

PRETORIA'S CHURCHES AS DEPICTED ON POSTCARDS IN THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

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South African Postcard Interest Group
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Pretoria's Churches as Depicted on Postcards in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Churches were among the first buildings in a settlement and, together with the often-adjacent market square, formed the focal point for the surrounding farming community on market days and “nachmaal” (communion) Sundays.

The same publisher might publish more than one style of postcard with the same photograph, while certain photographs appeared on cards published by different publishers.

Certain churches attracted photographers and publishers and a variety of different postcards were published showing these churches, while other churches seldom, if ever, appeared on postcards.

THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES

➤ Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK)

➤ Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK)

➤ Gereformeerde Kerk (GK)

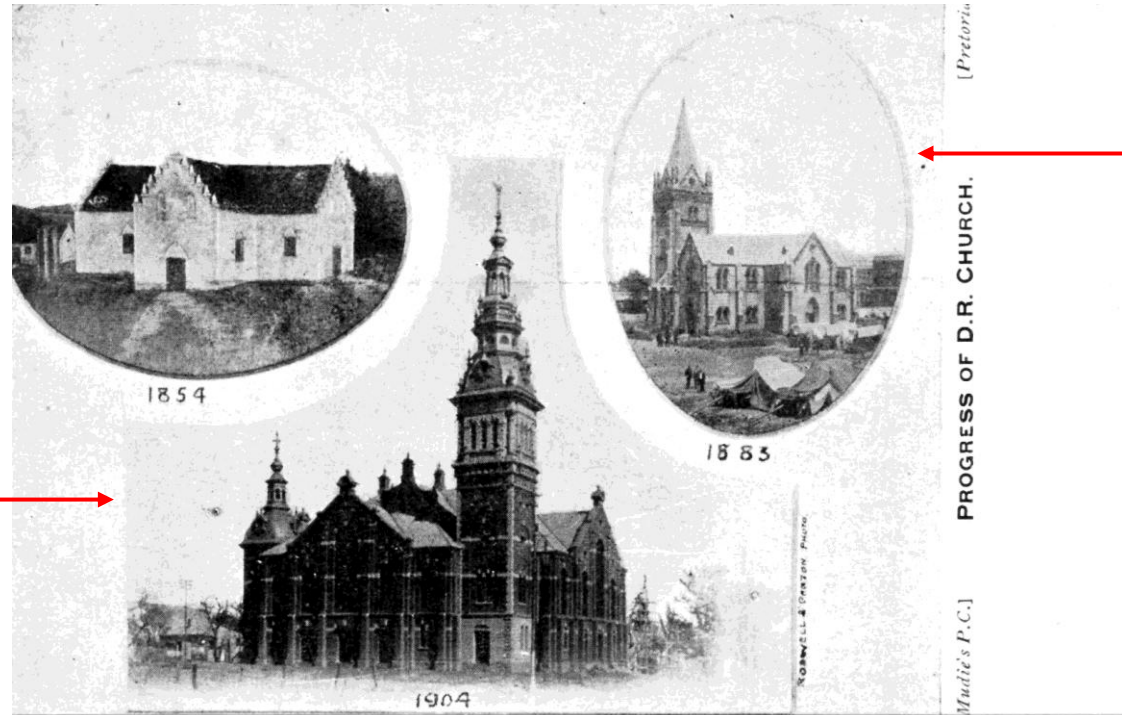
- The roots of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in South Africa go back to the Dutch East India Company's settlement at the Cape in 1652, with the first formal congregation being established in 1665 under the control of the Amsterdam "classis" (presbytery).
- The church became autonomous in 1824. The church remained semi-established after the British annexation of the Cape Colony in 1806 and came to be known as the "Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk" (NGK).
- Following the Great Trek of the 1830s and 1840s, a new church, the "Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk" (NHK), was established in 1852 as the state church of the South African Republic (ZAR).
- Conflict arose within the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) after the introduction of a new hymnbook. In 1859 a group, known as "Doppers", who refused to sing the new hymns, broke away from the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk" (NHK) and, at a meeting in the Rustenburg district, formed the nucleus of the Gereformeerde Kerk (GK) on 11 February 1859.

NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK (NGK)

The Church on the Square, Pretoria

The first church on Church Square, a simple building with mud walls and a thatched roof was built in 1854, a year before the proclamation of the town of Pretoria. It burnt down in 1882 and a second church, a Victorian Neo-Gothic structure, was built on the site. This church, however, stood for little more than 20 years: the church's tower was deemed unsafe and the whole church was pulled down in 1905. There were also those who maintained that the church was a traffic hazard, as it stood at the intersection of two main streets, Church Street (now Helen Joseph Street) and Paul Kruger Street (originally known as Market Street).

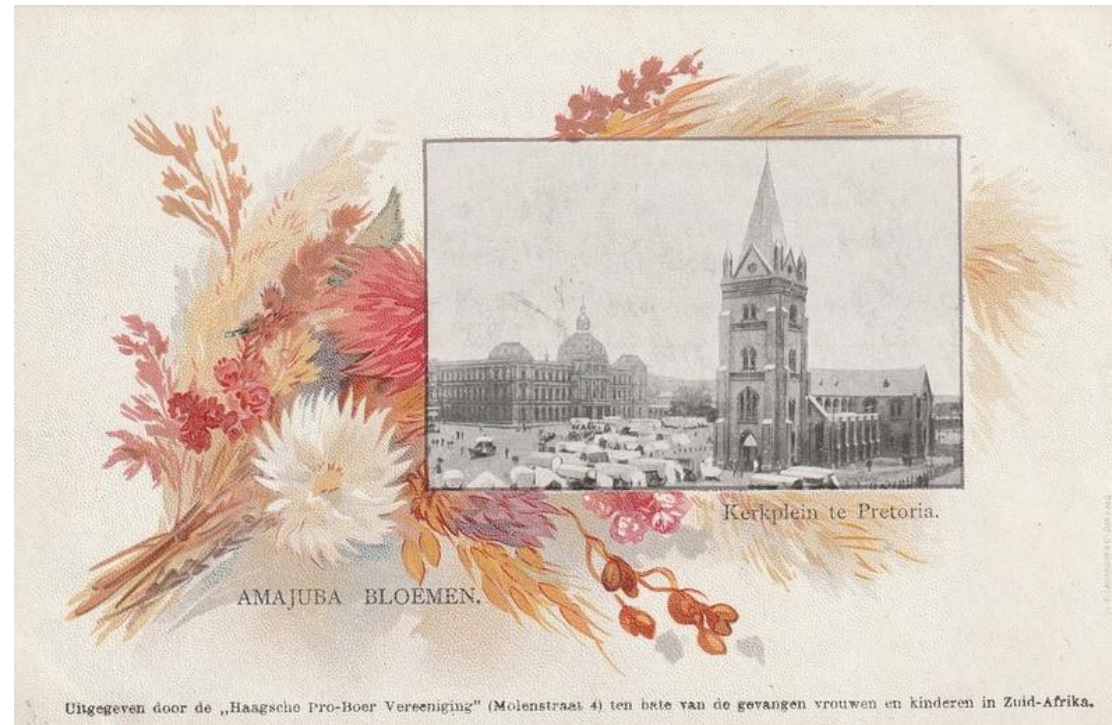
*Original church
on the Square
1854-1882*



*Second church on
the Square
1883-1905*

*Bosman Street church
1904-present*

The card was published by Mudie's, Pretoria, has an undivided back and is unused. The Transvaal coat-of-arms appears on the back.



Published in Holland by The Hague Pro-Boer Society in aid of the women and children prisoners-of-war in South Africa, this card has an undivided back and is unused. The flowers of Amajuba (the site of a Boer victory over the British in 1881) are hand-tinted.



A postal stationery postcard of the Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek.

The card has “Zuid-Afrik. Republiek Briefkaart” printed on the back. The ½d ZAR stamp is printed on the card. It also has a ½d ZAR stamp affixed to the top left-hand corner of the back (address side) of the card. Both the printed stamp and the affixed stamp are cancelled Pretoria ZAR 26 January 1898. The card was sent to Kimberley.



A postal stationery postcard of the Cape of Good Hope.

The card has “Post Card – Cape of Good Hope” printed on the undivided back. The 1d Cape of Good Hope stamp is printed on the card. On the front of the card are three vignette pictures, with the words “With kind regards and best wishes!” printed below the pictures. The sender of the card appears not to have wanted to send “best wishes” and put a line through the words, The message is written in Dutch and is dated 19 April 1900. It was cancelled in Graaff Reinet, but the date is illegible. The card was sent to Leiden in The Netherlands



Both cards have the same two vignettes, one of the Church on the Square and the other of Paul Kruger's House in Church Street (now WF Nkomo Street), but the card on the left has the pictures printed in green, whereas on the card on the right has them printed in brown.

The wording on the cards is in Dutch. Both cards are marked as "Briefkaart" (postcard) on the undivided backs and both cards were postally used overseas. The first card was posted from The Netherlands to Bremen, Germany. The date stamp is illegible, but the card is stamped as received in Bremen on 2 November 1899. The second card was posted in Brussels (Belgium) to Jette St. Pierre (Belgium) on 28 February 1903.

The same photograph appears on both cards, but the one on the first card is a vignette. Both have undivided backs and the second card has the coat-of-arms of the Cape Colony on the back.



The publisher is not stated. The card was postally used outside South Africa. It was posted in Bromley (England) to an address in London (England) on 29 October 1904.



The publisher is G. Budrick & Co. (printed as "GB" on the card). The number 334 appears on the card. The card was posted on 19 January 1905 from Pretoria to Salt River, Cape Colony.

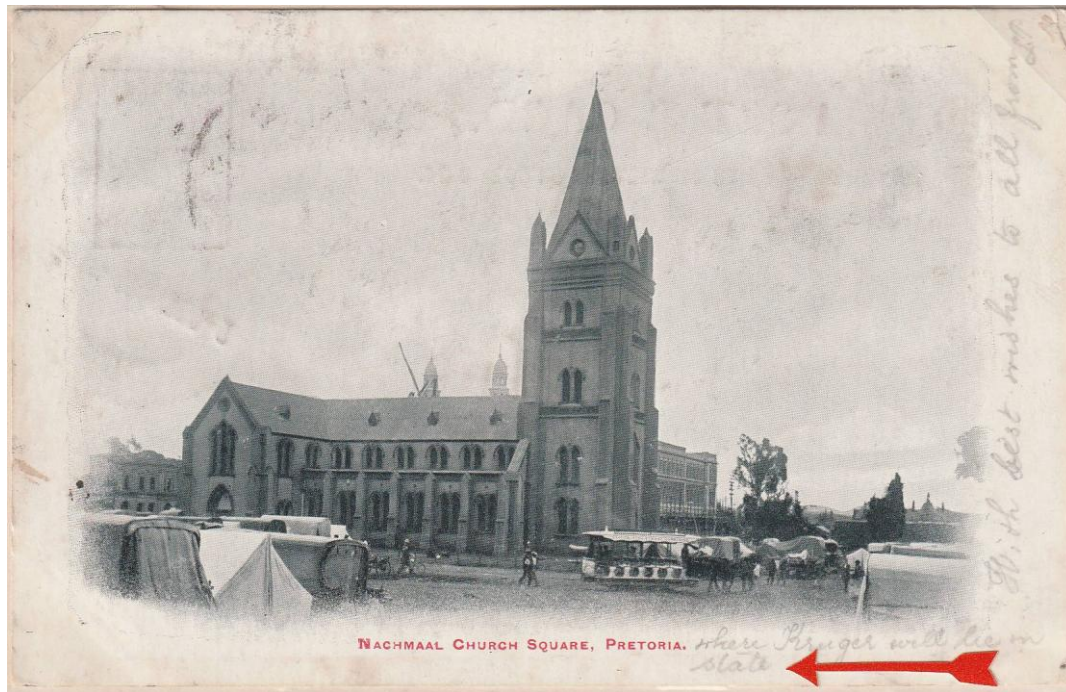
Both cards have undivided backs and were published in Durban by the same publisher, Sallo Epstein & Co., who used the same photograph on both cards, but with one in black and white and the other in hand-tinted coloured.



This card is unused.



This card was posted in Johannesburg to London, England, on 25 July 1904.



The card shows a view of the church surrounded by the wagons and tents of the congregants who had arrived for “nachmaal” (communion). The card has an undivided back. No publisher is given. The card was posted in Pretoria on 5 December 1904 to London, (England). Handwritten under the picture is the message “Where Kruger will lie in state”.



Published by C. Basson & Co., Pretoria, the card has an undivided back and was posted from Pretoria to Harrismith on 2 February 1905. In addition to the caption for the picture, the words “Greetings from Pretoria” are also printed below the picture. The handwritten message, from a visitor to Pretoria, refers to the demolition of the church and to Paul Kruger’s funeral: “They are now breaking down this church. From here, the President’s funeral started. Saw his grave yesterday. Seen almost the whole place already.”



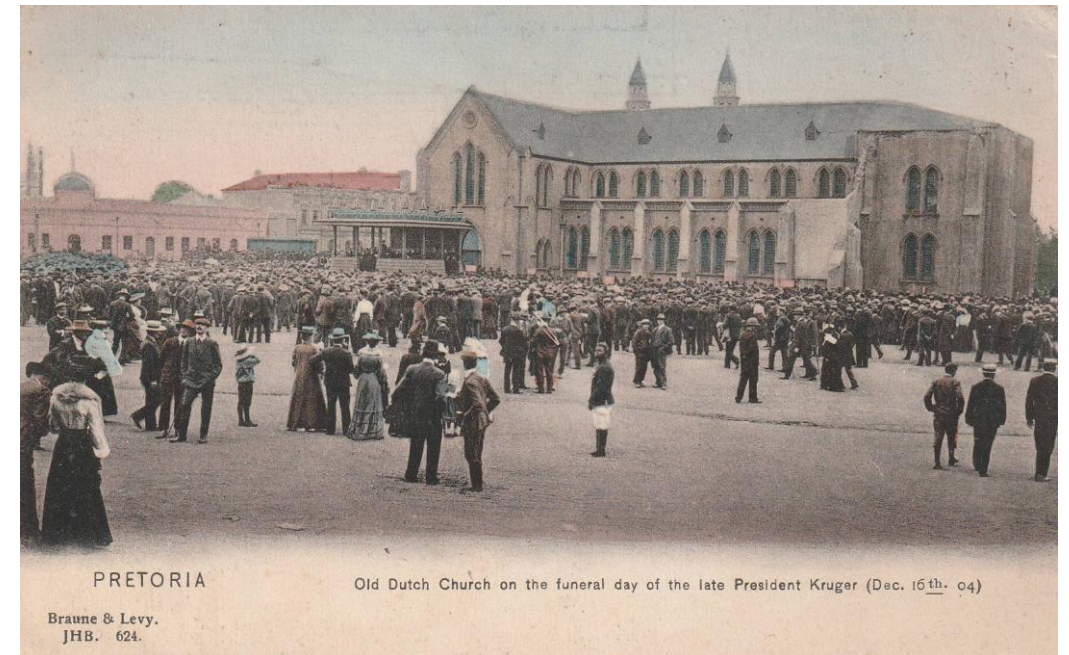
The picture shows the crowds outside the church at President Paul Kruger's funeral on 16 December 1904.

The funeral service was held in the church before its demolition, although the tower had already been partially demolished.

The card was published by Sallo Epstein, Durban, and is numbered 1034. It has an undivided back and is unused.



*This card shows the church during demolition of the tower.
The card has an undivided back and is unused. It was
published by Sallo Epstein, Durban, and is numbered 1255.*



*This card shows how the partially demolished tower was
“tidied up” for the funeral of President Paul Kruger in 1904.*

The Bosman Street Church, Pretoria

When the church on the Square became unsafe a new church was constructed in Bosman Street (named after Ds H. Bosman). This church was constructed in the Neo-Renaissance style. It was designed by J.G. Kraan and J.B. Weijers, with Klaas van Rijse as consultant. The cornerstone was laid by General Louis Botha on 11 May 1903. The church was consecrated on 30 September 1904.

Inner city demographic changes in recent years resulted in the church opening negotiations with PEN Ministries, who are very involved in community work in the inner city and who were the sole survivor of the Dutch Reformed Church's work at the Bosman Street Church, after the Afrikaans services were scrapped in 2007. In 2011 PEN was asked to take over the management of the congregation, with the church restructuring its operations to include the outreach and youth ministries of PEN. These ministries found a home at the church's Bronberg campus in Sunnyside.

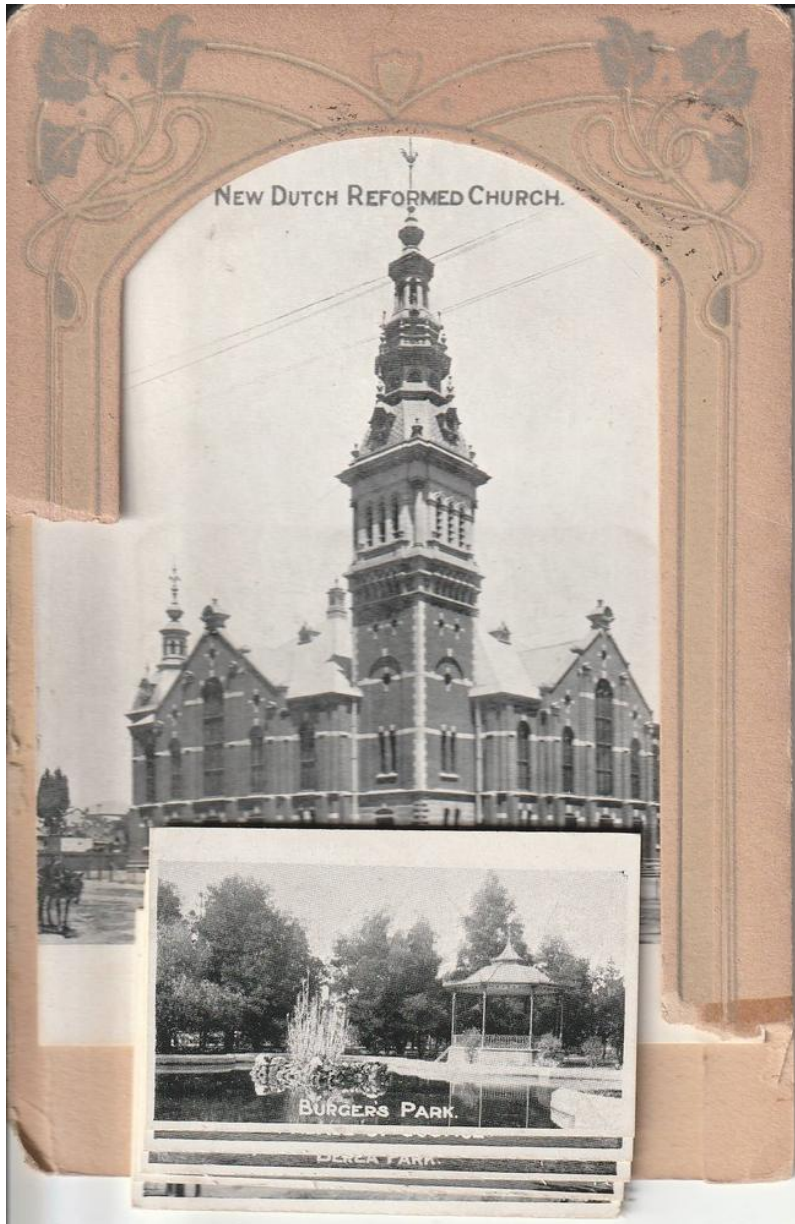
The old church building in Bosman Street is now a national heritage site and is co-owned by the Uniting Reformed Church Melodi ya Tshwane. The church was declared a National Monument on 29 August 1980.



The card has a divided back and is unused. It was published by Hallis & Co., Fine Art Dealers, Pretoria, and is made to look like a framed art work.



Published by Sallo Epstein & Co., Durban, the card has an undivided back and is unused. The picture shows the funeral cortege of Paul Kruger moving past the Bosman Street Church on the way to the cemetery (Heroes' Acre) in Church Street (now WF Nkomo Street) in December 1904.



A Multiple View Card, which had to be posted at the Book Post rate. The frame is damaged. The missing part of the frame would probably have held the flip-over strip of photos in place. The card was posted in Pretoria on 21 September 1906 to Montagu in the Cape Colony.

The 10 miniature photos in the flip-over strip show scenes in Pretoria:

- * Burgers Park
- * The Wonderboom
- * Palace of Justice
- * Artillery Barracks
- * Berea Park (sportsgrounds)
 - * Lion Bridge
 - * Police Barracks
- * Market Street (now Paul Kruger Street)
 - * The Hospital
- * Church Street (now Helen Joseph Street)



This card has an undivided back and is unused.

An example of the same photo being used by different publishers.

- *The card on the left was published by Braune & Franssen (printed as “B.F. & C.” on the card), Johannesburg, and is numbered 175.*
- *The card on the right was published by Braune & Levy, Johannesburg and is numbered 2089.*

The captions under the pictures also differ.

- *The card on the left is black & white.*
- *The card on the left has remnants of hand-tinted colour.*

Early postcards had undivided backs (for the address only). Divided backs, with the address space on the right and a message space on the left, first appeared in 1902 and by 1907 the undivided back was no longer used on postcards

So with its undivided back, the card on the left is most probably earlier than the card on the right, which has a divided back.



This card was posted in Pretoria on 27 March 1910 to Troyville, Johannesburg. It has a divided back

Gereformeerde Kerk (GK) (Doppers)

Kruger's Church, Pretoria

The Gereformeerde Kerk is on the corner of WF Nkomo (formerly Church) Street and Kgosi Mampuru (formerly Potgieter) Street in Pretoria, opposite the Kruger House. The original church was built in 1867, enlarged in 1877 and again in 1885.

A new church was built next door to it in 1896/7. The original church was neglected after 1897 and in 1910 it was sold to the state and demolished.

The new church was designed in the Dutch Neo-Renaissance style by the architect Klaas van Rijsse and was built by Daanen and Dorlas. The then president of the ZAR, Paul Kruger, who was one of the founding members of the Gereformeerde Kerk, laid the cornerstone on 10 October 1896, his birthday. The church was formally opened by President Kruger on 25 December 1897. Kruger himself took services in the church.

The church underwent renovations in 1949, 1950, 1979 and 2009. It became a national monument in 1983.



Kruger's church is shown on the left, with the original church on the right.

The card was published by Sallo Epstein, Durban, has an undivided back and was posted in Pretoria to a Pretoria address on 10 February 1905.

*One Kmdt Koos Jooste appears in a vignette on the card.
His picture appears on numerous postcards published in
Germany during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902).*

*Jooste was a champion cyclist prior to the Boer War and
was instrumental in setting up the Bicycle Despatch Corp.
During the Boer War, he left the Cape Colony and went to
Germany to raise money, ostensibly for the Boers, but it
seems likely that he was more interested in furthering his
own interests than in furthering the Boer cause.*

*He appears as Kmdt on the postcards,
but was in fact not a Boer War Kommandant.*



*The card has a divided back and is unused.
It was published in Germany and the
wording on the card is in German.*

Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (NHK).

The Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk is located in Du Toit Street. The architects were J.G. Kraan and J.B. Weijers, and the builder was G.J. Dorlas.

The corner stone of the church was laid on 18 July 1904 in the presence of general Louis Botha and only seven months later, on 25 February 1905, the church was ready to open. Alterations to the church were done in 1953.

The steeple houses an 1896 clock made in Germany.

On 25 August 2010 a museum was opened on the gallery inside the church. The museum contains material concerned with the history of the “Nederduitsch Hervormde Gemeente” and the “Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk”.



*The card has a divided back and is unused.
It was published by Sallo Epstein & Co,
Durban, and is number 1585.*

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

The Anglican Church was established in Cape Town in 1870. Previously known as the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA), the name of the denomination was officially changed to the Anglican Church of Southern Africa in 2006.

St Alban's Cathedral, Pretoria

The Anglican Cathedral Church of St Alban the Martyr is located in Francis Baard (formerly Schoeman) Street. The original church was built in 1879 and was replaced by the current Cathedral in 1909.

The plans for the Cathedral were drawn up in 1905. The foundation stone was laid by Lord Selborne in 1908 and the chancel was consecrated by Bishop Carter in 1909. The Cathedral was completed in 1958 by the building of the aisleless nave, vestries, cloisters, a hall and diocesan offices to a new design by Ewn Mallows, the son of Herbert Baker's friend from his Art Workers' Guild days in London.



The interior of the original church.

The card was published by Braune & Levy, Johannesburg, and is numbered No. 2014.

THE METHODIST CHURCH

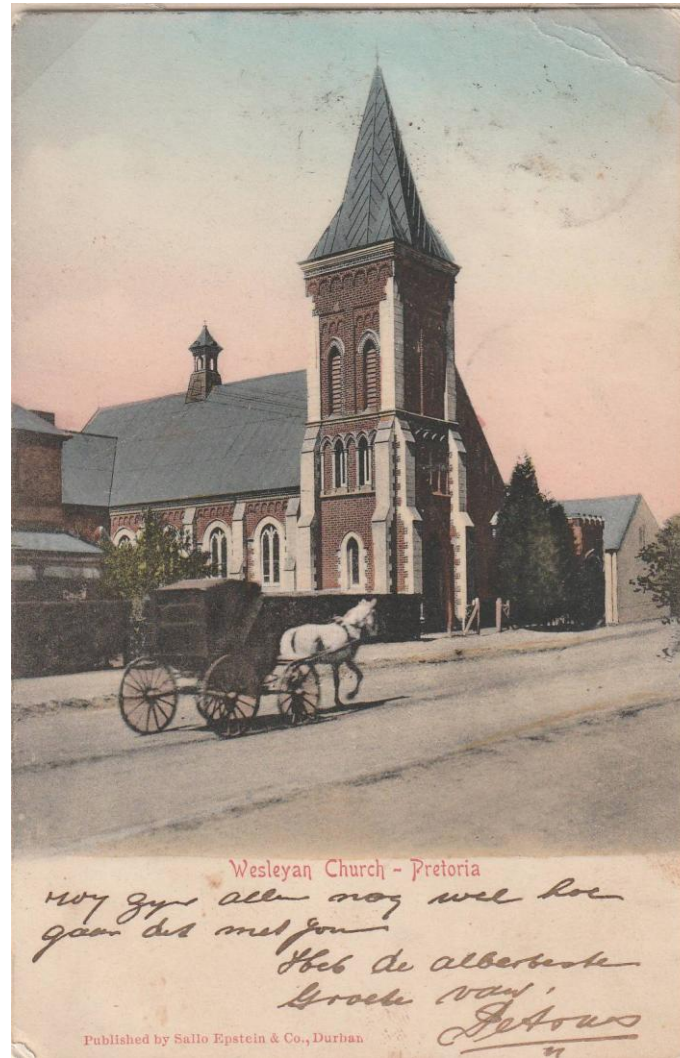
John Irwin, an Irish soldier stationed at the Cape, began holding prayer meetings around 1795. Another soldier, George Middlemiss, stationed at the Cape with the 72nd regiment of the British Army in 1805, was the first Methodist lay preacher at the Cape. The work of these two soldiers laid the foundation of Methodism in southern Africa.

This was followed by the missionary work of British Methodist missionaries, including missionaries accompanying the 1820 Settlers to the Cape. In 1883 six missionary districts of what was then called the Wesleyan Methodist Church came together to form an affiliated Conference.

This was followed in 1927 by the constitution of an independent Conference, which in 1931 was enlarged by the inclusion of the Transvaal Missionary District of the British Conference and the small Primitive Methodist Mission.

Wesley Methodist Church, Pretoria

A school building served as the first meeting place for Methodist worship in Pretoria. The congregation was at that stage an outstation of the Bloemfontein District of the Methodist Missionary Society. The Neo-Gothic church was built around 1878 on the corner of Andries and Church Streets (now Thabo Sehume and Helen Joseph Streets respectively) and is no longer extant, a new church having been built on a site some blocks away in Burghers Park Lane in 1969-1970



Published by Sallo Epstein & Co., Durban, the card has an undivided back and was posted in Pretoria on 9 March 1905 to an address in Venterstad (Cape Colony). The message was written under the picture, as the back was for the address only.

Sunnyside Methodist Church, Pretoria

There are three foundation stones for this Neo-Gothic church, one laid by Rev George Weavind, one laid by Councillor J.C. van Boeschoten and the third laid by Sunday School scholars. They are dated 8 June 1904.



The card was published by C. Basson & Co., Pretoria. It has an undivided back and is unused.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Devout Presbyterian soldiers in the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders Regiment arrived at the Cape in 1806 as part of Britain's occupying force. These devout Scotsmen formed The Calvinist Society, holding weekly prayers, bible study and worship, despite having no minister.

A Presbyterian minister, Rev George Thom, arrived at the Cape in 1812 and, instead of proceeding to his planned destination of India, decided to stay, establishing the first Presbyterian congregation at the Cape. In 1824 work began on the construction of a church, which was completed in 1827.

Known as the Mother Church of Presbyterians in Southern Africa, it still stands in central Cape Town today. The first minister of St Andrew's (as this congregation is called) was Rev John Adamson, who arrived from Scotland in 1827.

The Presbyterian Church of South Africa was formed in 1897, later changing its name to the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa (PCSA), to include Zimbabwe and Zambia. In 1999 the PCSA joined with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in South Africa (RPC) to form the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA).

St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Pretoria

The inaugural Presbyterian service in Pretoria was held in October 1889 in the Pretoria Masonic Hall and a congregation was constituted, giving it the status to call a minister. Rev James Gray became the new congregation's first minister on 2 March 1890.

The foundation stone of the St Andrew's Hall in Schoeman Street (now Francis Baard Street) was laid by President Paul Kruger on 12 April 1890. The hall, a wood and iron building, later known as the Tin Temple, opened in June 1900.

In August 1906 the foundation of the present church was laid by the Earl of Selborne and in December 1891 the church was officially opened and dedicated



*The card was published by R.O. Füsslein,
Johannesburg, No 4421, and has a divided back.*

*It was posted from Pretoria on 23 October 1912 and
received in Newcastle, Natal on 24 October 1912.*

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Roman Catholic Church's history in South Africa dates back to Bartholomew Diaz's arrival in Walvis Bay on 8 December 1487, with the first Mass being celebrated on the island of Holy Cross (off Port Elizabeth) some weeks later. Joao de Nova erected a small church at Mossel Bay in 1501. From 1652, under Dutch and subsequent British rule, Catholicism was forbidden.

On 14 April 1837, an Irish Dominican priest, Patrick Raymund Griffith, arrived at the Cape as Bishop of Palaeopolis and Vicar Apostolic of the Cape of Good Hope. Thus began the history of the Roman Catholic Church in South Africa. Both the Mariannhill missionaries and the Oblate missionaries played significant roles in the early work of the Roman Catholic Church in South Africa.

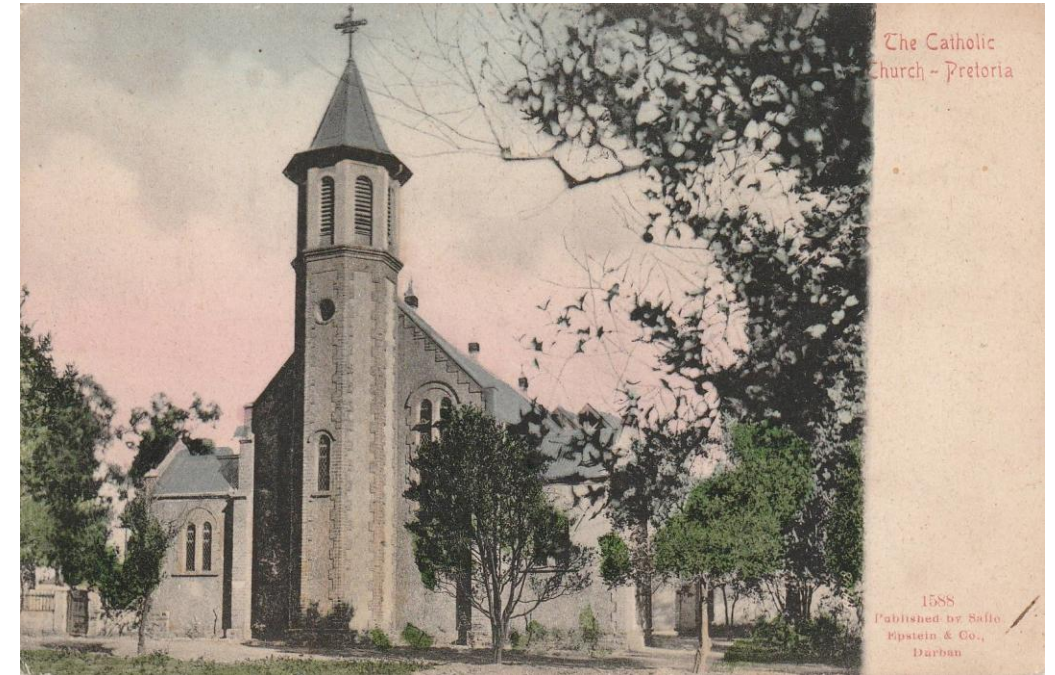
Denis Hurley, Archbishop of Durban, was a prominent opponent of the apartheid regime. Appointed bishop at the age of 31, he is probably the most eminent Catholic cleric in South African history.

Roman Catholic Church in Skinner Street

The first Catholic Church in Pretoria, on the site of the present Sacred Heart Cathedral on the corner of Bosman Street and Skinner Street (now Nana Sita Street) in central Pretoria, was established in 1877 by Bishop Jolivet. There have been three church buildings on the site. The first church building was a temporary structure. This was replaced by a second church, with parish priest Fr Andrew Walsh as architect, contractor and builder. The convent was established by the Loreto Sisters in 1878. Construction of the third church building, on the same site, began in 1887. The first stage, designed by B. J. Clinch, was completed in 1932 and the northern façade, designed by Hussey van Rensburg Architects, was completed in 1965. The style of the Cathedral is Gothic Revival, with Norman features. The church gained cathedral status in 1948.



The card shows the second church on the left. The building on the right is one of the convent buildings. The card was posted from Johannesburg to Seine, France, on 3 July 1905. On the back, the printed words "Post Card" have been crossed out and "Printed Matter" has been written by hand. The card is numbered 179 and was published by Braune & Franssen & Co. (printed as "B.F. & C." on the card), Johannesburg.



The card has a divided back and is unused. It was published by Sallo Epstein & Co, Durban, and is numbered 1588.



Thank You!