



Wilson in Venice
London

1861 1862
McBrien

Dr. W. J. LEYDS
~~Vrijdag~~ 337
8-GRAVENHAGE.

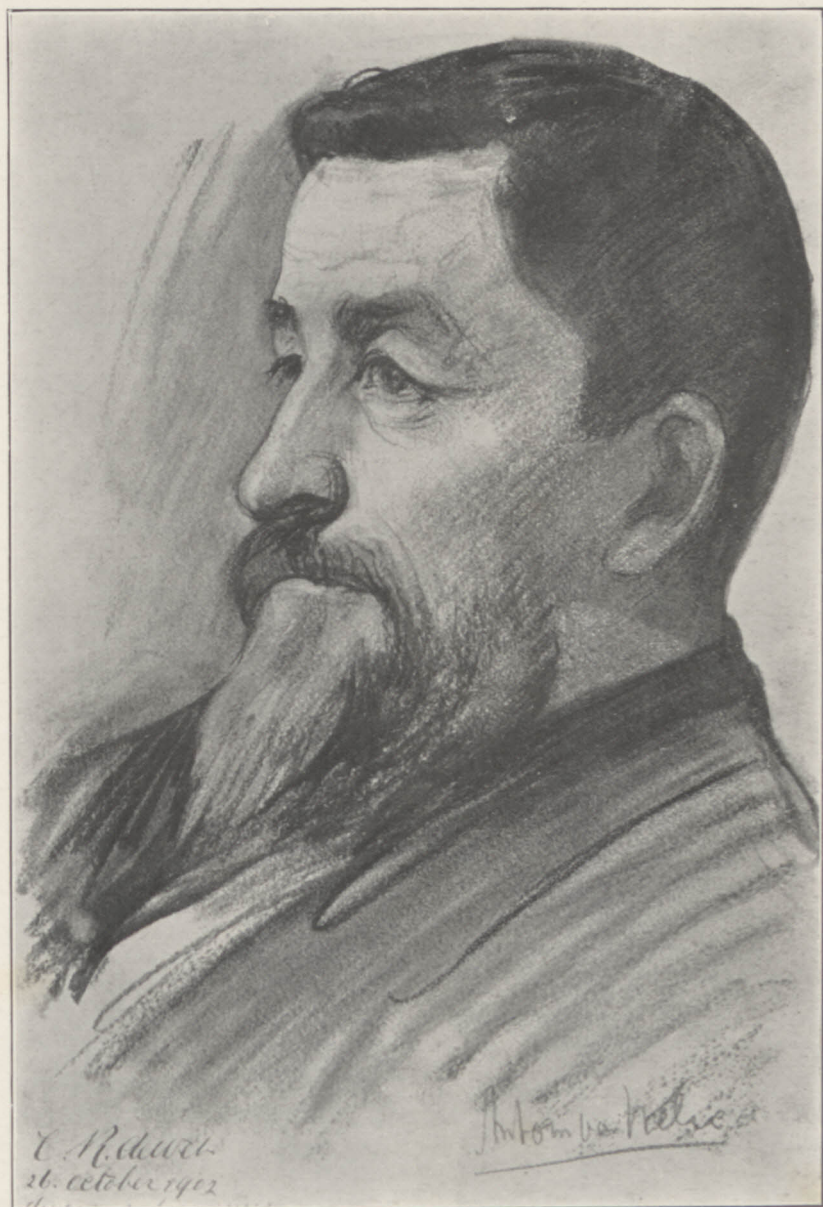
BOER PORTRAITS

PAINTINGS and DRAWINGS

FROM LIFE

by

ANTOON VAN WELIE



Historic Boer Portraits

Painted and Drawn from Life, by ANTOON VAN WELIE.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

I N the autumn of 1902, now nearly seven years ago, the famous Boer Generals, BOTHA, DE WET, and DELAREY, arrived in England, as the Delegates from the Transvaal and (former) Orange Free State Burghers, to conduct their historic negotiations with Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

During their stay in London, a remarkable collection of portraits was formed by the well-known Dutch Artist, M. ANTOON VAN WELIE, who had stayed with the Boer Generals during the whole period of their sojourn in London.

It is this collection, kept intact by M. VAN WELIE, all these years, and even added to, which is now exhibited for the first time, under the distinguished patronage of

The Right Hon. LORD REAY

The Right Hon. LORD HARRIS

The Right Hon. LORD BRASSEY

Sir RICHARD SOLOMON, Agent-General for the Transvaal

The Hon. FITZROY STEWART J. M. SWAN, Esq., R.A.

Sir EDGAR SPEYER LIONEL PHILLIPS, Esq.

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(Councillor Netherlands Legation) F. C. STOOP, Esq.

LIONEL CUST, Esq. HARRY DE WINDT, Esq.

P. A. MOLTENO, Esq., M.P. M. H. SPIELMANN, Esq.



Portrait of Mrs.
Lester C. Ho
1902

Chas. F. Johnson
1902

*Some Reflections on Three Great Men in
South African History.*

IT seems to me but yesterday that I heard DE WET's Private Secretary knock at my cabin door. It was at seven o'clock in the morning, on an October day, in the year 1902. He intimated to me that the General was ready for the first sitting.

I had not entirely recovered from the effects of seasickness, and I felt ashamed, as I looked at that lion's head. He sat straight before me, his right hand resting on his knee, his left on the cabin table. I felt immediately that I must paint him as he then appeared before me, and not otherwise. The spontaneity, the "*slimness*," of this natural man ran so much counter to my own thoughts and feelings, that this first meeting with DE WET acted upon me as a refreshing shower bath.

It is a remarkable thing that DE WET, so powerful in his appearance, showed himself so gentle and so simple, almost childlike, in his demeanour and his talk. I could hardly

realise it, that his soft rap on my bedroom door, of an evening, proceeded from his forceful fist. I could only be with him for nine or ten days, before he went back to South Africa; yet those few days proved sufficient to cement a close friendship between us. Time has not been able to destroy my first impressions. When I awoke in Horrex's Hotel, on the morning after his departure, I felt a void and melancholy in me, when I could not help thinking of our first meeting on the Rotterdam steamer, of that refreshing shower bath, and perhaps most of all, of his last look at me, as I left the mail-boat at Southampton.

The other two Generals I had already met, from time to time, when I was with DE WET. But DELAREY was then suffering, and BOTHA so overloaded with duties of every kind, that to work with and for them was then out of the question.

DELAREY always makes me think of one of the Wise Men from the East. He talked but little. I have the most lively recollection of what occurred one evening, when I had been drawing his head in profile. I expressed my admiration of the nobility of his features, my sorrow that I had not been born a sculptor. He stood behind me, looked at my sketch, then gave me the following simple reply:—

“My boy, all is but vanity. When Death comes, and all is fair within, then everything is right! Good-night!”



BOTHA, the youngest, also the most impenetrable of all three—BOTHA, to whom I felt drawn the closest; BOTHA, who yet remained the furthest away from me, through his great reserve—BOTHA was for me the most interesting of them all. It will be within his own recollection how one evening, when I was making my last drawing of him—one Sunday evening—the last, when BOTHA was left quite alone in Horrex's Hotel, I ventured to predict a great future for him, even daring to compare him with Bismarck.

BOTHA'S eyes are the most remarkable I have ever seen. They make us think of wildness, curbed by civilisation. I had the great privilege to watch him, the hero and the diplomat, surrounded by his family—the domesticated BOTHA! What a wonderful contrast! A happier couple than the BOTHAS exists nowhere.

Mrs. BOTHA is goodness and nobility of character personified. If BOTHA'S eyes are something wonderful, Mrs. BOTHA'S voice has an indescribable charm.

Now this little story.

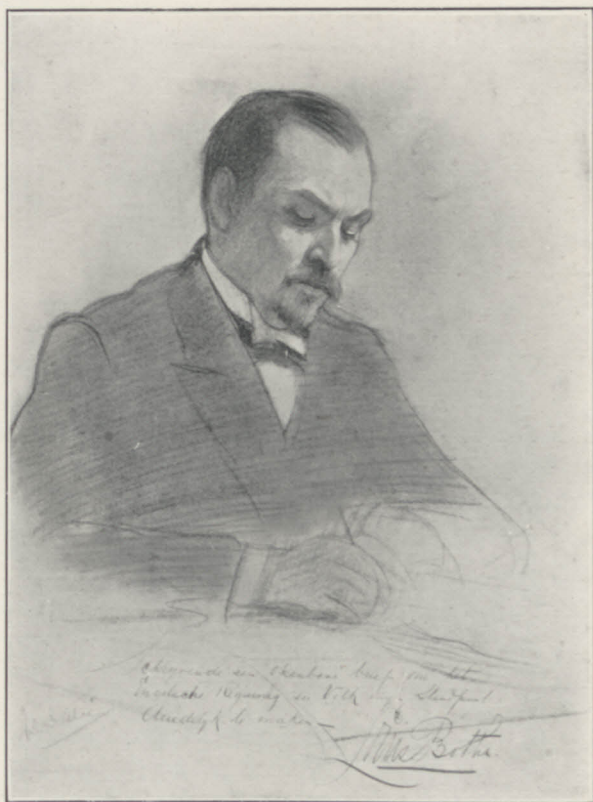
Mrs. BOTHA was sitting for me, one dark November day, for the large portrait of her which now remains in the Transvaal, and of which a sketch in pastel is to be found at this Exhibition. Suddenly the sombre tones, from three street musicians, reach us from the thick mist underneath. I see

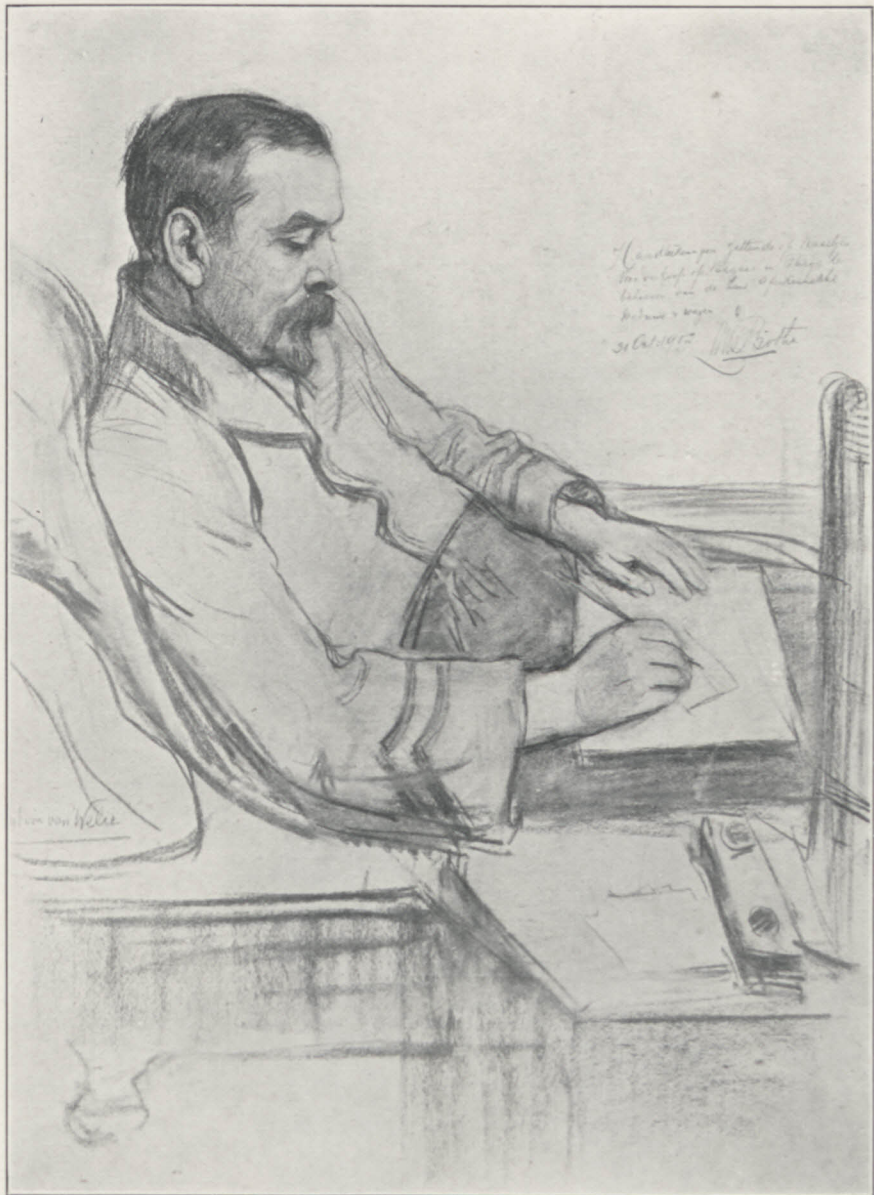
tears coming into her eyes. . . . I wish to say nought else but this: those poor musicians had a good day.

A feeling of great gratitude is in me towards a Providence who willed it that I should have the privilege to know these unspoilt people so intimately. I shall always think of them with the greatest sympathy, the profoundest admiration.

Anton von Helic

LONDON, July, 1909.





CATALOGUE.

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- 1 General P. H. Kretzinger

- 2 A. D. Wolmarans

- 3 General W. D. Fouché

- 4 Revd. Herm. D. van Brockhuizen

- 5 — Fischer

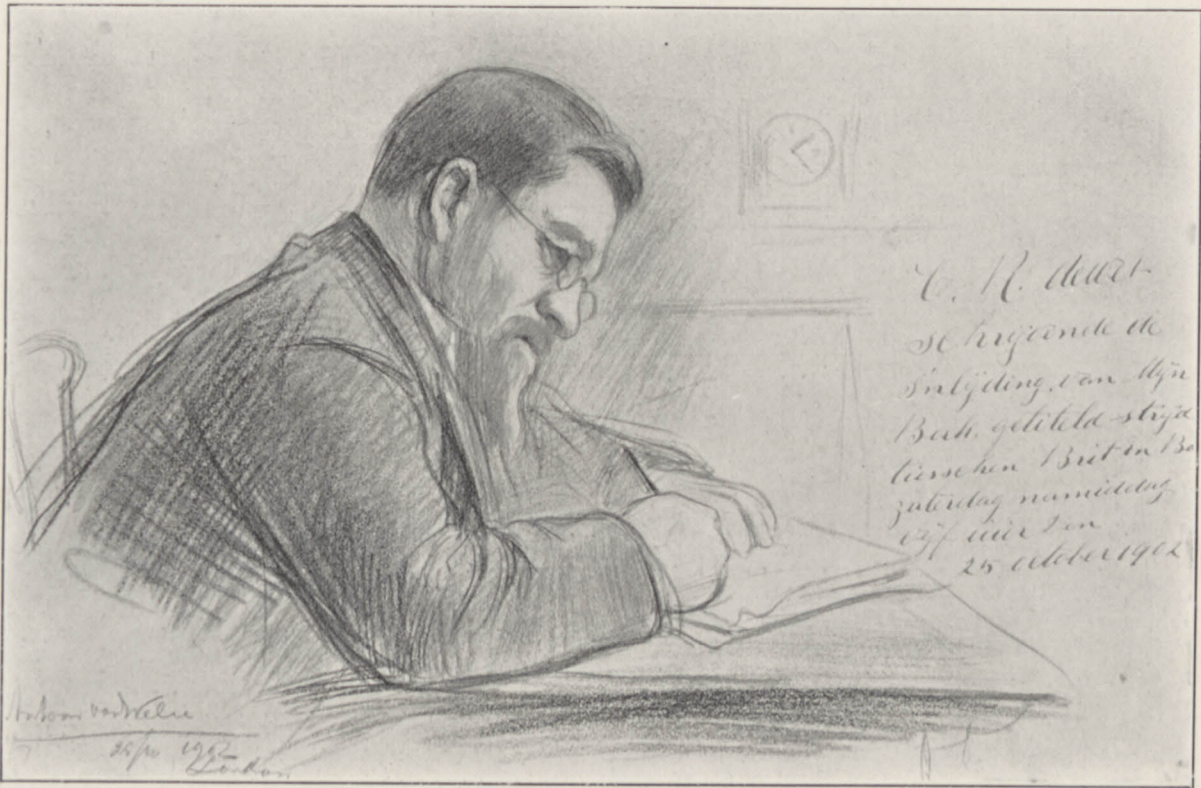
- 6 Pieter H. de V. Graff
- 7 S. Burger (*profile*)
- 8 Study of General J. S. Ferreira (*pastel*)
- 9 General J. S. Ferreira
- 10 S. Burger (*full face*)
- 11 General G. D. Joubert
- 12 Rev. J. D. Kestel
- 13 P. R. de Villiers (*charcoal and pastel*)
- 14 Dr. Colenso



General Louis Botha

- 15 "The time I was ill in London"
- 16 Louis, Son of General Botha
- 17 Smoking
- 18 D. Van de Velden (Botha's then Secretary)
- 19 "Writing an open letter to explain my
standpoint to the British Government and
People"
- 20 Study (*pastel*)
- 21 "During my illness"

- 22 Mrs. Botha (*full face*)
- 23 " Putting my signature on tickets to sell, at
the Bazaar in Paris, for the benefit of
the South African Widows and Orphans"
—30 October, 1902
- 24 General Louis Botha
- 25 Mrs. Botha (*in profile*)
- 26 In bed, speaking to Dr. Colenso
- 27 Mrs. Botha (*pastel study for the large picture in South
Africa*)
- 28 Botha after his illness



V. N. Meert-
de Krijnde de
Inlijding van zijn
Beeth. getiteld stija
Lieschen Brit en Be
jubel day namiddag
197 uur van
25 oktober 1912

H. van der Meulen
25/10 1912
Londen

General Christiaan de Wet

29 "In the Train for Southampton, 1st Nov., 1902."

30 Writing

31 "Writing the Introduction of my Book,
'The Struggle between Briton and
Boer,' Saturday afternoon, 5 o'clock,
25th October, 1902."

32 "In the Train from London to Southampton,
1st Nov., 1902 "

33 Study for Portrait

34 Portrait of General Christiaan de Wet

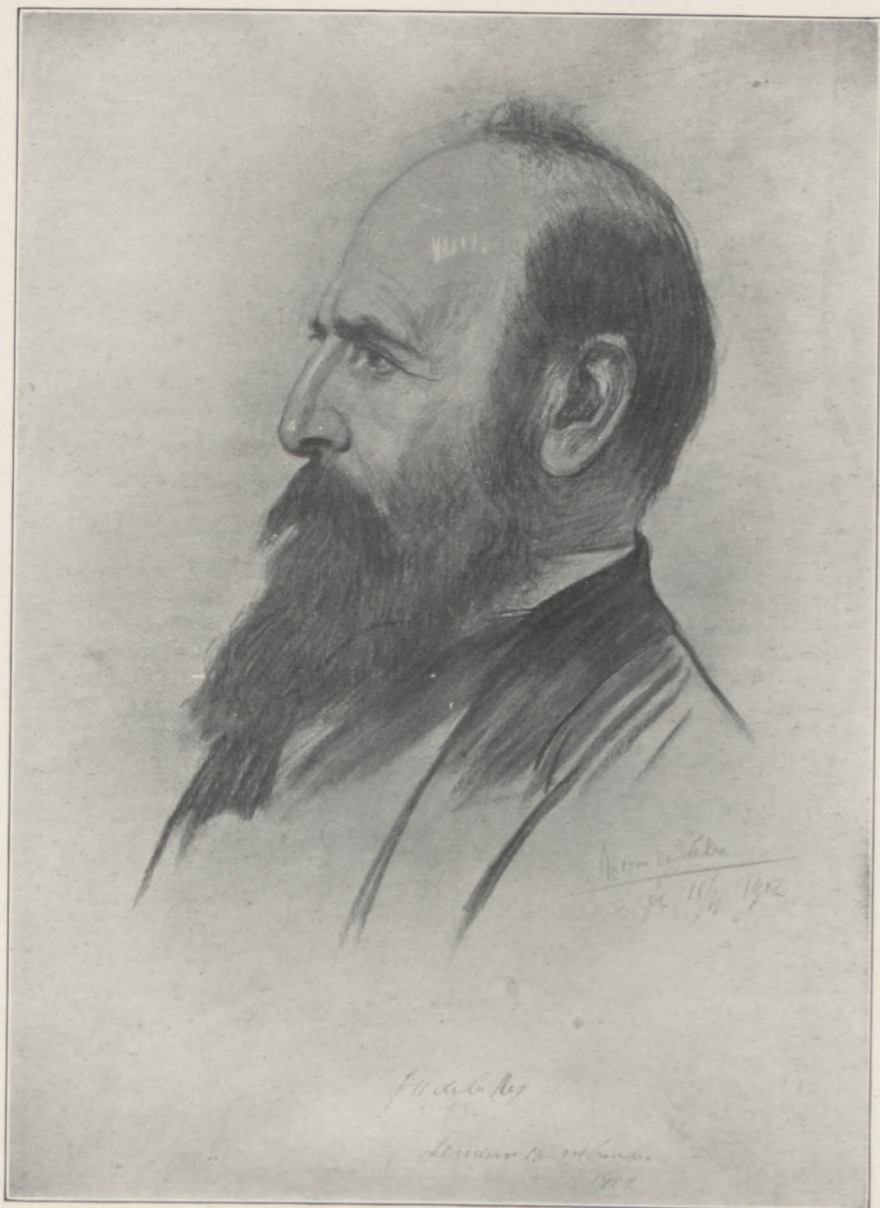
- 35 Profile

- 36 Pensive

- 37 Profile Study

- 38 Two Sketches (*charcoal & colour*)

- 39 Reading



Portrait of John
Jan 11/11 1912

J. M. de la Rey

Portrait of John
1912

General J. N. Delarey

40 "Made in haste.—I must leave London,
17-11-02"

41 Mrs. Ada Ferreira (daughter of General Delarey)

42 Profile

43 General Delarey

44 Mrs. Delarey

45 Study of a Head

46 Profile Study

47 Miss E. M. Molteno

