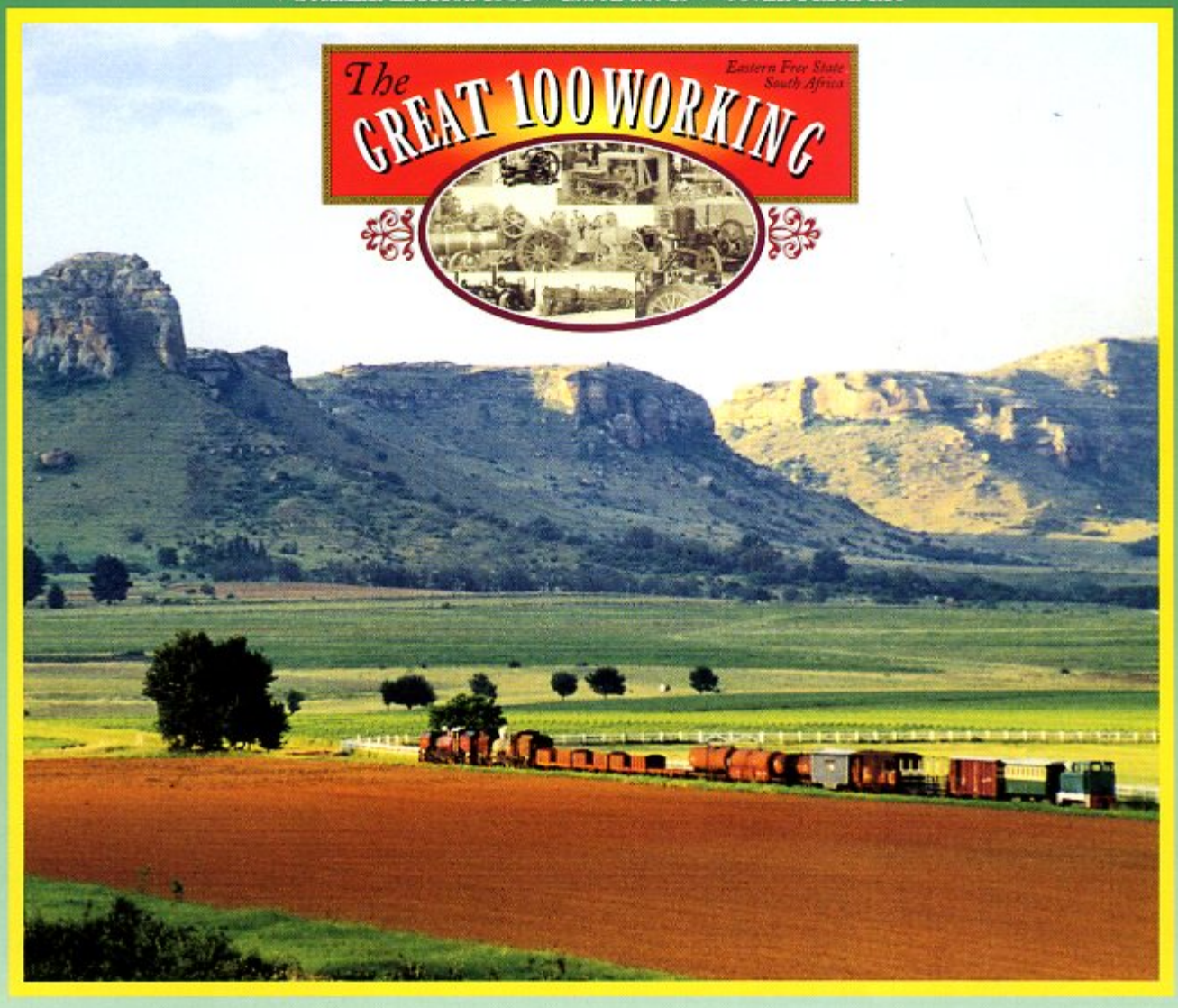
THE VETERAN FARMER
DIE VETERAAN BOER

DEDICATED TO KEEPING ALIVE MEMORIES OF BYGONE FARMING DAYS
÷ SUMMER EDITION 1998 ÷ ISSUE No. 15 ÷ COVER PRICE R10



In this issue

DETAILED INFORMATION ON
THE GREAT 100 WORKING
ANGLO-BOER WAR SPECIAL
THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF AN OLD TIMER

Plus Steam Puffs, Letters to the Editor,
and much, much more!

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FRONT COVER: The border area between Lesotho and South Africa has been in the news recently. Now it is about to be in the news again with the re-enactment of Anglo-Boer War battles and the familiar resonance of 3'6" and 2' gauge locomotives. All this to a backdrop of Boeremusiek, Pap en Vleis and the gentle hiss and hum of steam rollers, portable agricultural engines and traction engines. For a true preservationist or for a student of history, what could be more idyllic.



From the Editor's desk

Welcome to Edition 15 of The Veteran Farmer. This edition focuses very heavily on our forthcoming event organised by The Veteran Farmer magazine known as The Great 100 Working which will be held in the Eastern Free State. A colour brochure describing the event is included in every edition of The Veteran Farmer. A special Boer War Anniversary section is also included.

This is a show by preservationists for preservationists. It sets no particular limits as to what categories of old equipment will be on display. This is left to the preservation fraternity themselves. Our exhibitor application forms were widely distributed in Edition 14 of The Veteran Farmer.

One of the most important aspects of the show is that it is entirely non-competitive. There are no best restored tractors or prizes of any sort. Everyone has different views on what represents a well restored tractor or machine and there are many people who prefer to see them unrestored. Everybody wins a prize for being involved and for presenting his or her machine in exactly the way that they would like to see it presented.

We hope that you will make a special attempt to join us on the 9th, 10th and 11th of April where you will be able to enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the Eastern Free State and to participate in what we know will be one of the most interesting working events ever held in South Africa.

There is no doubt that 1999 will be a year of great historical significance. Preservationists will have much to reflect on.

We hope that you will look back on many of the achievements of the last hundred years and celebrate these milestones with us at The Great 100 Working.

Chris Wilson

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ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

"We would rather live for ever in a wilderness than under the Union Jack.
Andries Pretorius

With this quote Joseph Lehmann opens his book "The First Boer War" He goes on to say:

"To the Victorians South Africa was a land of surprises, a land of extremes where unparalleled discoveries in diamonds and gold coincided with incredible political and military blunders. It was a land of warfare, endemic ever since Cape Town was surrendered to the British in 1806. While the sun never set on the British Empire, the blood never seemed to dry in South Africa. Britons, Boers and blacks clashed and fought and fought again, in a fashion bewildering to those in distant centres of world civilization."





In his book "Battles of the Boer War" W. Baring Pemberton states:

"The roots of the Boer War lie deeper than any gold reef on the Witwatersand. If there had been no gold and consequently no Uitlanders with their catalogue of grievances, real or imaginary, it is hardly conceivable that British Imperialism, thrusting north into the sub-continent in fulfilment of its 'Manifest Destiny', would not, at some time or another, have clashed with a backward, penniless, intransigent Transvaal Republic sprawled across its path. The finding of gold hastened a clash and incidentally gave it a character which it might otherwise have lacked.

It has been said that no one can know the Boer who does not know his past. Descended from tough Calvinistic stock, infused by some vigorous Huguenot blood, the Boer carried to the threshold of the twentieth century those traits reminiscent of Macaulay's seventeenth-century Puritan, with one significant change. The left hand still clasped the Bible, but the right hand held no longer the two-edged sword, but a Mauser magazine rifle of the most up-to-date manufacture."

With these thoughts we open this special section of this edition of The Veteran Farmer. One hundred years on let us reflect on these issues which have left many legacies.

ANGLO-BOER WAR MUSEUMS

The Great 100 Working commemorates amongst other things the commencement of the start of the Anglo-Boer War. Due to the significant impact that this war had on the rural communities of South Africa and indeed the entire political direction of the country for the next 100 years, we believe that it is something that should be well understood. There are a number of highly authoritative sources for information on the Anglo-Boer War and we feature two of them here, one South African and one British.



The first of these is the Anglo-Boer War Museum, PO Box 704, Bloemfontein, 9300. Tel: 051 4473557. Fax: 051 4471322. Johan Hattingh of the Museum has been most supportive and has provided a wealth of information including a specialised article which will appear in a future edition of The Veteran Farmer. A cordial invitation has been extended to anyone that would like to visit the Museum.

The second organisation is The Society of Friends of the National Army Museum in the UK. The object of the Society as laid in its constitution is to support The National Army Museum in Chelsea in London for various means including the purchase of important relics and research material which might otherwise be lost to the nation.

In the 1950s a few enthusiastic individuals began to plan the creation of a museum which would do justice to the long history of the British Army – from its national and regimental structure in Britain to its eventual worldwide and imperial roles; essentially including a record of the Indian Army and of colonial units which have enrolled with the British Army overseas and which form part of the history of the British Empire.

The Museum presents a range of educational and holiday activities and facilities for school children and young visitors. For further information contact the Educational Department at the Museum.

The National Army Museum,
Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4HT, U.K.
Tel: 0171 730 0717

TOUCHING MEMORIES OF THE BOER WAR - a family story

By Kathy Lotter

Robert Wighton Cameron's father emigrated from Scotland to South Africa, where he met and married a "Boerenooi". They had three sons, Robert the youngest.
Robert grew up in Ermelo and as a young boy fought in the "Boer" War.
He was wounded very badly in the leg in Steynsdorp, by an Englishman, who actually came to his assistance in the bush and gave him a handkerchief to try and stop the bleeding (see photo).
He was then transported on an Ossewa to Pretoria, where his leg was amputated and then he was shipped off to the "Meerbank Konsentrasiekamp".
There he met Hendrina Wilhelmina Kleynhans and married her in the concentration camp. The couple had nine children.

1 Dalefield Terrace
DUNDEE 6 July 1911

My dear nephew Robert

It is with much pleasure I write to thank you for the very handsome photograph of yourself, wife and family you were good enough to send me. You are all so nice, healthy and happy looking just like a glint of sunshine from far away Ermelo. We are all greatly delighted with it. I showed it to Aunt Janet and to my own old aunt and daughters Mrs Kidd (my mother's youngest sister - 88 years) as your father is the only one of us whose sons and daughters have families, so that your children are her great grand nephews and nieces. Just permit one word of praise to this dear woman at your side. It was indeed brave and noble of her to let love rule and to accept your maimed, though you were after the war. She looks so homely and happy with you and the bairns that I am sure she has no regret for the step she then took. See that you don't forget it Bob, and be the best of good husbands to her, for the worth of a good wife cannot be estimated. But, oh, the ugly blunber of that war, it will never cease to be to Britain's shame!
Happily she knows it now and there are many of her sons who will not fight again in such an unrighteous cause and you did nobly too, so that your and her foes had to respect young valour.
The photograph is already framed and in a place of honour on the top of the piano where all our friends will not fail to see it.
I sincerely hope you will succeed on your farm at "The Brook" and of course I shall be pleased to hear of that success from time to time and of your sister Maggie's lad too. Be good to him and he will be all the more useful to you as well as to himself. Sorry that his sister Annie is far from well, poor girl. When you see Maggie thank her from me for sending Jim, wife and family it was very thoughtful of her. I am sure, warmest regards both to her and him. Jessie will be writing to Maggie soon I expect, she is at Perth, 20 miles from here. Just now for a few days at a "good temple conference". Where is John? I do not recollect of hearing of him for a long time. Time he was taken prisoner I think did he come back?
So write soon again Robert please and tell me all about yourselves and the others etc. farewell.

Your affectionate uncle
JAMES CAMERON

ABOVE: Transcript of letter Robert received from his Uncle in Scotland, James Cameron. BELOW: original copy of the letter.





Handkerchief given to Robert by an English soldier

DIE VADERLAND ★ Woensdag, 15 Oktober 1952.

GETROUD IN KONSENTRASIEKAMP — VIER NOU GOUE BRUILOF



DIE goue bruilof van mnr. en mev. R. Cameron (verskyn op foto links) is verlede Saterdag op gesellige wyse deur familie en vriende op Bronkhorstspruit gevier.

Robert Wighton Cameron het in die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog aan die kant van die boere gevog en is op kommando gewond en gevange geneem. Aangesien dit nodig was om sy been af te sit, is hy nie as gevangene weggestuur nie, maar in die Meerbank-konsentrasiekamp as gevangene aangehou. Op 14 Oktober 1902 is hy in die konsentrasiekamp in die eg verbind met Hendrina Wilhelmina Kleynhans.

Die egpaar het nege kinders van wie ses dogters is. Sewe van die kinders was teenwoordig op die viering van hulle ouers se goue bruilof. Van die persone wat destyds die huweliksvoltrekking in die kamp bygewoon het, was mev. Cameron se suster, mev. P. Merts, die enigste wat ook die goue bruilofviering kon bywoon.

Married in Concentration Camp – 50th Anniversary

MILITARY EVENTS ARE CARVED DEEPLY INTO OUR COUNTRY'S HISTORY



1999 has seen significant commemoration of a number of key wars and individual battles which resonate with significance.

The Anglo-Zulu War in the 1870's was complex in its origins and it is not within the scope of The Veteran Farmer to analyse it. Suffice to say that Britain suffered its greatest military defeat ever at the battle of Isandhlwana at the hands of the Zulu's, while at Rorkes Drift on January 22, 1879, the British Army redeemed itself. Fine prints from the Military Print Company UK (see painting to right) "Pinned like Rats in a Hole" by Mark Chums. *"Private Hook and Private Williams, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 24th Foot. Inside the Burning Hospital at Rorkes Drift 7pm January 22nd 1879".*

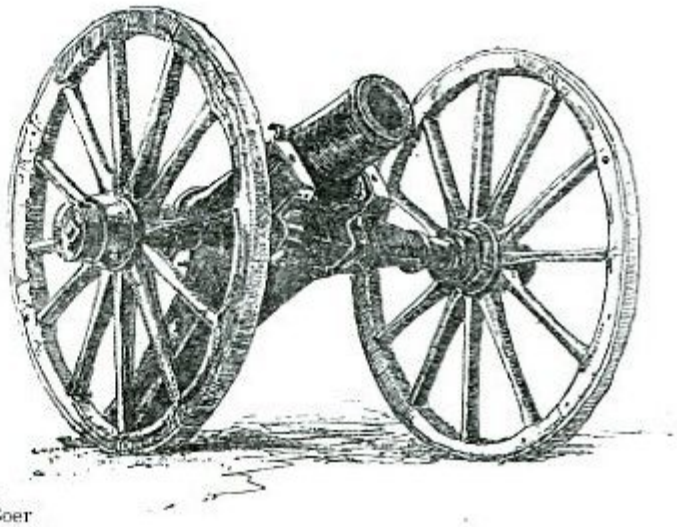
The Anglo-Boer War saw development of the tensions that had been simmering during the latter part if the 19th Century. A copy of a fine art print below from the Military Print Company was entitled "All that was left of them" by Caton Woodville. At Modderfontain Farm a squadron of 17th Lancers were pinned down by a large Boer force and fought to the finish. Students of history of this period never cease to be amazed at the bravery, endurance and military skill displayed by three highly competent military groups, the Zulus, the Boers and the British. Each group had a different strategies and each of the armies fielded leaders of great courage. Shaka, Cetshwayo, Pretorius and De Wet did the unthinkable by challenging the might of the British Army.

A selection of these magnificent prints and postcards are available from Inside Out Gallery, Shop 145 / PO Box 92, Pavilion Centre 3611, Natal. Tel: 031 2650223.



BATTLES OF YESTERYEAR RECALLED





The Free State branch of the South African Arms & Ammunition Collectors Association will display an impressive cross-section of old firearms at The Great 100 Working. This display will included

1. Boer War Rifles (Martinis, 303s, Mausers, Guedes, Mannlicher, etc. to coincide with the Boer War Centenary.

2. A display of rifles used against the Basotho by the Boers in the Eastern Free State (conquered territory) – Enfield muzzle loaders, monkey tails, sniders. The area north of the Caledon was claimed with the help of these weapons.

3. A number of weapons used in the Basotho Gun War of 1880. This was when the British Government tried to confiscate guns from the native Basothos – broken off muzzle loaders, musketc and snider carbines).

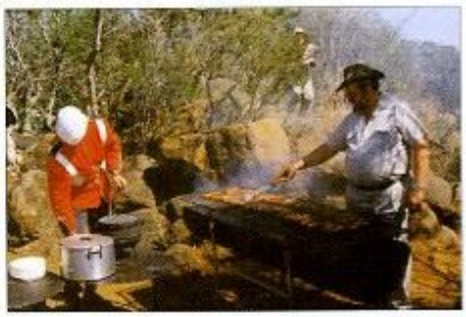
The Free State branch of the South African Arms and Ammunition Collectors Association is certainly the most active branch in the country as far as collecting, displaying and actually firing pre-1902 rifles is concerned. The Club enjoys the participation of over one hundred members at its varied shooting events throughout the year. The reason for 1902 being the cut off date for the Club's primary area of interest is that all rifles produced prior to 1902 probably saw some service during or before the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). During the shooting competitions, period dress is compulsory and only pre-1902 rifles qualify. This makes for good fun and an excellent spirit as the Club often have Steyn's or Kruger's dressed in Tommie uniforms and Healy's and Barretts dressed as Boers.

Painted gas-bottles make good targets and it is quite a sight seeing a helmet being shot off a target at 500m with a black powder Martini-Henry! Prizes are awarded for the best dressed participant, the best "black powder" shottist, and the best "Nitro" shottist and the best junior shottist.

Meals usually consist of a traditional braai and potjie. This is certainly the Club to join if you feel at all interested in old firearms, South African history or in getting an old rifle restored to its former splendour.

Morgan Barrett
Tel: 051933-3910

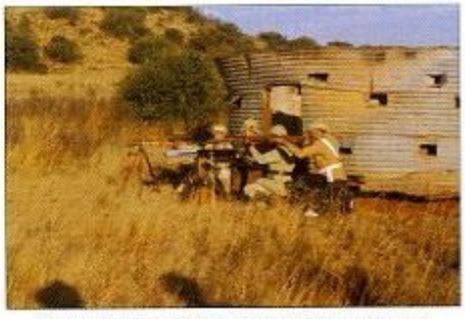
The Veteran Farmer commends this dedicated group of enthusiasts who have got it right. They preserve the past, they work hard at their hobby and they have fun.



Years later the Boers braai the meat – as expected – but for a Soutie to make the pap? Wouldn't trust the guy in the background – it looks like the braai is about to be ambushed



Defending Fort Mistake – seems more like a braai to us?



British troops defending their sandstone (oops... corrugated iron) blockhouse

SAAACA 1999 ANNUAL PROGRAM

April			
Wed	14th	17h00	Arms Fair Committee Meeting at the War Museum
Wed	21st	19h30	Show and Tell" at the Fort
Fri & Sat	23rd & 24th		London Arms Fair (not a SAAACA function)
Sat	24th	a.m.	.303 competition (not a SAAACA function)
Thurs	29th	19h30	Membership Sub-Committee Meeting at the Fort
May			
Sat	1st		SAGA Fesitval at Golden City Shooting Range
Thurs	13th	20h00	Combined lecture with Military History Society at the War Museum
Wed	19th	19h00	Committee Meeting at the Fort
Thurs	27th	19h30	Membership Sub-Committee Meeting at the Fort
June			
Sun	13th	10h00	Swap/Trade/Display get-together at the Fort (Bring & Braai)
Wed	23rd	17h00	Arms Fair Committee Meeting at the War Museum
Thurs	24th	19h30	Membership Sub-Committee Meeting at the Fort
July			
Wed	14th	17h00	Arms Fair Competition Meeting at the War Museum
Wed	21st	19h00	Committee Meeting at the Fort
Wed	28th	17h00	Arms Fair Admin/Briefing at the War Museum
Thurs	29th	19h30	Membership Sub-Committee Meeting at the Fort



BOER WAR STEAM TRACTION

One hundred years ago the Boer War was underway. This is not a military magazine so we deal with the steam and mechanical equipment that was used to support the war effort. By and large, the Boers achieved their mobility on horseback and avoided the more cumbersome mechanical inventions. The British on the other hand began to experiment with the use of steam power in a war environment. John Talbot has supplied us with some interesting prints from his archives and has provided some useful insights to support these pictures.

BURRELL SCC'S GO TO WAR

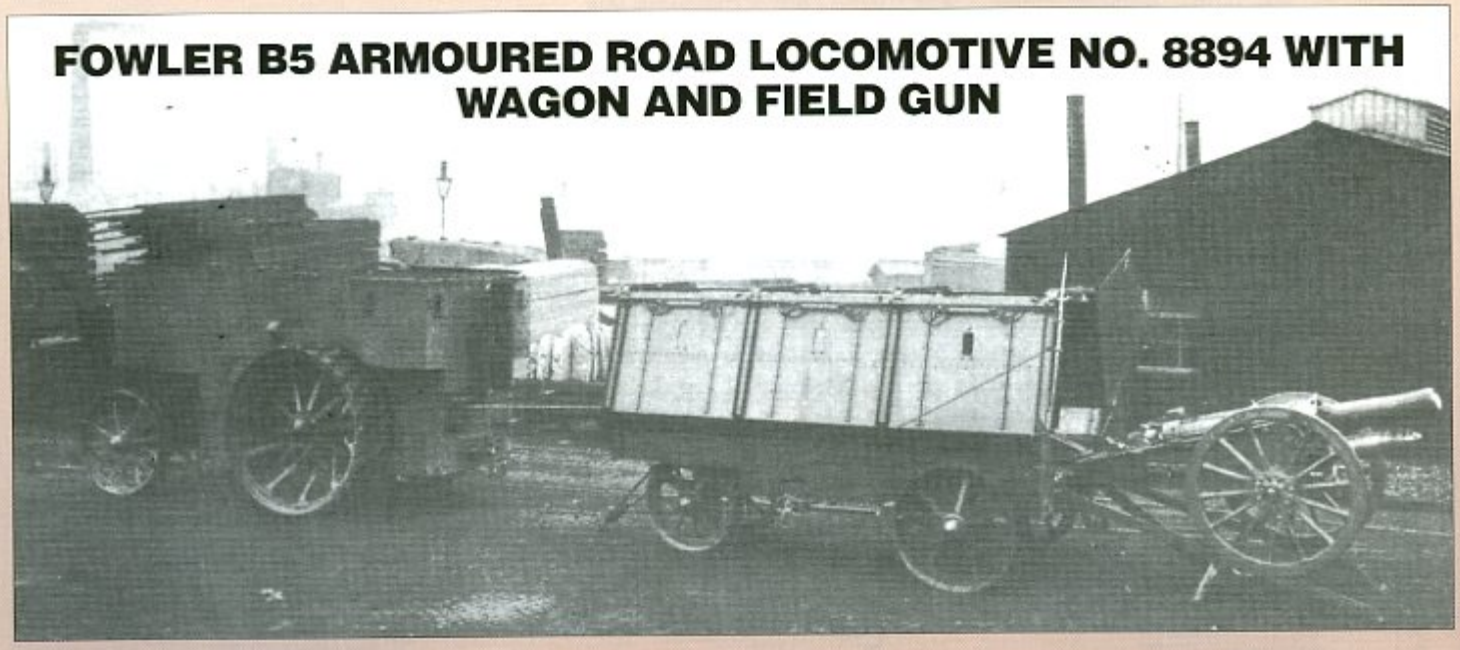
In December 1899, members of the Institution of Electrical Engineers were urgently formed as: The Corps of Electrical Engineers and embodied into the Royal Engineers. This Corps was rapidly equipped, trained and sent to South Africa, arriving on May 3rd 1900.

Once dispersed to key Garrisons, power was supplied for arc lighting and searchlights; mining; field telephones; base workshops and base hospitals. X-Ray equipment was first used in combat hospitals during the Anglo-Boer War. Traction engines by Aveling's, Burrell, Fowler and McLaren were used by the E.E.'s (a.k.a. Enormous Easters).



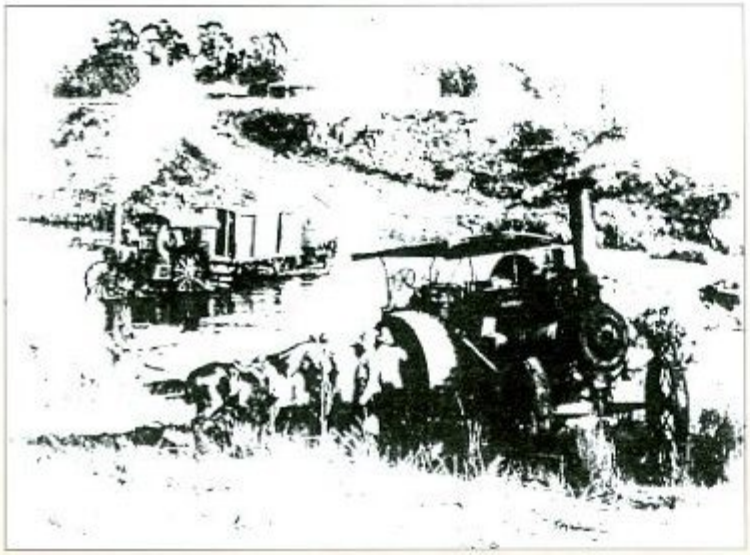
Here two Burrell single crank compounds are en-route to Colonel Crompton's Chelmsford Works to have dynamos fitted. The crew's kit is lashed to the dynamo bracket. Dynamos were built by Laurence, Scott Limited, of Norwich.

FOWLER B5 ARMOURED ROAD LOCOMOTIVE NO. 8894 WITH WAGON AND FIELD GUN



Extensively protected by Armour. Even its crankshaft end has a 'coned' cover to deflect small arms rounds. Illustrated is winching a field gun into an independently braked carrier wagon. As we know how tall a B5 is, the real proportions of that custom-built gun-wagon may be accurately gauged. A full Royal Artillery field gun crew rode behind armoured panels. Ammunition, food and kit was included. '8894' would haul three of these rigs; miles-per-ton of good coal, and gallons of water per ton-mile aren't recorded. Or are they?

SAPPER TRANSPORT CROSSES A DRIFT



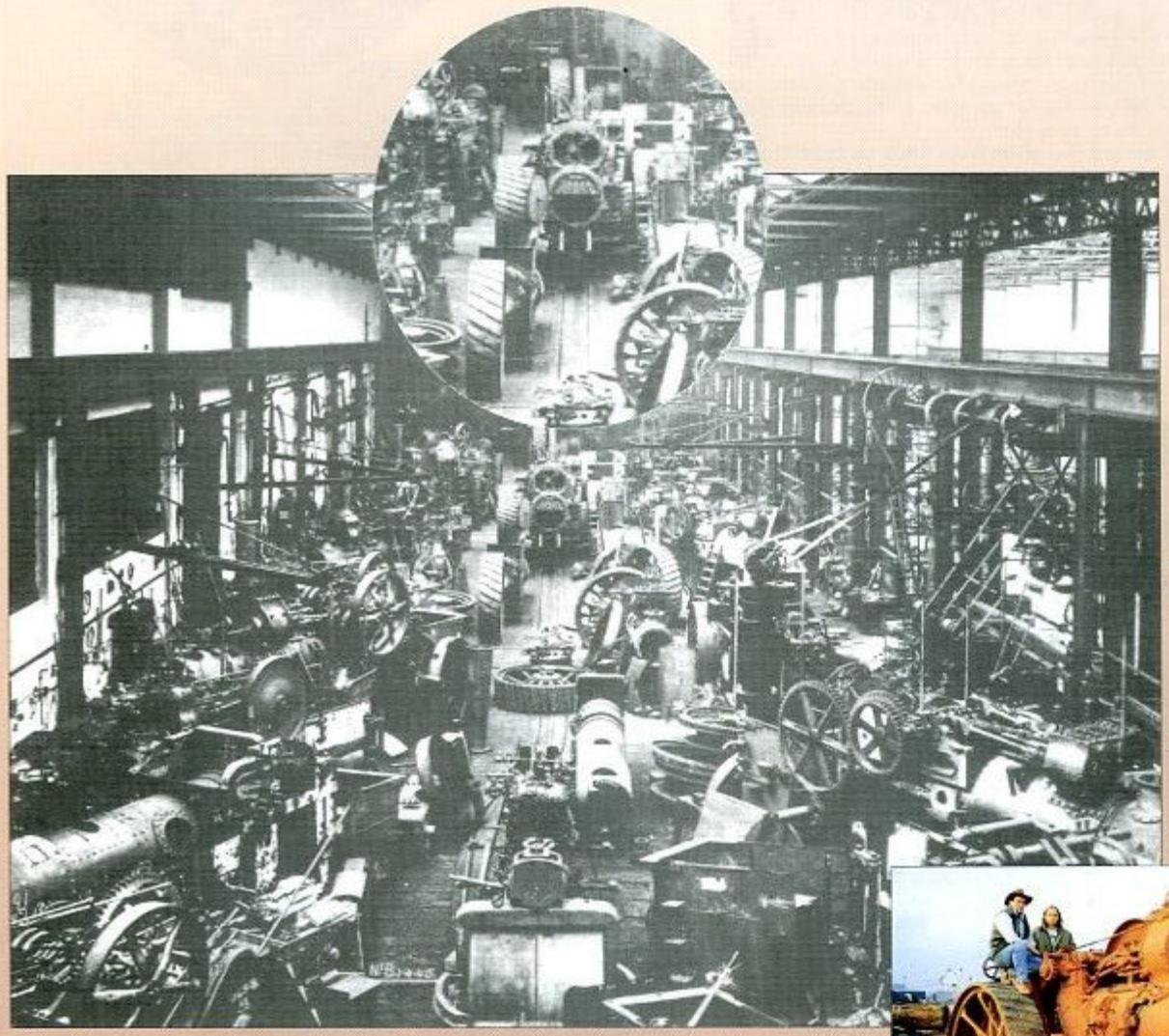
A Burrell Road Locomotive of 45th Steam Road Transport Co. Royal Engineers, stands by to offer haulage assistance at a Natal river crossing during the South African War, circa. 1900-1902. A Fowler B5 Road Locomotive of the same R.E. Company negotiates the drift with three Weyman traction wagons on its hook.

Note: Fording rivers was not a plunge in and belt it across affair! Engine would stop, raise a full head of steam, then drop the fire completely.

With cooled furnace the engine would be driven across. Upon gaining the opposite bank, its crew would relight and rebuild their fire.

Buckled plates, broken firebars and stays, and choked furnaces were avoided or minimised by this practice hence: steam only in exhaust.

ARMY B5'S UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT FOWLER'S LEEDS FACTORY



Armoured Road Locomotive 'Big Foot' B5, No. 8894 has been the subject of much discussion and controversy. Our photograph shows this engine centre aisle being manufactured for the Royal Engineers at Fowlers Road Engine Erecting Shop in Leeds in 1900.

BELOW: Extract taken from The Veteran Farmer Issue No 13, 1996:
"Ex British Army B5 Fowler Road loco seen here on exhibition at the 1996 Great Dorset Steam Fair. On board Richard Pocock, the new owner who plans to have it restored shortly, and (right) Johan van der Hoven, the previous owner who had the foresight to save the loco from the scrapmen."
NB: Shortly after this article was written, Richard Pocock sold the engine.





A Lifetime of Ag
Travel

The Life and Times

Tommy Wilson was born in Newton Stewart, Scotland on 13 June 1883. Tommy's parents were of pioneering stock and attracted by better opportunities in the developing colony of South Africa, which had been created in the immediate post-Anglo Boer War period, they emigrated to Molteno in the Eastern Cape as stock farmers and merchants. Tommy grew up in the area and went to school in Molteno. Like so many young men of his time, particularly those with an engineering inclination he was attracted by the excellent engineering training given by the railways of the day. He was taken on as an apprentice at the South African Railways Apprentice Training School in East London and completed his training. He left the Railways after some years, a highly qualified and accomplished engineer, with not only the necessary skills to carry out engineering work itself, but perhaps more importantly with the innovative spirit to seek better solutions.

In those days mechanisation in agriculture was virtually unknown, but Tommy saw the potential and worked for both Herbert Vaughan & Co in East London and Mangolds Limited in Port Elizabeth. Thereafter he joined a firm of machinery merchants in Cape Town Messrs Duffett & Koch around 1908. His responsibility was the delivery and installation of irrigation and agricultural equipment throughout Southern Africa.

Mr Alec Wilson, his Son, has done a meticulous job of piecing together his travels and as a result of the careful recording of family archives, it is possible to get a very clear view of Tommy's activities.

One of his early assignments was the delivery of a suction gas irrigation pumping plant at Goede Hoop, a portion of Grootvaders Bosch, near Heidelberg (Cape) where he met his future wife, Irene Duminy, then only 15 years old and he a young man of 25.

It was apparent that during the years from 1909 to 1914 Tommy managed to find few opportunities to visit Goede Hoop and since he was not particularly welcome as an "Uitlander" and "Engelsman", he had to rely on postcards of which some 220 survived.

Tommy was a consistent and reliable communicator and recorded in detail the places he visited in beautifully written postcards to Irene. These originate from the length and breadth of Southern Africa including Basutoland, British Bechauanaland, Rhodesia, Mozambique and South West Africa.



This postcard sent from the Queen Hotel in Kimberley, 11.11.1912 was sent to Irene's younger sister, Rita Duminy.



Sent from Hope Valley, Ferreira District Bloemfontein. 28.11.1911. Many of these postcards are adorned with real fabric



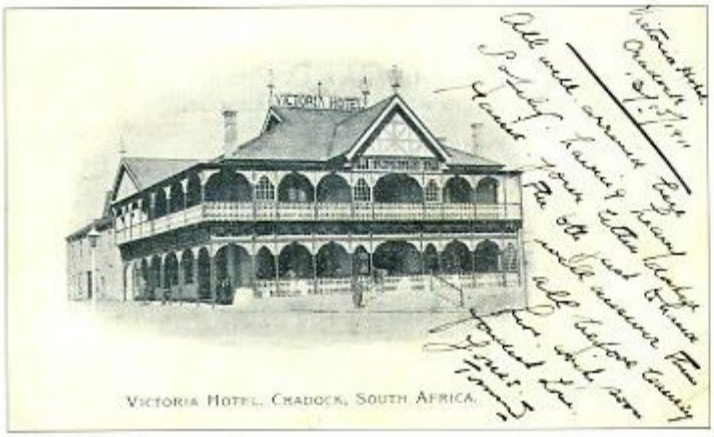
This postcard sent on 16.07.1910 sets the political scene for a good part of the Century.

ricultural Engineering, and Adventure

of Thomas (Tommy) Scott Wilson



This postcard is unfortunately undated. The message of the day was unambiguous





Sent from Kroonstad 7.4.1914. In this postcard he describes Kroonstad as a "pretty little town". As time progressed, the postcards became more and more romantic. Finally Irene and Tommy married.

LEFT: Sent on 3.10.1911. Many of Tommy's postcards give an excellent insight into the beautiful architecture of the day.

Alec has been able to record his travels using the postcards as a reference. Aided by a map of the Southern African Railway Network obtained from Transnet Heritage dated 1917 he is able to track Tommy's movements to remote stations and locations, many of which are virtually unheard of today.

Needless to say most of his travels and all of the transport of machinery was done by rail. However from the rail destination, journeys were carried out by ox wagon, horsedrawn carts or very early automobiles. Very few people realise the extent to which the railway network covered the country in those days. Here is a summary of Tommy's movements in 1913 as recorded from his postcards.

13 January:	Cape Town, Buffels Vlei, Middelburg, Teehush on way to Transvaal via Kimberley.
15 January:	At Kimberley
8 May:	From Cape Town to Steinshopt Namaqualand near South West African (Namibian) border, then back to Cape Town.
26 June:	In Kimberley met a 'friend' who is also an Engineer.
31 August:	Went from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth. There until 1 September.
5 Sept:	In P.E. loading tractor for Vryburg. Tractor left last night following by train to Vryburg.
7 Sept:	Left Vryburg to go to Kimberley.
9 Sept:	Kimberley leaving for Bechuanaland.
11 Sept:	Kameel Bechuanaland tractor arriving.
15 Oct:	At Kimberley, back from Bechuanaland.
16 Oct:	Went from Kimberley to Johannesburg, Klerksdorp. Saw his parents.
17 Oct:	Went back to Bechuanaland with Tractor.
18 Oct:	Kameel British Bechuanaland.
21 Oct:	Kameel British Bechuanaland.
28 Oct:	Kameel to Johannesburg and Klerksdorp.
5 Nov:	Left Klerksdorp
9 Nov:	Kimberley, Oudtshoorn and Heidelburg.
11 Nov:	Heidelburg Oudtshoorn, Victoria West Kimberley and return to Cape Town.
9 Dec:	Cape Town, Worcester
9 Dec:	Klerksdorp to Zeerust
11 Dec:	Kameel, British Bechuanaland and on to Bulawayo.
14 Dec:	Bulawayo, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).
14 Dec:	Bulawayo Motopas
15 Dec:	Bulawayo to Victoria Falls with a Tractor! For a farmer in Nyamaskhovo.
16 Dec:	At Nyamaskhovo.
18 Dec:	Return to Cape Town.

A story that he was fond of telling was about the first delivery of a tractor north of the Orange River to a farm in the then South West Africa. Reconstructing the journey from the information available, the tractor and wagon were loaded to capacity and railed to Bitterfontein and from there by road under its own power to Goodhouse on the Orange River, a distance of about 320 kms. The tractor first crossed the drift across the Orange River under its own power and then hauled the wagon across with a long "steel rope". From the photographs we are able to identify it as a very early 25 HP Fairbanks Morse Tractor. Only relatively small numbers of these big Fairbanks Morse Prairie Tractors were made and Fairbanks Morse ceased production of them in 1914.

RIGHT: Fairbanks Morse began experiments with gasoline engine tractors by 1893, and over the next fifteen years produced self-powered railroad work cars. Tractor experiments began in 1910. The Fairbanks Morse Model 15-30 used the screen system for engine cooling. Engine heater water was fed by a belt-driven centrifugal water pump to the top of the screen where gravity and evaporation did the rest. The model 15-30 weighed about 16,000lb. Photo on right is a well restored unit at a rally in the USA.





15-30 bogged down in thick sand. The tractor would unhook the wagons, go forward, attach a steel cable and pull them to safety – see below



RIGHT: Receiving a majestic tractor like this must have been a very important event for a family, particularly when they were 320 kilometres from the nearest rail head.

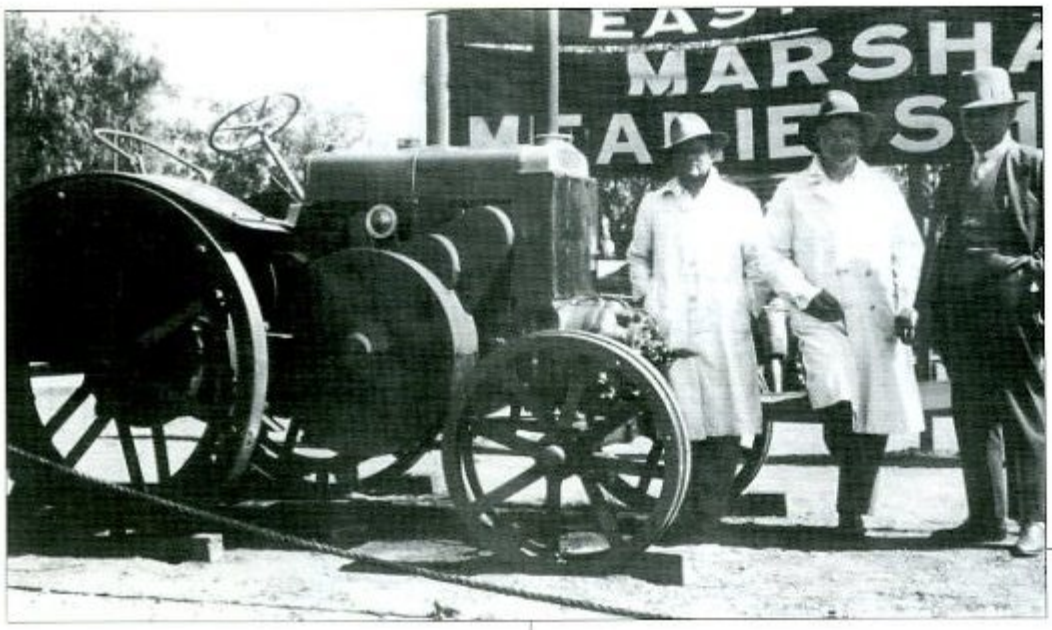


BELOW: Repairs in the field – 15-30 obviously had a hiccough and no, that is not a dog kennel in the foreground, it is the radiator

15-30 having just made it across the Orange River. This photo was taken close to Winstead. Notice myself with rifle – just shot large monkey on the other side









Tommy Wilson appears on the left. The first Marshall 18-30 – the production unit arising from the development of the 15/30 was turned out in 1933 so we can deduce that these photos were taken at about that time. We invite UK based Marshall experts to see if they can trace this 15/30 from the Build Register and provide us with the possible serial number. Allan Condie's records show that four 18-30's out of a total of eighty eight were shipped to SA. Remember though this was a 15-30 of which only perhaps half a dozen were made. Compare this tractor with the photo below.

In 1915 Tommy settled in Bloemfontein, married and opened an Agricultural Machinery business trading as De Graaf, Wilson and Co., later to become known as T S Wilson Irrigation Engineer and Machinery Merchant.

For many years he pioneered and supplied irrigation and agricultural equipment to the farming communities in the Orange Free State, as well as to some of the smaller municipalities.

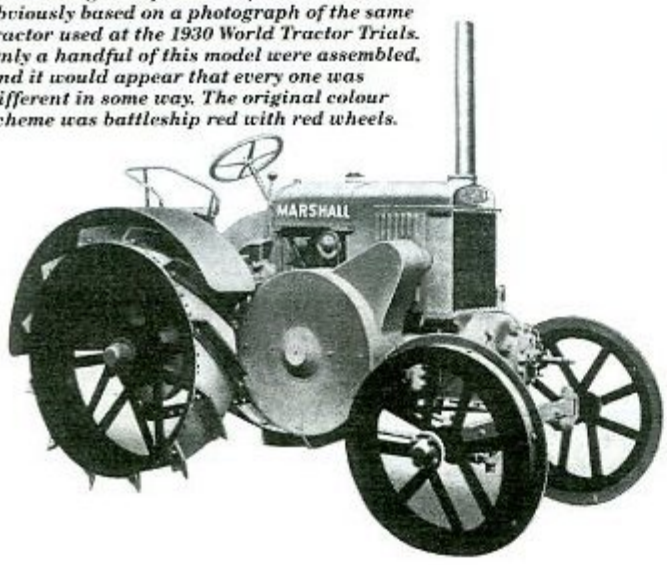
He also supplied and installed electric lighting plants and hammer mills to trading stores in Basutoland.

The Central Bloemfontein Agricultural Show was an annual event at which he exhibited a wide range of irrigation and agricultural equipment including Marshall shellers and tractors, Petter Engines, Irrigation pumps and windmills, piping equipment and even Alfa Laval dairy equipment, etc.

It is at this show at Bloemfontein that we are able to record a very early Marshall 15-30 tractor, a rare and very special tractor if ever there was one.

Perhaps this tractor is out there somewhere today. So if you hear of an old steel tractor go and have a look.

In Allan Condie's book The Marshall Album he features a 15-30 as described below: The catalogue impression of the 15-30 was obviously based on a photograph of the same tractor used at the 1930 World Tractor Trials. Only a handful of this model were assembled, and it would appear that every one was different in some way. The original colour scheme was battleship red with red wheels.





Marshall 15-30 with maize thresher – an impressive combination

Tommy was inventive and his photograph albums showed a wide variety of interesting mechanical applications of one sort or another. Our technical experts need to put their thinking caps on and get their magnifying glass out. What are these things?



LEFT: From Tommy's personal album. What on earth was Tommy up to? The photographic skills in those days helped to give some interesting design parameters to the machinery of the day. However, this old stationary engine on an ox drawn trolley is not necessarily difficult to identify





ABOVE/LEFT:We are appealing to our vintage car friends to tell us what this magnificent and sturdy vehicle is. Sign written "No. 5 Royal Mail" it is an impressive looking machine. The Veteran Farmer never fails to be fascinated by the fact that so often we come across vehicle designs which are years and years ahead of their time. For all our 4x4 enthusiasts with their big chunky vehicles, why not take this machine on board. Imagine how macho you would have been in 1910 driving around in one of these



The doctor who must have been in attendance obviously left in a hurry because he neglected to take his gladstone bag with him.



LEFT: Tommy makes no mention of what this magnificent old vehicle is?

BELOW: Proof positive that Rumely was alive and well in South Africa in the early part of the century.We have no information on this tractor.





RIGHT: Tommy was obviously proud of this combination because he has many, many photographs of it. Can our readers throw some light on what it is?

BELOW: International Titan 10-20. Note two tractors on railway station platform. Man on right has hammer at the ready to carry out routine maintenance?





Tommy's second driver's licence issued in 1942 to replace the licence that he had issued in 1916

Tommy was a discerning engineer. Fairbanks Morse, I H Titan and Marshall were the tractors that we can specifically associate him with. Obviously only the best would do.

Tommy Wilson's life summarises everything that the Veteran Farmer stands for and what the Great 100 Working event is trying to portray. Imagine a life where you travelled by rail for thousands of kilometres per year behind every type of locomotive operating at the time. Imagine the pioneering spirit you needed to deliver tractors hundreds of kilometres into rural areas where there were virtually no roads. To rub shoulders with the six class locomotives of that era, to be responsible for delivering big prairie tractors and a host of other agricultural machinery so prized by collectors today and then to enjoy the stability and dignity that the infrastructure and social order of the day conveyed, must be every preservation man's dream.

Our thanks to the Wilson family for allowing us to use their beautifully preserved archive material and for giving us a glimpse of life in the agricultural sector in the early part of the century.

Finally, Tommy Wilson was a romantic man and the warm thoughts that he conveyed in his postcards, indeed the very selection of the postcards themselves, send a much stronger message than any e-mail communication could ever hope to emulate.

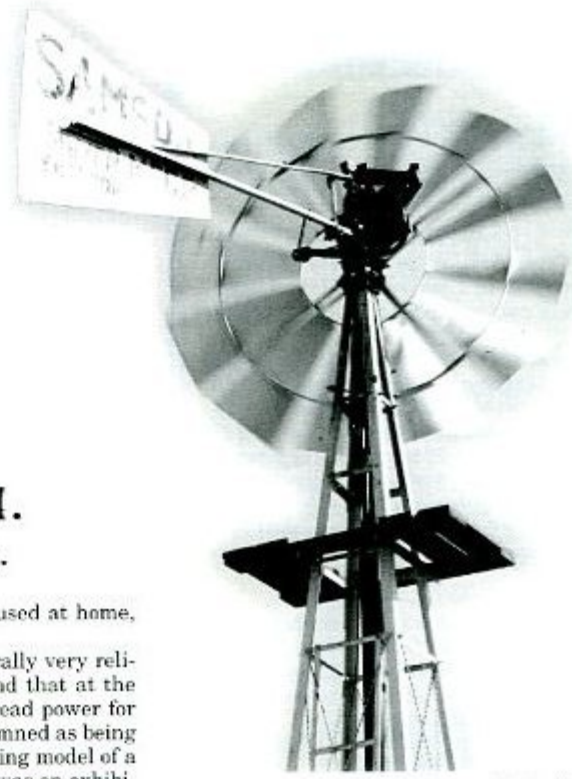
THE PORT ELIZABETH AGRICULTURAL SHOW OF 1904:

THE VIEW FROM NORTH AMERICA

By T. Lindsay Baker

By the first decade of the twentieth century, the Port Elizabeth Agricultural Show had become the most important commercial exhibition of agricultural machinery and tools in southern Africa. It was to this show in 1904, the first since the close of hostilities, that implement makers from both Europe and the United States sent special shipments of goods for exhibit in hopes of attracting attention from South African dealers. They also encouraged their distributors in southern Africa to represent them in exhibiting their products.

Because of the importance of the Port Elizabeth Show for farm machinery makers in the United States, the Capetown correspondent of the American journal, Export Implement Age, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, attended the show and sent in the following report. It was written specifically for the edification of agricultural implement makers across the Atlantic, and for this reason its perspective on the farm machinery market in southern Africa is especially interesting. Also of particular note are the striking observations by the American reporter on the attitudes of South African farmers on their implements.



The open back-geared "Samson" windmill, one of the American-made windmills exhibited at the 1904 Port Elizabeth Agricultural Show. It was made in Freeport, Illinois, by the Stover Mfg. Co. Courtesy Windmillers' Gazette

PORT ELIZABETH, APRIL 10, 1904.

EXPORT IMPLEMENT AGE, PHILADELPHIA, PA., U.S.A.

Gentlemen: There was a particular pride which the people of Port Elizabeth and vicinity took in their Agricultural Show held April 7th and 8th, for, although everything is very much depressed in South Africa, yet they still have hope that the agriculturist will eventually make the country self-supporting. Furthermore, it shows the country is settling down and giving more attention to local development, for it was the first exhibition of the kind for four years, or since the war.

The main feature of the show, and that which was head and shoulders above everything else, was the exhibit of agricultural machinery. The dealers of Port Elizabeth, as well as other parts of South Africa, may justly be proud of the fine display, and American manufacturers should appreciate the efforts of their representatives, for fully three-fourths of the implements exhibited were of American manufacture and strictly up-to-date. We may get some idea of the thoroughness to know that in the windmill line alone there are 15 mills erected around a reservoir which cost about $1,500 to construct for the occasion, and these mills were all in actual operation pumping water or running machinery. Fourteen of the 15 mills were American steel mills, which fact along is evidence at the ratio of 14 to 1 that American mills are better adapted to this trade.

A machinery shed, constructed of steel and about 100 x 500 feet, was packed with smaller implements, such as plows, ensilage cutters, corn shellers, pumps, etc. Throughout the whole American machinery predominated, and, in fact, in several instances European firms were trying to reproduce the American pattern of mold board for their plows. However, as yet they are entirely unable to produce even a poor quality of soft center flint steel, or chilled plow.

In pumps we are again leaders, especially in up-to-date designs. It was especially amusing to see the farmers and their wives examine and admire the Myers' glass valve seat and wonder why they had not yet thought of that idea before the progressive "Yankee." The chemicals in the water here are very destructive to the ordinary valve, consequently the glass seat, which is very extensively used at home, met with general approval.

The South Africans are generally very religious. Consequently I understand that at the last show several years ago a tread power for horses, mules or oxen was condemned as being cruelty to animals. A small working model of a two-horse Fearless tread power was on exhibition, and we understand a number of sales were made, showing prejudice is being gradually overcome by practical ideas. When the farmers once fully realize that they can utilize the power they always have at hand in oxen, mules and horses, there is no doubt there will be a good demand for this class of goods, for it requires no skilled labor to run them.

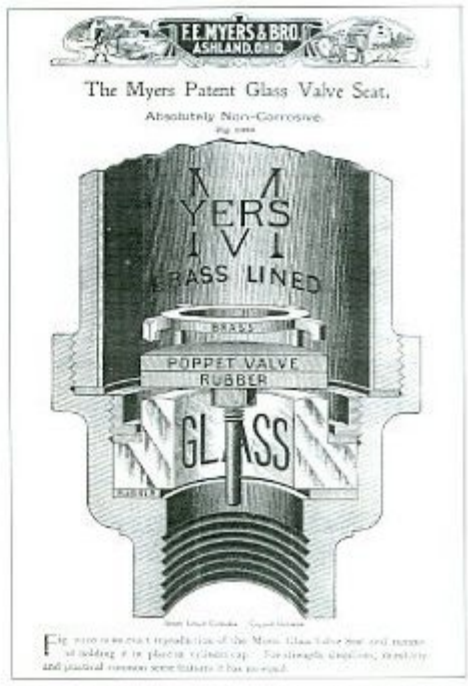
Several firms exhibited the European hand plow with fore carriage. Some dealers even recommend it, "because it stays in the ground so well without holding," the very feature that would condemn it to any practical American plowman, for if the plow is set nose downwards, so it will always and under every condition pull into the ground, it surely will not run level. This, undoubtedly, is the reason their shares wear out so quickly and have to be sharpened or replaced so often.

Experience is demonstrating in this country that American agricultural implements are by far the best adapted to the agricultural interests of South Africa. The colonial farmer admires the lightness of construction of American machines, and gives his testimony that they stand the test and are up-to-date, for one could hear on every side, "What won't you 'Yanks' turn out next?"

Respectfully yours,

Ira A. Snyder, Capetown, South Africa.

This original article may be found under the title, "South African Fair," in Export Implement Age (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), X, No. 3 (June 1904), p. 17, in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., USA. The contributor, T. Lindsay Baker, edits and publishes the quarterly Windmillers' Gazette magazine, P.O. Box 507, Rio Vista, Texas 76093 USA. If you want to send him any windmill-related questions or would like a complimentary sample copy of his windmill periodical, write directly to him in Texas.



The Meyers glass seat for water pumps which attracted attention at the 1904 Port Elizabeth Agricultural Show. From F.E. Myers and Brother, Ashland, Ohio, Pump Catalogue No. 50 (Ashland, Ohio: F.E. Myers & Bro., [ca 1905]), p. 24. Courtesy Wildmillers' Gazette research files.