

**Gold fever** was running high in many parts of the world in the mid nineteenth century. This fever spread to the South African Republic, also known as the Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek and Transvaal. The **search** for the riches from the bowels of the earth continued in several districts with discoveries that attracted **gold hunters**.

In the 1870's payable alluvial gold deposits were **mined** at Eersteling, Lydenburg and Pilgrim's Rest in the North. The early 1880's saw the operations **moving** to Kaapsche Hoop, Barberton and finally in 1886 the world's **greatest goldfields** - the Witwatersrand that turned this Goldfields to the goldfield of **choice** for diggers from all over the world.

British Imperialism caused the first Boer war in 1880 and when the war came to an end in 1881, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) came into being. The ongoing **turmoil** between Britain and the Transvaal/ZAR Government eventually led to deceitful expatriate relations and eventually the Anglo Boer War.

The first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw rampant labour **unrest** on the Witwatersrand mines that opposed white miners against mine owners and government.

### AIM

This exhibit presentation aims to give an overview of the **first** goldfields, of which the most significant ones was in the Eastern Transvaal and ultimately the Witwatersrand.

### SCOPE

The discovery and exploration of gold has transformed the ZAR and exercised an unthinking predominating influence in shaping the history of South Africa. The **discovery** and mining of payable gold, the undesirable **impact** it had on the ZAR/Transvaal, its burghers and to a lesser degree South Africa.

It commences with the role of British **Imperialism**, the Anglo Boer War, and finally the notorious **Labour** unrest on the Witwatersrand mines with specific reference to the 1907, 1913 and 1922 strikes.

The storyline is **outlined** with historic pictures portraying early mining activities and philatelic material.

### ROAD MAP

#### Frame 1 - THE SEARCH FOR GOLD

pp 1: Introduction  
pp 2: Eersteling (1871)  
pp 3: Lydenburg (1873)  
pp 4: Sabie (1873)  
pp 5: Pilgrim's Rest (1873)  
pp 6: Duivel's Kantoor/Kaapsche Hoop (1881)  
pp 8: Moodie's (1883)

#### Frame 2 - GOLD IN THE ZAR

pp 9: Barberton (1884)  
pp 11: Barberton (Sheba Valley - 1885)  
pp 12: Eureka City  
pp 13: Klerksdorp (1885)  
pp 14: Malmani (1886)  
pp 15: Witwatersrand Overview (1886)  
pp 16: Central Witwatersrand (1886)

#### Frame 3 - CENTRAL WITWATERSRAND

pp 17: Government Actions (1886)  
pp 18: Birth of a city  
pp 20: Mining the Gold - Early Operations  
pp 21: Mining the Gold  
pp 22: Deep Level Mining  
pp 24: Living Conditions

#### Frame 4 - WITWATERSRAND

pp 25: Randlords  
pp 26: Chamber of Commerce

#### Frame 4 - WITWATERSRAND (continue)

pp 27: Johannesburg Stock Exchange  
pp 28: Transport  
pp 29: West Rand (Krugersdorp Goldfields) - Roodepoort  
pp 30: West Rand - Krugersdorp  
pp 31: West Rand - Randfontein  
pp 32: East Rand

#### Frame 5 - WITWATERSRAND

pp 33: East Rand - Germiston  
pp 33: East Rand - Boksburg Goldfields  
pp 38: Far East Rand - Heidelberg Goldfields  
pp 39: Pyrites Panic  
pp 40: Uitlander Franchise

#### Frame 6 - BRITISH IMPERIALISM

pp 41: Jameson Raid (1895)  
pp 42: Anglo Boer War (1899 -1902)  
pp 45: Aftermath - Chinese Indentured workers (1904)  
pp 48: Labour Activities

#### Frame 7 - DISORDER ON THE RAND

pp 49: 1907 Strike  
pp 51: 1913 Strike  
pp 55: 1914 Strike  
pp 56: Timeline (1915 - 1921)

#### Frame 8 - DISORDER ON THE RAND

pp 57: 1922 Strike - Prelude  
pp 58: 1922 Strike

### MATERIAL

The exhibit is planned chronologically but, in some instances, material is grouped together to keep to the story line without detracting.

Philatelic as well as non-philatelic material has been chosen to best fit the story, to enhance the exhibit and to appeal to the eye.

Usage of Non-ZAR/Transvaal stamps are indicated as such.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gold! Gold! Gold!: Eric Rosenthal, 1970 – pp 110 - 354

The Romance of the Golden Rand: William MacDonald, 1933 – pp 1 - 25, 72 - 83, 273 - 286

A history of the discovery of the Witwatersrand Gold Fields: Ethel L and James Gray 1940 – various pages

The Stamps of the Union of South Africa 1910 – 1961: Handbook catalogue 1986: SJ Hagger – pp 8, 11, 84

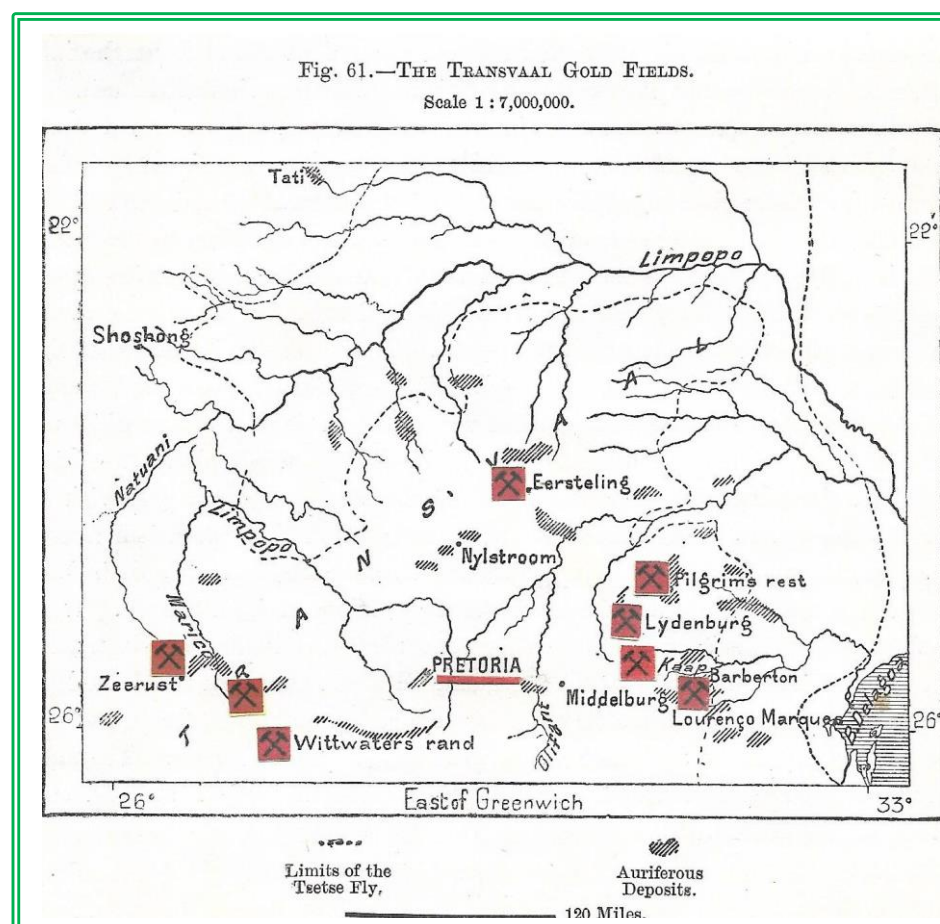
Transvaal Philately – BONCS and Triangles: Matthews pp 152 4

Personal research – Various Internet websites accessed: <https://core.ac.uk/> (W Visser) : <https://www.theheritageportal.co.za/> :

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/> : <https://www.sahistory.org.za/> : <http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/>



Map of South Africa and neighbouring countries (1910)



Rare antique **Woodbury type** printing map (circa 1887) showing the Transvaal Goldfields in 1886

### Selected highlights since it was last exhibited

1887 Wood engraved print of Prospectors, Lydenburg, pp 3  
1880's Stamp cancelled with ZAR obliterator, pp 6  
1894 Cover with Kaapsche Hoop no. 10 barred triangle obliterator, pp 7  
1880's Glass Lantern Slide, Barberton 1<sup>st</sup> Stock Exchange, pp 9  
1898 Niekerk Consolidated Ltd, Klerksdorp share certificate, pp 13  
1888 P/Stationary card manuscript cancelled also with Malmani Goud Velden (Goldfields) cds, pp 14  
1898 Malmani Gold Syndicate Ltd share certificate, pp 14  
1899 Chamber of Mines wrapper, Jhb, pp 26  
1898 Sale of a mynpacht affidavit, Roodepoort, pp 29  
1896 Claims Amalgamation Deed, Krugersdorp, pp 31  
1892 Prospector's license, East Rand (Germiston), pp 32  
1899 Geldenhuys Estate & Gold Mining Co cover, pp 34  
1892 Claims Amalgamation Deed, Boksburg, pp 34  
1899 Prospector's license, New Primrose mine, pp 35  
1888 Elandsfontein Prospectus, pp 35  
1897 Cassel Colliery reply to Postcard, pp 38  
1913 Original photo of strike, pp 53

Highlighted items are indicated with **green** borders.

The overall impression between philatelic and non-philatelic material is well-balanced.

A different font is used to distinguish between subject related and deltiological information.

Ancient gold workings in South Africa are confirmed and early **history** of listed gold prospecting, discoveries and mining in South Africa **dated** back as early as 1834. In October 1853, **alluvial** gold was discovered by Pieter Jacob Marais in the Jukskei River North of the Witwatersrand

On 6 December 1853 Marais was appointed by the South African Republic (Transvaal) Government as the first official prospector. He concentrated on riverbeds, succeeded discovering small quantities of gold.

Inferior quartz gold was discovered near Krugersdorp in the early 1870's. It attracted some interest, but the main attention was focused on the North and Eastern Transvaal.