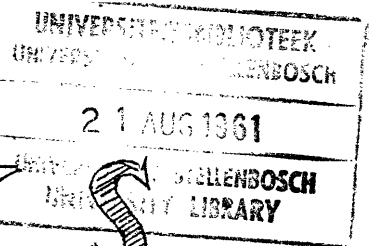




I. M. S.



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No. 43. STELLENBOSCH, June, 1949.

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INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE MUNICIPALITY  
OF STELLENBOSCH.

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1. A CONDUCTED TOUR THROUGH OLD STELLENBOSCH.

The tour actually took place, the guide being Mr. J.D. Krige (Oom Japie Home) and the party conducted was the writer of this article. It must perhaps be explained that Mr. Krige came to study at Stellenbosch in 1876, i.e. 73 years ago, when he was 13 years of age. After completing his studies, Mr. Krige taught at Stellenbosch and later became the well-known house master of the Home which was situated at the back of the present boys' hostel Prima. Our form of locomotion was, of course, the motor car, but we frequently left the vehicle in order to see and explore better.

The route taken was along the Avenue from van Riebeck Street, then along the river to the Piet Re-tief Bridge, up along the river bank on the south side, i.e. along the side nearest to the Paul Roos Gymnasium, over the University Bridge, along Noordwal, along Coetzenburg Road, up van Riebeck Street to the entrance of Lovers' Walk, thence to Jannasch Street from where we followed the Mill Stream to its source. Please try to recall the route taken and check up with what has been written, otherwise you will miss some of the points to be enumerated.

### OUR OLDEST RESERVOIR.

In the Avenue, just where it branches off from van Riebeck Street, i.e. in front of the residency, Stellenbosch's first reservoir was situated according to Mr. Krige. Till when? Until after our informant's coming to Stellenbosch. It was therefore still there within living memory. But what a strange place! you will comment. Well, it must be remembered that van Riebeck Street was not then in existence and our present Avenue as it runs North to South in the direction of the sports fields, was not used for vehicular traffic. The site was, therefore, well chosen in so far as it was outside the town itself, but on the other hand it was so low-lying that the pressure in the town was next to nothing. The first reservoir was, of course, very small, much smaller than the second reservoir, the remains of which can still be seen along the upper <sup>reaches</sup> of Lovers' Walk. The dimensions of the second reservoir are 14 by 57 feet, with a depth of some 10 feet. The reservoir we are using at present in Jonkershoek contains half a million gallons when it is full. More will be said about the second reservoir when we reach Lovers' Walk. At present we are still in the Avenue running from North to South, to the University bridge.

### KOLONIESLAND.

To the east of the Avenue lies a large tract of land formerly known as Koloniesland. It extended from the Avenue along the present van Riebeck Street and along Lovers' Walk. It has been built up as far as Coetzenburg Road but beyond that it is still used for farming. The beautiful vineyard of Mrs. Marais is part of Koloniesland.

When Koloniesland was purchased and subdivided, a thoroughfare had to be provided and in that way the North to South Avenue came to be used as a street. To simplify matters we shall call it the Koloniesland Avenue in order to distinguish it from the part of the Avenue which runs parallel to the river. The owner of Koloniesland was Cornelis Brink and from him Professor Hofmeyr bought the entire property. He planned to establish his Industrial School on it, but subsequently he found a more suitable site and then decided to subdivide and sell Koloniesland. Even under these circumstances he experienced difficulty in finding purchasers, one good lady saying that she objected to living in the Transvaal. It must not be supposed that Koloniesland extended to the river, i.e. to where Noordwal has since then been constructed. The fact is that a small tract of land along the river vested in the Council. This was subsequently disposed of to Mr. Roelof Louw and it eventually became the property of Mr. Frikkie Marais.

#### MINNESERIE.

As we have now reached the river near the bridge to Coetzenburg Sports Grounds, the reader is asked to look downstream, i.e. west, with us. We see before us what used to be the Stellenbosch Show Grounds until not so very long ago. In fact the buildings that used to belong to the Agricultural Society are still to be seen at the lower end of the Avenue. But there are three distinct tracts or carriageways along this part of the river. Which is the Avenue? There is first of all, the tarred road which connects up with Noordwal at the Coetzenburg University Bridge; then there is a road or a wide sidewalk in immediate proximity to the row of houses in the Avenue, and lastly, there is a

beautiful avenue in between the two roads that have just been mentioned. Mr. Krige is quite explicit about this point. The tarred road is a later construction. The real avenue is the one that cannot be used by vehicular traffic at present, i.e. the middle course. But that is not the whole story, for Mr. Krige informs us that this tract was formerly not called the Avenue but Minneserie, with the accents on the second and last syllables, thus Min-né-se-rié. The reason for the name was that there used to be a menagerie in the vicinity and Min-né-se-rié is simply a corrupted form of it. This word, or rather another form of it, has been preserved, for the street near the Presbyterian Church has been named Minseric Street. It will be noticed that Mr. Krige suggests that the word was not pronounced Minseric.

According to Mr. Krige then, Minneserie was the original name which was gradually replaced by Avenue. After Professor De Vos went to live in this area in 1883 the Avenue also came to be called Die Lean. Today Die Lean is very generally used.

We are able to proceed along the riverside because a road has been constructed through the grounds of the Theological Seminary along the bank of the river. The Curatorium of the Seminary was willing to make the ground available to the Municipality and in that way unfortunately diminish the size of the gardens of the professors, on condition that the Council constructed a suitable wall. One dares hope that the beauty of the wall is some recompense for the fine gesture of the Curatorium. The western part of Noordwal continues up to the Piet Retief Bridge which was recently constructed by the Council to recompense the Paul Roos Gymnasium for

making land available to the Municipality on the south side of the river. It is along this southern side that we must now travel eastwards, or upstream.

### WELGEVALLEN.

On this southern side of the river we have Krigeville, the Paul Roos Gymnasium, the Boarding establishments of the school, the University farm and finally the Coetzenburg Sportsfields. All this was part of the farm Welgevallen, which eventually belonged to Mr. Fanie Brink. It was from him that Professor Hofmeyr bought the whole concern. The lower or western portion he sold to Mr. Willie Krige, the father of our Councillor, Mr. W.A. Krige, for the sum of £550. For £550, therefore, the grounds on which the Paul Roos Gymnasium, Krigeville and some of the land

to the south of these properties lie, were sold and bought. Prices have certainly not remained stationary, here as elsewhere in Stellenbosch. The central portion on which the boarding establishments are now found was retained by Professor Hofmeyr for educational purposes. It consists of 54 morgen. The eastern portion was sold to Messrs. Frikkie and Sarel Marais for £850. They subsequently subdivided the land, Sarel retaining the part on which the University farm is situated and Frikkie keeping the part on which the sportsfields are to be found today. Mr. Brink's property Welgevallen had, therefore, passed into the hands of Mr. Willie Krige, the Industrial School, the Home Authorities and Mr. Sarel Marais and Mr. Frikkie Marais.

And how did all these good people get across the river? Brink had his own bridge which exists to this day, although it is closed to vehicular

traffic, and the School and Sarel Marais used it also. Mr. Krige, lower down the river, had his bridge which also is in existence to this day and Erikkie Marais constructed one for his use. He farmed on the present sportsgrounds and lived on the other side of the river. A small part of the foundation of his bridge is still to be seen in the river, near Miss Katie Neethling's home. When this piece of cement is submerged, the river is very full indeed.

The story of the educational activities on the 54 morgen of ground not sold by Professor Hofmeyr has been told more than once and forms part of the history of the education of our country as well as of our town. For that reason we will not refer to it at length now.

There are, however, two topics to which we would still like to draw your attention, one being the remains of another bridge and the other a footpath.

#### THE STEG.

The remains of the bridge are to be found at about 100 yards' distance from, and to the east of, Brink's Bridge, or the Home Bridge, as it subsequently came to be called. The remains can be traced on both sides of the river and they certainly form an historical monument, although they have not been declared as such. Farmers and their families dwelling to the south of the Eerste River used a drift at the lower end of the town when coming to Stellenbosch for church or for business reasons. When the river came down in flood they could not cross it - in the days when bridges had not been built. In order to help them

to get to church or to the village at all, right of way was given them over the farm Welgevallen, on its banks an outspan was proclaimed and a foot-bridge was built. The farmer who was prevented from reaching the village by the flood, would then outspan his cart at the outspan, walk over the steg or footbridge and then he was within a few hundred yards of the church and within a few hundred yards of the Drosdy. No vehicle was allowed to cross the steg, but an exception was made for the horse carrying the mail to Somerset West and Caledon. The outspan has long since disappeared and now forms part of the farm of the Agricultural Department of the University. The old right of way over Welgevallen had also lapsed. All that remains of the steg are the cement blocks on either side of the river. Silently they witness to the religious habits of our forefathers.

#### THE MOUNTAIN FOOTPATH.

And now for the footpath, the twelve foot footpath. It is there to give the public access to the mountain beyond the sports grounds of the University. Some twenty or thirty years ago the Council granted the University approximately 250 morgen of ground against the slope of Stellenboschberg, but the right to cross the University sporting grounds as well as the ground given it, was safeguarded. The public was to retain the right to reach the mountain freely. The twelve foot footpath starts some 100 yards west of the main gates to the football grounds. It runs at right angles to the river until the foothills of the mountain are reached. There a bend at right angles (first bend) is made after which the footpath immediately starts to combat the hill. The ascent is steep indeed. After another sharp turn of ninety degrees (second bend) the footpath runs forward in

the direction of the mountain. The footpath is well fenced to a point well beyond the second bend. So far, so good; but now the University has begun to use the lower portion of the footpath for vehicular traffic going to or coming from the swimming bath and the Building for Physical Education. As the road is extremely narrow, only 12 feet, it seems highly desirable that a bypass must be provided. The road used by people going to the swimming bath and the building for Physical Education leaves the footpath at a point beyond the Grand Stand. From this point the footpath runs on in its own glory to the first bend and beyond. The pedestrians have chosen to follow the path mapped out by the vehicles. Once they reach the Building for Physical Education, they scramble up the hillside to join the 12 foot path some distance above the second bend. This necessitates them going through fences and private ground. Mr. Krige and the writer followed the footpath a considerable way up the mountainside. It was obvious to them that little use is made of the footpath between the first and second bends, in fact after the motor road branches off. The Municipality and/or the University must seriously consider the desirability of improving this section of the footpath. It was noted that parts of it are badly eroded. There is also the necessity of protecting private property.

The climb to beyond the second bend, mentioned above, enabled Mr. Krige to point out Ertjieskloof. It is the old picnic site of Stellenbosch and is situated just above the football fields, and borders on the farm Coetzenburg. It would appear that this valuable and beautiful valley was given to Mr. Jannie Marais in exchange for the ground in Lovers' Walk. The latter had become necessary,



not for the lovers alone or chiefly, but as the pipe track from the second reservoir, already referred to. With this reference to Lovers' Walk, we can now consider this beauty spot in more detail.

### LOVERS' WALK.

Mr. Krige and the writer proceeded over the University Bridge and travelled up Noordwal. Where the latter meets Coetzenburg Road Mr. Krige explained that there had been an older Lovers' Walk, which he himself had frequented with his girl friends, had run along the bank of the river and had extended to near Blake's Drift. In course of time this right lapsed. At present there is no sign or possibility of a walk. The old Lovers' Walk has become private property.

Rather saddened by this loss of a beautiful heritage, we betook ourselves to the new Lovers' Walk. It was first examined at the top end of van Riebeek Street, thereafter at the corner of Man-kadan and Rowan Streets. A small bridge here across the Mill Stream will not be out of place and will make it possible for pedestrians to reach the Walk at a second point, for at present there is only one spot where the general public can enter it. An attempt was made to reach the Walk at the southern end of Jannasch Street but here not only one but two locked gates barred the way. We had to approach a friendly resident of Mostertsdrift whose property borders on the Mill Stream with the request to allow us to cross the stream at the back of his property. Once we were in Lovers' Walk we proceeded upstream and soon found the remains of the second reservoir from which the pipes down the Lovers' Walk track took the water to the town. Beyond the old

reservoir it is possible to make one's way to the point on the river where the Millstream is taken out. Beyond that point no further progress seemed possible.

It would seem that at Jannasch Street a small strip of privately owned ground separates Lovers' Walk from the street. Hence the two gates and hence the difficulty of reaching the Walk from this street. It was also noticed that Lovers' Walk is used for motor traffic purposes above Jannasch Street. In other words vehicles travel along Jannasch Street, pass through the gates and then travel along Lovers' Walk to a quarry. To any resident of Stellenbosch the thought will occur whether permission to use vehicles on Lovers' Walk ought not to rank as a quid pro quo for opening the gates to the public so that free access is obtained to Lovers' Walk not only at the western end but also at a point near the eastern end.

Mr. Krige is one of those people who would safeguard the rights of the residents of Stellenbosch. He served on the Council from 1908 to 1928. He believes that rights must be used. It must be shown that they are wanted, otherwise they tend to lapse. It would seem that a painful chapter can be written on what we as citizens have allowed to lapse, but into this dreary work we shall not go. ~~Learned and acquire~~ ~~an interest in what we have re-~~ ~~quired.~~ That is part of the message of this article. Another part of it is to stimulate interest in the history of Stellenbosch as well as in its present problems, opportunities and amenities.

2. STELLENBOSCH SANATORIUM.

Passengers on the Vlotenburg Road will no doubt have noticed some building activity at the Stellenbosch Sanatorium, or Infectious Diseases Hospital. What is being erected is not a building but a suitable entrance. The architect of the gate is Mr. Bliersch who has designed all the buildings that have been completed so far. The money for the entrance gate was collected by Mrs. E. E. van Rooyen and Mr. Leslie Fischer, both of whom have been connected with the Sanatorium for a long time. The donors in this case are Miss Wirth of Nooitgedacht and the late Mr. S. D. Sacks of Niet Voorby. The Sanatorium is now also the proud possessor of a new tennis court for the entertainment of the staff. The court cost some £200 and was financed from the recreation fund which is raised by the Ladies' Committee of the Sanatorium. From this fund presents are bought for the patients at Christmas time. Money is at present also required for buying material for patients who are anxious to make articles in connection with the occupational therapy that is proving its value. One patient made a beautiful crocheted rug which was disinfected and subsequently sold for no less than £10. Mr. H. Levinsohn's assistance in this connection is gratefully acknowledged.

With all these activities that require an outlay of money, the Ladies' Committee is anxious to raise more funds. They have been successful in getting the assistance of Mr. Pieter de Waal of the S.A. Broadcasting Company. He and his artists will stage a show in the Recreation Theatre in Plein Street on 17th June, 1949 at 8 p.m. Mr. de Waal's programme is called "VROLIKHEID IN DIE KOFFIEHUIS". Everybody is invited to attend the concert and to join in the singing. The members of the Ladies' Committee will supply light

refreshments and the whole function will cost supporters not more than 2/6. Please support a deserving cause and moreover come and enjoy yourself. Mr. Imker Hoogenhout, Mr. John le Roux, Miss Daphne Kest, Mr. Kat Smith and Miss Danita Hanekom will take part. Don't forget the date 17th June at the Recreation Theatre.

### 3. PERSONAL.

We offer our congratulations to Sister Hecse of the Stellenbosch Sanatorium who has announced her engagement to Mr. Paul Leendert of Rotterdam. The Sister and her fiancée made each other's acquaintance on board a Dutch vessel on which she was a passenger and he an officer.

Misses S. Basson and C. Louw, also of the staff of the Sanatorium, have gone one better and are getting married quite soon. The bridegrooms are Messrs. L. Esterhuizen and Steenkamp.