; Andries married the Mouton's first cousin, Maria Magdalena, whose parents farmed over the Pakhuis Pass on the east side of the Olifants River. Barend Fredrik married Johanna Maria Keyser, who as both the Moutons' aunt and Barend Lubbe's niece epitomized the tight connection established among the Lubbe, Mouton, and Keyser families in two generations of marriages.

Cross Reference:
Read more about Schalk Willem Burger.
([chapter6.html#p37](#))

Fig. 7.4. Lubbe Family Farms

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Johanna Keyser also symbolized the link between the Lubbes of the Cedarberg and individuals in the more settled areas of the colony. She spent her early years on her parents' farm Welgelegen.¹¹ She had not yet been born when Barend left Stellenbosch, but her mother, Aletta, must have kept in touch with her faraway brother Barend. The fact that Johanna married her cousin Barend Hendrik—who grew up on the distant Groote Valleij—indicates the families remained in contact at least sporadic enough to facilitate the introduction of the couple. Barend Lubbe may have moved to the Cedarberg to seek his fortune, but he kept up his connections back home.

Elisabeth Lubbe's marriage to Gerhardus Munnik, in contrast, defies presumption. No circumstantial evidence links the families before her marriage, and Gerhardus remained firmly ensconced near Cape Town as a land owner and alcohol *pachter* (licensed monopoly merchant).¹² Yet the frontier-to-town connection that took Johanna Keyser to the Cedarberg as a bride must also have extended to unite Munnik with Elisabeth, and to keep him within the social network even after Elisabeth's death. Six years after Munnik remarried, he journeyed to Groote Valleij for his former father-in-law's auction and made significant purchases there. Whether he was buying for his own account or on behalf of his children, he spent more than double his late wife's share of the estate, which suggests he was not simply taking his children's share home in livestock rather than in cash. **17**

Only one of the Lubbe siblings made a second marriage, also to a partner with local connections. Maria Jacoba's union to Josias Engelbrecht introduced another family to the mix, but did not practically shift frontier alliances. Engelbrecht's own father died in debt when Josias was only one year old.¹³ After his mother remarried a year later, Engelbrecht and his three older siblings would undoubtedly have gotten to know their step-father's connections. Jacobus Louw Jacobsz farmed in the Lange Valleij, the same district as Jan Engelbrecht had. In addition, Louw also claimed grazing permits near the Olifants River, and many Louw family members settled in the Cedarberg, thus plausibly situating Engelbrecht within the tightly-knit frontier community.¹⁴ After his marriage to Maria Jacoba, Josias assumed the lease on Berg Valleij, behind the Piketberg, which Maria Jacoba inherited from her first husband, Abraham Mouton, in 1768.¹⁵ **18**

These closely circumscribed social relationships also had a spatial component. Andries, the eldest son, began farming at Modder Valleij, near present-day Citrusdal, the year after his marriage to Maria Magdalena Mouton.¹⁶ The following year, Barend Fredrik and Johanna Maria Keyser established a home at Brakkefontein, also in Olifants River valley. Johanna was widowed young and maintained the farm until she transferred it to her son Paul Willem in 1794.¹⁷ Their sister Martha and her husband Johannes Paulus Mouton joined them on the nearby Modder Rivier farm in 1765. The third brother, Willem, claimed more distant land, but only for three years in the 1770s, suggesting that he farmed in partnership with his brothers or cousins.¹⁸ **19**

By the time the fourth son, Johannes Hendrik, came of age, there was less pressure to leave the family farm, and Barend, then 57 years old, must have welcomed the help. Johannes was also the first of the four Lubbes to marry one of the neighboring Burger children, so he and his wife Elsie had incentive to stay on Groote Valleij near both their families. In 1773, three years after their marriage, Johannes and Elsie appeared in the *opgaaf* as dependents of Barend and Martha, a position they seem to have accepted until Barend's death.¹⁹ **20**

Fig. 7.5. The Doom River

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Frans, the youngest son, complemented the land claims made by his father and brothers, moving out of the river valley, over the Pakhuis Pass and into the Bidouw Valley.²⁰ The Moutons who raised livestock on farms in that area were his sister-in-law Maria Magdalena's people, so his neighbors—though not situated as close together as his siblings and Burger cousins were who lived near the river—were nevertheless kin.

Sisters Johanna Catharina and Elsie moved south and east of the Olifants River center of the Lubbe family. Hendrik van der Merwe and Johanna Catharina settled in the high Witsenberg valley, the source of the Olifants. Elsie and Petrus van der Merwe traversed another set of mountains to the Koue Bokkeveld.²¹ Jacoba and Barend Jacobus Burger moved even farther east, to the Roggeveld.²² After claiming loan farms in the Cedarberg, Aletta Sophia and Alewijn Jacobus Burger eventually opted for Graaff-Reinet and the Eastern frontier, an unusual move since both partners had large extended family networks in the Cedarberg.²³ Elisabeth, the only Lubbe sibling to marry outside an obvious family or frontier connection, retraced her father's trajectory and returned to Stellenbosch, where her husband served as heemraad of both Stellenbosch and Drakenstein, as well as on the Drakenstein Church council.²⁴

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Fig. 7.6. Continuity of Land Tenure in Lubbe Family Loan Farms

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Starting from Barend Lubbe's original land claim near the Olifants River, the family's property radiated through the Cedarberg and beyond. Frans and Johanna Adriana extended settler farming into higher elevations while Johannes Hendrik and Elsie Burger maintained the Lubbes' original homestead. Meanwhile Andries, Barend Fredrik, and Martha made additional claims in the Olifants River Valley and Maria Jacoba moved back behind the Piketberg. Johanna Catharina and Elsie gravitated toward a region heavily settled by the van der Merwe family, and other siblings moved further afield, emphasizing the great degree of mobility in frontier communities and the extent to which the frontier regions were deeply connected to the rest of the colony. Within the Cedarberg itself, a proliferation of family farms gradually seeped out across the landscape; the Lubbes used the same strategies of marriage and land acquisition as their frontier neighbors and kin.

Apportioning a Family's Belongings

Barend Lubbe outlived his wife and three of his children. His daughter Aletta Sophia and her husband Alewijn Jacobus Burger had moved to Graaff-Reinet, a distance that precluded their return for the auction. The rest of the children, along with many other family members,

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returned in November of 1785 to the farm where they grew up. The occasion was an infrequent reunion for some, and a sociable visit for others—a time to catch up on family news and to settle debts with kin and neighbors.

The estate was undoubtedly auctioned in order to facilitate an equitable division of inheritance among the many claimants—12 children's portions, two to be directly subdivided to grandchildren, since Elisabeth and Barend Fredrik had already passed on. The principal heirs—Lubbe's sons, sons-in-law (as the public faces of their wives' portions), and a grandson—together bought over half the estate. Eleven family members acquired this significant portion through a limited number of purchases, buying what mattered most to rural agricultural production: land and slaves. They also bought the other high-value equipment indispensable for frontier farm life: ox wagons and a horse-drawn cart. The auction took two days to complete, but the bulk of the estate's value went in just 19 transactions: 13 slave sales—four of which involved an adult with a child or children—four wagons, and the two farms. Family members made 14 of those crucial purchases, a clear indication of the close circulation of wealth, despite widespread community participation.

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Fig. 7.7. Buyers at Barend Lubbe's Auction Ranked by the Value of Their Purchases

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Although people came from neighboring farms and from distant reaches, at its heart this auction was a family affair, unlike the one Barend experienced as a newly orphaned boy 62 years before. The Grootte Valleij vendu raised 23,192:3 rixdollars, nearly ten times the value of Old Barend Lubbe's sale.²⁵ Then, most of the deceased's children were minors with limited resources of their own. Barend's two brothers-in-law bought livestock, grain, and small tools amounting to about 16 percent of Old Barend's estate, but other buyers clearly outpaced them. Philip Morkel alone bought 450 of the 700 sheep for sale. The rest of the sheep and the cattle were parceled out to a range of buyers, none of them related to the Lubbes. The family's only slave, Pieter van Ceylon, was the single most expensive item at the sale; he went to a neighbor. The 150 sheep Paul Keyser took home that day amounted to just a little more than his wife's share of the estate; her inheritance walked itself from Wolvedans to Welgelegen.

The Lubbe family, and the family's fortunes, increased dramatically by the time of the Grootte Valleij vendu. Lubbe's sons and sons-in-law spent over 15,600 rixdollars; other relatives spent another 1,000 rixdollars, unrelated neighbors from the Olifants River Valley brought over 1,500 rixdollars, and the general public generated an additional 3,500 rixdollars. Considering that trek oxen fetched about the same price at the two sales, but sheep were nearly four times cheaper at the frontier auction, the increase in quality and quantity of goods for sale in 1785 was staggering.

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Son Johannes Hendrik made the largest purchase, the opstal at Groote Valleij. Johannes and Elsie clearly wanted to stay on the farm at the heart of their extended network of Lubbe and Burger relations, and in the place they had invested their labor. The sale of the farmhouse and other improvements stipulated that Johannes should received one-third of the coming harvest of wheat, rye, barley, peas, and beans, suggesting that he had a stake in the planting. The couple's willingness to pay 8,050 rixdollars for the farm, over four times Johannes's likely share of his parents' estate, suggests they wanted very much to remain anchored in the Olifants River valley. The high purchase price for the opstal is also a clear indication of extensive built improvements and natural resources on the farm. **28**

In comparison, Johannes' younger brother Frans paid only 224 rixdollars for the opstal on Bloemfontein, a more distant farm, undoubtedly with fewer improvements and not likely to have been as well situated for arable agriculture as Groote Valleij. For Frans, though, the addition of Bloemfontein, beyond the confluence of the Olifants and Doorn Rivers, was a useful complement to his farming enterprise established in the mountainous regions to the east of the Olifants River valley. **29**

Slaves, too, tended to stay in the family, though that did not mean that any families or other relationships among the slaves themselves were kept together. In fact, the 18 slaves sold on the second day of the auction dispersed widely. Andries brought Flora van de Caab and Fortuyn van Sambowa up the river to Modder Valleij. He alone bought two slaves in separate transactions, whether because the slaves wanted to be together, or simply because Andries wanted the labor, is impossible to know. Frans took Frans van Mallabar—a coincidence of naming, or the result of shared experiences in the Lubbe household? **30**

The three slave women sold with their children each went to a son-in-law—who may have been acting explicitly as proxies for their wives.²⁶ Lea van de Caab and her daughters Sara and Leonora (sold "as is") had only to cross the Piekeniers Kloof Pass to their new home with Maria Jacoba and Josias Engelbrecht. Victoria van de Caab and her daughter Rachel also remained within plausible visiting distance of their old home, moving to the Witsenberg valley with Johanna Catharina and Hendrik van der Merwe. In contrast, Anna van de Caab and her child Arend presumably went to the Roggeveld with Jacoba and Barend Jacobus Burger, making the chance of reunion with those they liked or loved from Groote Valleij slim indeed. Lubbe's nephews Hendrik Lubbe Hendriksz and Johannes Liebenberg each bought a slave, meaning that Corridon van Mallabar and Goliath van Madagascar might have stayed in the Olifants River valley, as both men had loan farms there.²⁷ Jephtha van Mallabar, however, likely returned with Gerhardus Munnik to Wynberg. **31**

Thus the three men from Malabar were split up after the sale, Frans going over the Pakhuis Pass with Frans Lubbe, Jephtha going with Munnik, and Corridon moving to Hendrik Lubbe's farm further down the Olifants River. In the absence of other records, it is impossible to know **32**

their response to this separation, though one presumes that life in the company of countrymen who shared a language and religion was easier than life completely among foreigners. Barend Lubbe had multiple farms, however, so this relocation might not have been a separation after all. Whatever their preferences, the slaves had no more choice about their new homes than the sheep. If a slave did run away in protest of the change, he or she would not be left simply to contend with the heat and the jackals. Slaves were too valuable a capital investment to let go. If the Lubbes had a sentimental attachment to any of their slaves, or sense of belonging to a shared (though admittedly hierarchical) household, financial concerns outweighed these emotions.²⁸ Three slave men and a child were sold out of the family and out of the district.

Johannes Joosten, a Stellenbosch burgher with a farm in the Bokkeveld, made the second largest purchase of the auction, spending 1,151 rixdollars for Joseph van Mozambique. His brother Frans, also a Bokkeveld farmer, acquired Januarij van Sambowa. The Joostens were not kin to the Lubbes, though they were cousins of the Moutons.²⁹ Roggeveld farmer Isaak Visagie, no connection at all to the Lubbes, purchased Sabandar van Bougies with his son, Abraham van de Caab. Presumably, this locally born boy had a mother, but she was not a factor in this sale. **33**

After land and slaves, Lubbe's wagons commanded the highest prices for a single item. The utility of heavy transportation is clear, but Barend Lubbe's wagons had some additional cachet. First of all, four wagons—three yoked for oxen and one for horses—was an abundance. Every farming household needed one wagon, and many inventories for Lubbe's neighbors and family members list two wagons, but not three. Barend's father's wagon fetched only 50 rixdollars at auction.³⁰ Other farm wagons in the 1720s and 1730s had similar or lesser values.³¹ Among Barend Lubbe's contemporaries, only Joseph de Clercq had wagons valued as highly.³² The Burgers' transportation, for instance, did not appreciate as Lubbe's did.³³ Lubbe's son Willem bought one ox wagon with a cover for 271 rixdollars; his son-in-law Barend Jacobus Burger bought the second for 258 rixdollars; nephew Barend Vorster snagged the third for only 162 rixdollars, and nephew Arnoldus Botman paid 180 rixdollars for the horse wagon. These four close kin paid handsomely for equipment that could have been gotten cheaper elsewhere. Either there was something special about Lubbe's wagons, or transportation rarely came on the market in the Cedarberg. De Clercq's 300 rixdollar wagons were near Tulbagh, not on the frontier. **34**

Numerically, livestock formed the largest portion of the sale. The auctioning off of sheep in lots of one hundred, trek oxen by twos, cows in twos and tens must have occupied a lot of time. Price variation shows that the auction was not pro forma; buyers gauged prices—offering more here and holding back there. They were not simply buying undifferentiated livestock. Son-in-law Munnik, the wine pachter from the Cape, took home most of the sheep, over 1,400 including the ewes with lambs. One of the Orphan masters, Christoffel Brand, took **35**

an additional three hundred sheep and a large portion of the cattle: 24 trek oxen plus an additional 30 young animals. Brand had a farm on the Berg River, so he did not have to drive his herd all the way back to Cape Town, but Munnik did not register any grazing land near the Cedarberg, so either he planned to resell the animals in Stellenbosch or deliver many of them directly for slaughter, since his land was unlikely to support so large a flock.

Selling the livestock and most of the farming implements consumed the first day of the auction, which revealed the working side of an industrious agricultural enterprise. Plows, a harrow, harnesses for draft horses and oxen, empty grain sacks, scythes, and sickles all attest to active cultivation at Groote Valleij, although Barend Lubbe did not report a grain harvest to the opgaaf. Large axes, crow bars, picks, and shovels transferred from one set of working hands to another. An anvil, a bench vice, adzes, hand axes, and wrenches needed specialized skills. Loose barrel hoops suggest someone on Groote Valleij was a cooper. Josias Engelbrecht bought the hoops, along with a few empty barrels. Did he have the skills, or would he hire the hands when he needed them? **36**

Empty barrels and two brandy stills show that like most established Western Cape farms, Groote Valleij made its own liquor. Cow hides, uncut canvas for making wagon covers or grain sacks, even a piece of tanned Russia leather all testify to handiwork on the farm. They also sold thatching reeds and broom straw, another sign of specialized skills. Auctioned individually or in small lots, this wide array of tools and farming supplies went to a range of buyers without following any discernable pattern. Kin, neighbors, and strangers made purchases large and small. Son-in-law Petrus van der Merwe spent just three stuivers on "some tools," but 12:2 rixdollars on an empty barrel. Neighbor Christiaan Baarts parted with 1:3 rixdollars in exchange for an ax and a scale, while nephew Barend Vorster laid out 60 rixdollars for one of the brandy stills. **37**

On the second day, the auctioneer turned to housewares, including beds with bedding, cookware, and a range of serving pieces. In addition to the expensive wagons, valuable slaves, and specialized tools that speak to hard-nosed agricultural production, the Lubbe household, like their Burger neighbors, had silver spoons, porcelain plates, and copper serving kettles for coffee and tea. The Lubbes had a baffling forty forks (a complement, perhaps, to Schalk Willem and Hester Burger's sixty plates?). If they had an equal number of plates, they did not sell them at the auction. As with the tools, the housewares went individually or in small lots to a wide range of buyers. The most expensive domestic purchase was son Willem Lubbe's bid of 57:1 rixdollars for a bedstead with a mattress, a bolster, four cushions, and both chintz and woolen coverlets. Son-in-law Josias Engelbrecht took home the two other complete beds, though they had only two cushions and no woolen coverlet, and sold for less than half the price. **38**

Cross Reference:

Compare the Lubbes' household belongings to those of Schalk Willem and Hester Burger. (chapter6.html#p42)

Son-in-law Petrus van der Merwe—likely advised by his wife Elsie—purchased the other two most costly domestic items: a desk that sold for 25:7 rixdollars and the family Bible—in folio with a copper clasp—at 28:1 rixdollars. They also bought 19 pewter spoons, an iron meat fork and cleaver, two unidentified books, a shelf, and two guns. This eclectic assortment is characteristic of all the household purchasers, with the exception of Hester Smit from the neighboring Halve Dorschvloer. **39**

As the Widow Burger, she was the only woman to buy in her own name. It had been just three years since her husband passed away and her own household inventory recorded modest markers of settler respectability. She made the short trip to the auction at Groote Valleij—now her daughter and son-in-law's farm—and completed just three purchases, all status-conscious housewares. She bought an expensive copper water kettle and brazier meant for table-side tea service. At 7:4 rixdollars, it was the most costly household serving or display item of the sale. The set duplicated the function of the two pewter kettles and iron chaffing dish she already possessed. The Widow Burger also bought a pewter soup tureen with a matching ladle, something she did not have in 1782, and another pair of copper candlesticks. Though Barend Lubbe's greater wealth did not accrue to Halve Dorschvloer, a little bit of status did. **40**

Reckoning a Family's Place on the Frontier

A public auction was a mechanism of circulation in both broad and narrow orbits. For the Lubbes, this sale served to liquidate assets in order to pay out each heir, so wealth dispersed, following the diaspora of Barend and Martha's children: along the Olifants River, over the Cedarberg mountains, across to the Roggeveld, down to the Bokkeveld, back toward the Piketberg and all the way to Cape Town. But the auction was more than a financial convention. People, goods, and status traveled, too. **41**

Narrowly, resources were redistributed within the family and within the confines of the Olifants River valley. Basic elements of agricultural production formally changed hands, though in a case like Groote Valleij, Johannes Hendrik and Elsie simply became the heads of a household and a farming enterprise in which they were already deeply invested. Most of the slaves, too, as both labor and as members of a household, stayed within the family. In a scattered generation of siblings, however, close kin connections could mean moving a great **42**

distance, as Anna and Arend van de Caab found when they followed Jacoba and Barend Jacobus Burger to the Roggeveld. Slaves bought by other households left the immediate family but remained in the area, potentially able to maintain some of their own social network.

Other valuable or valued items also stayed in the family: wagons, furniture, bedding, and the Bible went to children or nephews. General tools, housewares, and livestock were sold widely, but close kin or close neighbors bought the most. The Joosten brothers' expensive slave purchases, and Orphan Master Christoffel Brand's major cattle purchase serve to underscore the public, market-oriented nature of the event. Those in the narrow orbit arrived inclined to buy, undoubtedly hoping to keep some belongings in the family or in the area, but not at any cost. **43**

Thus the auction also created a wider circulation, though on the frontier, the market was limited to those claiming a settler identity. The free people of color and mixed-race individuals present at urban sales were not buyers on the frontier. **44**

Notes

Note 1: Tracey Randle, "Patterns of Consumption at Auctions: A Case Study of Three Estates" in *Contingent Lives: Social Identity and Material Culture in the VOC World*, ed. Nigel Worden, 54 (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 2007); Martin Hall, "The Secret Lives of Houses: Women and Gables in the Eighteenth-Century Cape," *Social Dynamics* 20 (1994), 1.

Note 2: Randle, "Patterns of Consumption;" Robert C.-H. Shell, "Auctions—their Good and Evil Tendency (Part 1)," *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library* 3:4 (June 1985), 147–51.

Note 3: Edmund H. Burrows, *Overberg Odyssey: People, Roads and Early Days* (Swellendam: Swellendam Trust, 1994), 56–58.

Note 4: Randle, "Patterns of Consumption," 56.

Note 5: CA: MOOC 8/4.88, Estate Inventory of Barend Lubbe, 4 Dec. 1723. CA: MOOC 10/3.47, *Vendu rol*, Barend Lubbe, 10 Dec. 1723.

Note 6: 1731 opgaaf, Hans Heese transcription.

Note 7: CA: MOOC 8/4.114, Estate Inventory of Jan Lubbe, 22 May 1726; CA: MOOC 8/4.113, Estate Inventory of Frans Lubbe, 8 Aug. 1726.

Note 8: Leibbrandt, *Précis*: 670f.

Note 9: Ad Biewenga, *De Kaap de Goede Hoop: Een Nederlandse vestigingskolonie, 1680–1730* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Prometheus and Bert Bakker, 1999), 150–52.

Note 10: Nigel Penn, *Forgotten Frontier*, 70. Dan Sleigh, personal communication, 10 Feb. 1998.

Note 11: CA: MOOC 8/7.25, Estate Inventory of Paul Keyser, 26 Apr. 1752.

Note 12: Leibbrandt, *Précis*, 775c. On the alcohol pacht system, see Gerald Groenewald, "From Tappers to *Pachters*: The Evolution of the Alcohol *Pacht* system at the Cape, c.1656–1680," paper presented to the 'Company, Castle and Control' research group meeting, 8 Sept. 2004, University of Cape Town.

Note 13: CA: MOOC 8/6.33a, Estate Inventory of Jan Engelbrecht, 23 Apr. 1740.

Note 14: CA: RLR 14:66, *Truto, over de Olifants rivier*, to Jacobus Louw Jacobsz, 1755–57; CA; RLR 14:96, *Bidouw, over de Olifants rivier*, to Jacobus Louw Jacobsz, 1755–57 (per L. Guelke data).

Note 15: CA: MOOC 8/12.41b, Estate Inventory of Abraham Mouton, 15 Oct. 1768. CA: RLR 25:24, *Berg Valleij, agter Piquetberg*, to Josias Engelbrecht, 24 Jan. 1777–8 Oct. 1791 (per L. Guelke data)

Note 16: CA: RLR 15:5, de Modder Valleij, *over de Olifants rivier* to Andries Lubbe, 12 Jan. 1757–10 Feb. 1786 (per L. Guelke data).

Note 17: CA: 1/STB 11/19, folio 7, LFL, Widow Barend Frederik Lubbe payments on Brakkefontein through 1794; CA: 1/STB 11/19, folio 14, LFL, Paul Willem Lubbe Barendsz, payment for Brakkefontein, 11 Sept. 1794.

Note 18: CA: RLR 23:202, *Kleijn. Fonteijnt. op de S.B.* to Willem Lubbe Barendz, 19 Apr. 1775–20 Jan. 1778 (per L. Guelke data). ARA: VOC 4214, 1764 opgaaf, Drakenstein pp. 26 & 34, (Robert Ross transcription).

Note 19: ARA: VOC 4276, 1773 opgaaf, Drakenstein p. 25 (Robert Ross transcription).

Note 20: CA: RLR 34:44.4, *Onrust, over de Olifants Rivier*, to Frans Lubbe 6 Oct. 1786–18 May, 1791; CA: RLR 35:45, *Wedouw, over de Olifants River*, to Frans Lubbe, 6 Oct. 1786–18 May 1791; CA: RLR 35:116.1, *Bloemfontein, over de Olifants River*, to Frans Lubbe, 11 Apr. 1773–18 May 1791 (per L.

Guelke data). CA: 1/STB 11/19 folio 8 p. 37, LFL, Frans Lubbe Payments on Zandrif, in the Biedouw Valley, 1791–1803. CA: 1/STB 11/19 folio 5, LFL, Frans Lubbe, payments on Onrust, Wedouw and Bloemfontein, 1791–1803.

Note 21: CA: RLR 15: 212, *Kaaken Valleij, in het Bokkeveld*, to Petrus van der Merwe, 22 Jan. 1760–25 Oct. 1792 (per L. Guelke data).

Note 22: CA: RLR 28:175, *Renoster Fonteijn, op het Roggeveld*, to Barend Jacobus Burger, 23 April 1782–30 Sept. 1789 (per L. Guelke data).

Note 23: dV&P, 1981, 121.

Note 24: Leibbrandt, *Précis*: 391c, Munnik elected to Drakenstein church council 1773; 556h, Munnik appointed heemraad for Stellenbosch in 1775; 1465i, Munnik appointed heemraad for Drakenstein, 1777.

Note 25: Total value was RxD 2,811:0: ½. CA: MOOC 10/3.47, Vendu Rol: Barend Lubbe, 10 Dec. 1723.

Note 26: Randle, "Patterns of Consumption," 58–60.

Note 27: CA: RLR 36:12, *Dijker Fonteijn, aan de Olifants Rivier*, to Hendrik Lubbe Hendriksz, from 28 Feb. 1788 (per L. Guelke data); CA: RLR 26:140, Hendrik van der Wat's *Gat, aan de Olifants Rivier*, to Johannes Liebenberg, from 19 Nov. 1779 (per L. Guelke data).

Note 28: Shell, *Children of Bondage*, 308–309.

Note 29: dV&P, 1981, 367. The Joosten brothers' grandmother, Maria Mouton, was executed in 1714 for conspiring with her slave lover to kill her husband, Frans Joosten. See Nigel Penn, "The Wife, the Farmer, and the Farmer's Slaves: Adultery and Murder on a Frontier Farm in the Early Eighteenth-Century Cape," *Kronos* 28 (2002): 1–20.

Note 30: CA: MOOC 10/3.47, Vendu Rol, Barend Lubbe, 10 Dec. 1723.

Note 31: Two wagons for RxD 100, CA: MOOC 8/4.92, Estate Inventory of Maria van der Merwe, n.d. [1720–27]. One wagon, 50 Cape guilders, CA: MOOC 8/5.11, Estate Inventory of Barend Burger, 12 Sept. 1729. One wagon, 100 Cape guilders, CA: MOOC 8/5.35, Estate Inventory of Willem Burger, 12 July 1731.

Note 32: One horsewagon with traces for 8 horses and 1 ox wagon with canvas cover and yokes, each valued at RxD 300. CA: MOOC 8/20.29, Estate Inventory of Joseph de Clercq, 29 July 1791.

Note 33: One wagon at RxD 50, CA: MOOC 8/13.46, Estate Inventory of Barend Burger, 22 Sept. 1770. One used wagon at RxD 100 and one old wagon at RxD 30, CA: MOOC 8/49.25, Estate Inventory of Schalk Willem Burger, 24 Sept. 1782.