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[SECOND EDITION]

# THE IMMIGRANT'S GUIDE.

THE

# DIAMOND-FIELDS

OF

SOUTH AFRICA,

WITH A MAP OF THE COUNTRY AND FULL PARTICULARS  
AS TO ROADS, PRICES OF NECESSARIES, &c.

BY

J. G. STEYTLER.

FIFTH THOUSAND.

CAPE TOWN:

SAUL SOLOMON & CO., PRINTERS, ST. GEORGE'S-STREET.

1870

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## PREFACE.

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IN presenting to the public the following brief description of some of the most prominent features of the newly-discovered DIAMOND FIELDS of SOUTH AFRICA, the reader is requested to bear in mind that we do not profess to do more than to reproduce and condense, in a convenient shape, the information which has been accumulating for months past in the Colony. The various communications we now reprint from scientific men, and from those who are actively engaged in bringing to light the hidden resources of this portion of South Africa, have been collected, mainly, from the periodical press of the Colony. Indeed, the whole of the circumstances connected with the discovery of the Diamond-fields on the banks of the Orange River, and of the success which has attended those who have searched for the precious gems, are of a character the reverse of the sensational or romantic. Upwards of two years ago a valuable diamond was accidentally discovered in the possession of a Dutch farmer, who had given it, along with a number of pretty stones, to his children as a plaything. It was not long before the farmers and traders resident near the Orange River made it known that they were prepared to pay well for any diamonds which might be discovered, and the natives were not slow in finding that it paid them, while herding their master's stock, to pick up any stone presenting an unusual appearance which they might fall in with. From time to time the traders in Hope Town, Colesberg, and other places became in this manner possessed of gems which were duly forwarded to the English market.

About this time Mr. Emanuel, the well-known dealer in diamonds, dispatched a Mr. Gregory to report upon the

Prof. J. R. GREGORY

△ March 1867

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Daniel Jacob JACOBS  
on the farm  
de KALK in the  
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nature of the country from whence the diamonds were said to have been obtained, and that person having posted over several parts of the country which no one had pronounced to be diamondiferous, returned to London and reported that the rumours which had been circulated were without foundation, but had been trumped for the purposes of land speculators. Only a very short time after this report had reached the Colony, one of the most splendid gems in the world, "THE STAR OF SOUTH AFRICA," a diamond of the first water, weighing eighty-three and a half carats, was brought into the Colony by a native and sold to Messrs. Lilienfeld & Co., of Hope Town. This diamond subsequently realized twenty-four thousand pounds. It can well be imagined that a discovery of this kind could not fail to have an effect upon the colonists, and since then the number of persons engaged in the search for diamonds has gradually increased. At the present time there are probably not less than two thousand persons encamped upon the banks of the Vaal River, busily engaged in digging, sifting, and washing the soil, and the number of diamonds they have discovered offers inducements which tends to add daily to their numbers. What effect these discoveries will have upon the future of this Colony it is impossible to foresee; but as diamonds have been found at points separated by upwards of a hundred miles, there is sufficient ground for believing an important era in the history of South Africa is approaching. Believing this to be the case, we have determined to place our readers in Europe in possession of information which will enable them to form their own opinions, and to offer such advice as may be acceptable to those who may resolve to pay a visit to one of the most interesting spots on the frontier of the Colony.

The Diamond-fields are situated near the junction of the Vaal and Orange Rivers, at a distance from Cape Town, in a north-easterly direction of about eight hundred miles. Immigrants arriving in Table Bay from Europe or elsewhere will be in a most favourable position for laying in supplies, procuring cattle, vehicles, and other necessaries. The line of main road from Cape Town to the Orange River is well-

constructed, and supplied with w capital pasturage. Starting from by rail to Well miles more. Th wagon rates at ar per day. From Karoo Poort is arrives at Esau's where there is a kloof, where go The next princ River, Blood Ri three hundred : indicating eight by mules. Pro us to Rhenoste ful supply of From Nel's Po by ox-wagon, o reach Hanover. ance of about e the nearest rout Orange River t arid, sandy reg across the Vaal the exigent Ka side of the Va crossed before : must again tu Klipdrift. A by way of C the veldt gene River is to four days by Jacobsdal, abo this point that

constructed, and is kept in an efficient state of repair. It is supplied with water in sufficient abundance, and provides capital pasturage for cattle.

Starting from Cape Town there are first fifty-eight miles by rail to Wellington. Thence to Ceres come thirty-six miles more. The rest of the distance we give in bullock-wagon rates at an estimate of from eighteen to twenty miles per day. From Ceres through the Warm Bokkeveld to Karoo Poort is two days. In another day, the traveller arrives at Esau's; next at Pataties River; then at Driekop, where there is a capital Government dam; and next at Zoutkloof, where good supplies may be had for man and beast. The next principal stages are Buffel's River, Geelbek's River, Blood River, and so on to Beaufort West, which is three hundred and sixty miles from Cape Town, a distance indicating eighteen days by bullock-wagon, or about eight by mules. Proceeding thence, one day by ox-wagon brings us to Rhenosterkop, a Government outspan, with a plentiful supply of water; and another day to Nel's Poort. From Nel's Poort to Richmond is a distance of seven days by ox-wagon, or about 130 miles; two days more suffice to reach Hanover. Hope Town may then be reached at a distance of about eighty miles. Hope Town is geographically the nearest route. Leaving Hope Town and crossing the Orange River by a pont the traveller must pass through the arid, sandy region of Albania, past the Backhouse Station, across the Vaal River, and by an execrable road and through the exigent Kafirs of the Campbell Grounds, on the west side of the Vaal, on to the Hart River, which also must be crossed before reaching the long bend by which the traveller must again turn back to his diamondiferous destination at Klipdrift. Assuming that he prefers the other route by way of Colesberg—to which the roads are easy and the veldt generally good—the next stage across the Orange River is to Fauresmith, a distance of eighty miles, or four days by ox-wagon. Thence the adventurer makes for Jacobsdal, about an equal distance; and, indeed, now it is to this point that most even of the Hope Town people direct

their aim instead of taking the west side of the Vaal. From Jacobsdal to Pniel is about four days more, or eighty miles—and there the journey is completed.

When time is no particular object most persons travel in wagons drawn by a team of oxen numbering from twelve to sixteen, according to the weight of the load, and the nature of the roads. Should a more rapid progress be desirable mules and horses are substituted for oxen, but the expenses are greater than with the latter mode of locomotion. As a proof of the character of the roads to be traversed, we may mention that His Excellency Sir P. E. Wodehouse, the late Governor of the Colony, traversed the road between Wellington and the Orange River in an American spider, occupying only eight days.

At present operations have been carried on at the Diamond-fields in the most primitive manner. The machinery has been of the rudest and most simple character, and nothing like a systematic search by competent persons has been undertaken. Much remains to be done, but sufficient has already been accomplished to prove beyond dispute that the Diamond-fields of South Africa are more than exceptionally productive. The natives residing in the vicinity of the Diamond-fields are peaceful and moderately industrious, the country is free from dangerous reptiles and beasts of prey, and the climate is healthy and pleasant. The prices of provisions on the spot are moderate—bread 6d. per lb., beef 1s., potatoes £2 per bags of three bushels, flour £2 10s. for ditto, Indian corn £1 10s. ditto, brandy 2s. 6d. per bottle, wine 1s. 6d. ditto, sheep 10s. each, butter 1s. 6d. per lb., and Kafir corn 30s. per bag. Parties visiting the Diamond-fields usually lay in a stock of necessaries previous to leaving Cape Town, calculated to last them during their stay in the country, and in this way are able to purchase at the most reasonable rates.

The success which will attend the labours of the seekers after diamonds will greatly depend upon the character of the person by whom the search is undertaken. Some, unquestionably, will be more lucky than others; but from the

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private letter of a gentleman at the Diggings, we gather that "perseverance" is the most necessary quality in diamond-seeking, and is also, to a considerable extent, wanting in many of the parties. "The luck, as they call it," says he, "belongs to those who turn over the most ground, take a kopje, and stick to it. The mistake made by many is that of just turning over a few stones, and then running off to another place where they hear a diamond is found."

Within the last two days intelligence has reached the Colony that at the Tatin Gold-fields, which lie about five hundred miles beyond the Diamond-fields, and where quartz-crushing by machinery has just been commenced, the yield of gold has not been less than two ounces to the ton.<sup>o</sup> This is a return which has astonished the most experienced Australian diggers.

In conclusion, we have only to add that immigrants arriving from abroad will meet with every assistance, and will receive the most reliable advice upon communicating with ourselves. Our lengthened experience of the Colony, and our intimate acquaintance with the interior, enable us to present advantages to those who may favour us with their confidence which few possess. We shall at all times be anxious to make the interests of our constituents our own; and having already taken the necessary means for being put in possession of the most reliable information upon every subject connected with the Diamond-fields, we shall be happy in placing our knowledge and experience at the disposal of those who, on arriving in a distant Colony, have much to learn, and who are liable to be misled by those who are simply actuated by self-interested motives.

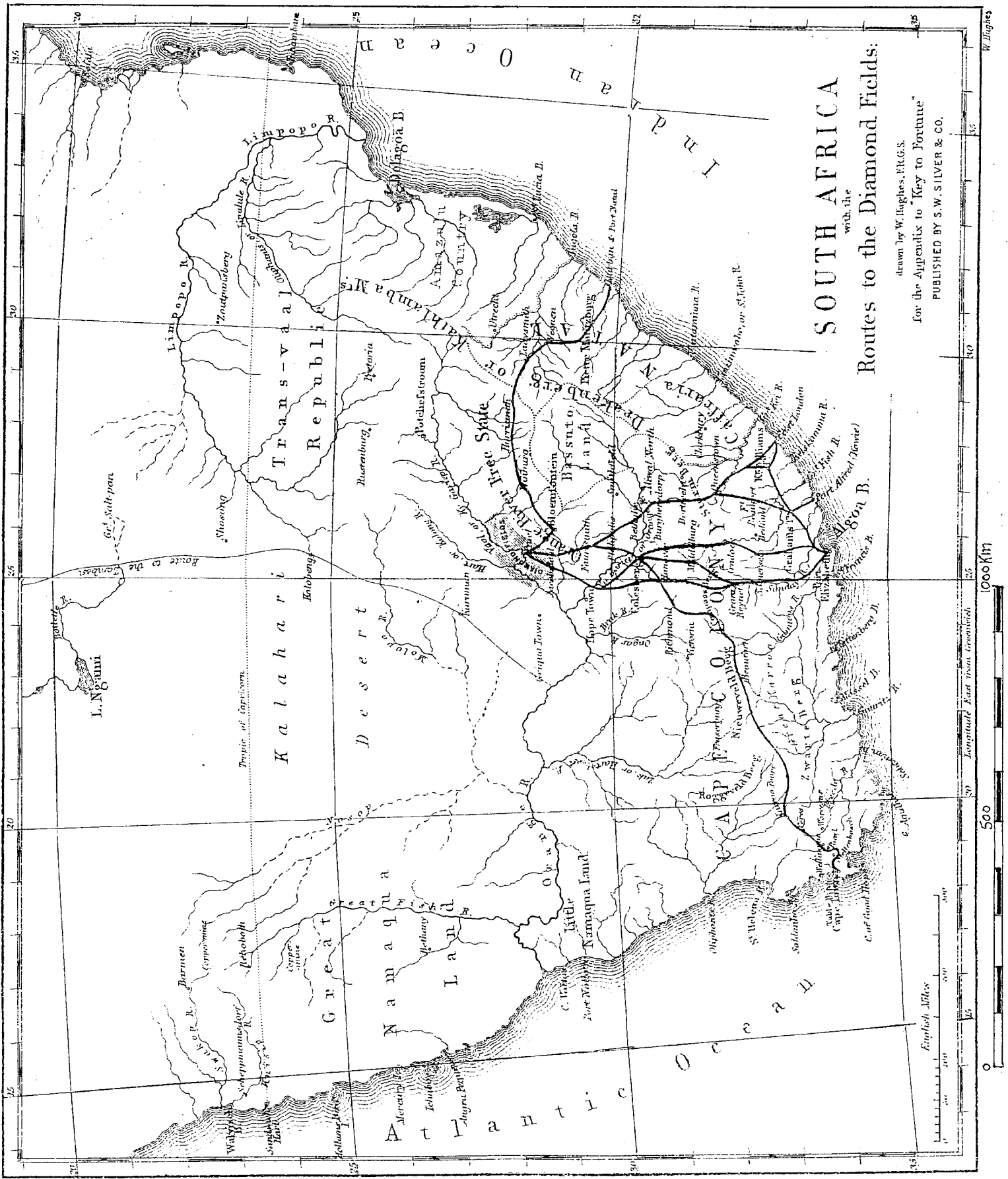
STEYTLER & STEYTLER,

Immigration and General Agents,  
62, St. George's-street,  
Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope.

August 18, 1870.

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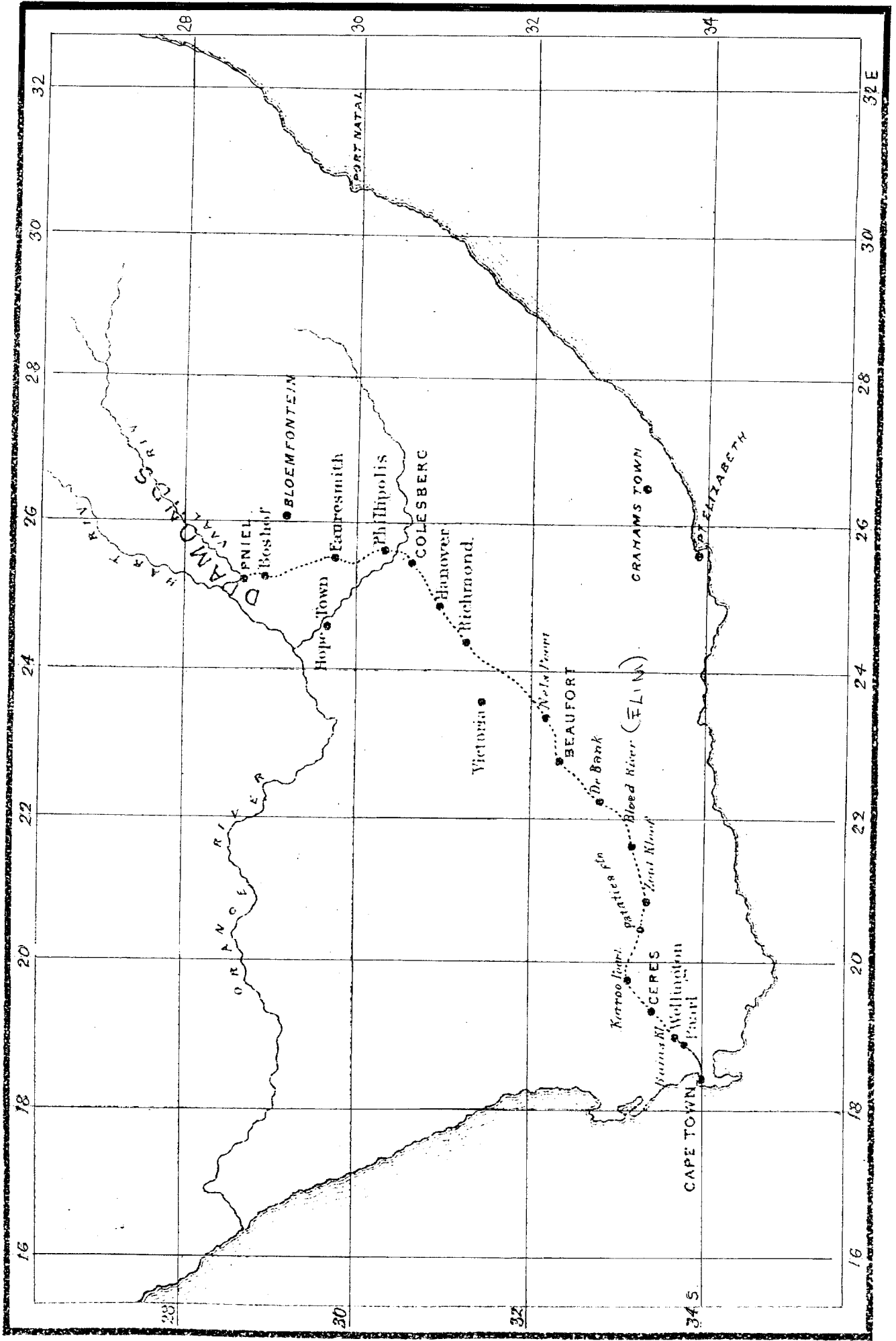
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# SOUTH AFRICA

## Routes to the Diamond Fields:

with the  
 drawn by W. Hughes, F.R.G.S.  
 for the Appendices to "Key to Fortane"  
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Saul Solomon & Co. Litho

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