



A Reminiscence of the 1st Anglo-Boer War and the Later Years and Funeral of President S.J. Kruger

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1st Anglo-Boer War through picture postcards



Events leading to the 1st Anglo-Boer War

In 1875, Henry Herbert, Earl of Carnarvon, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, approached the Orange Free State and the ZAR to organise a federation of the British and Boer territories. The Boer leaders refused. Carnarvon later sent Sir Theophilus Shepstone as a special commissioner to the ZAR. In January 1877, Shepstone told President Burgers that Britain was going to annex the Republic. Burgers tried to convince the ZAR government to act, but it refused to see the urgency of their predicament.

On 12 April 1877, a proclamation of the annexation of the Republic was made in Pretoria. It was to be known as the British Colony of the Transvaal. A government delegation including Paul Kruger went to London to present a case on behalf of the Republic to Lord Carnarvon, but their efforts were unsuccessful. Then began a growing resentment against the annexation, with complaints that it had been a violation of the Sand River Convention of 1852, and the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854.

Major-General Sir George Pomeroy Colley was appointed Governor of Natal, Transvaal and Military Commander in July 1880. Colley, instead of visiting the Transvaal where he knew many of the senior Boers, relied on reports from the Administrator, Sir Owen Lanyon, who had no understanding of the Boer mood or capability. This was to prove a major mistake.

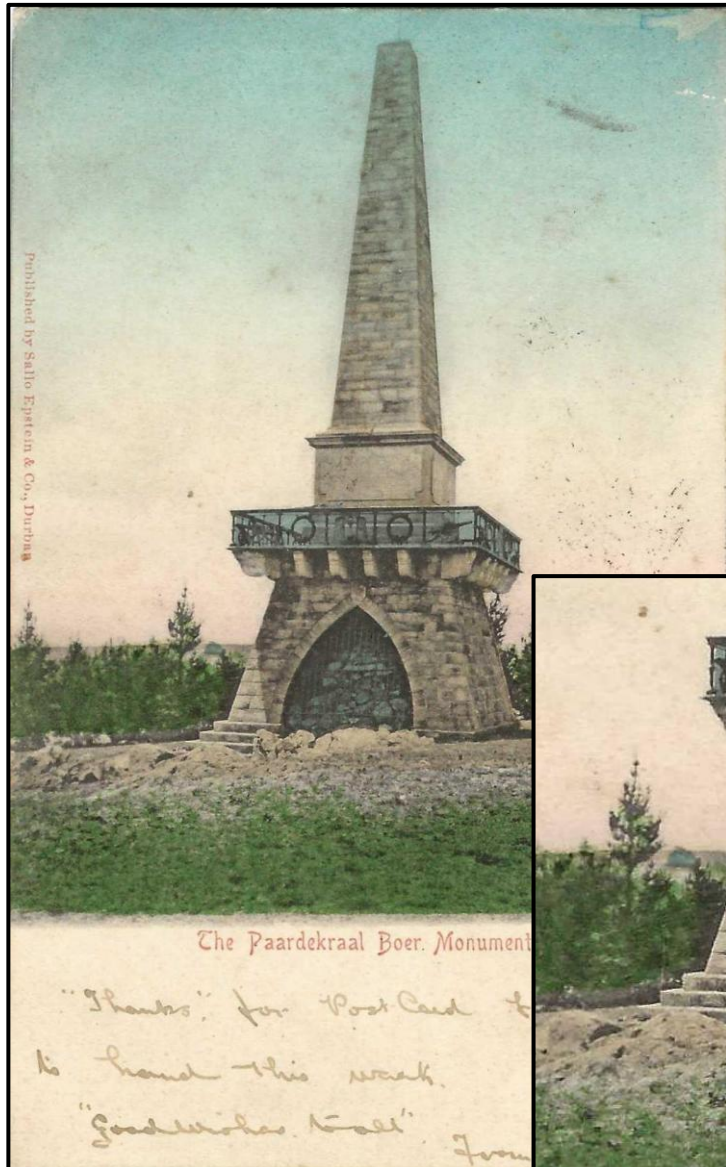
The Vow

The Annexation of the Republic brought about an increased sense of national identity. By 1880, the struggle quickened and a meeting was fixed at Paardekraal for 8th January 1881.

After a tax incident at Potchefstroom, the meeting was brought forward to 8th December 1880. Some 10,000 attended with several thousand burghers vowing to regain independence. Each placed a stone on a cairn.

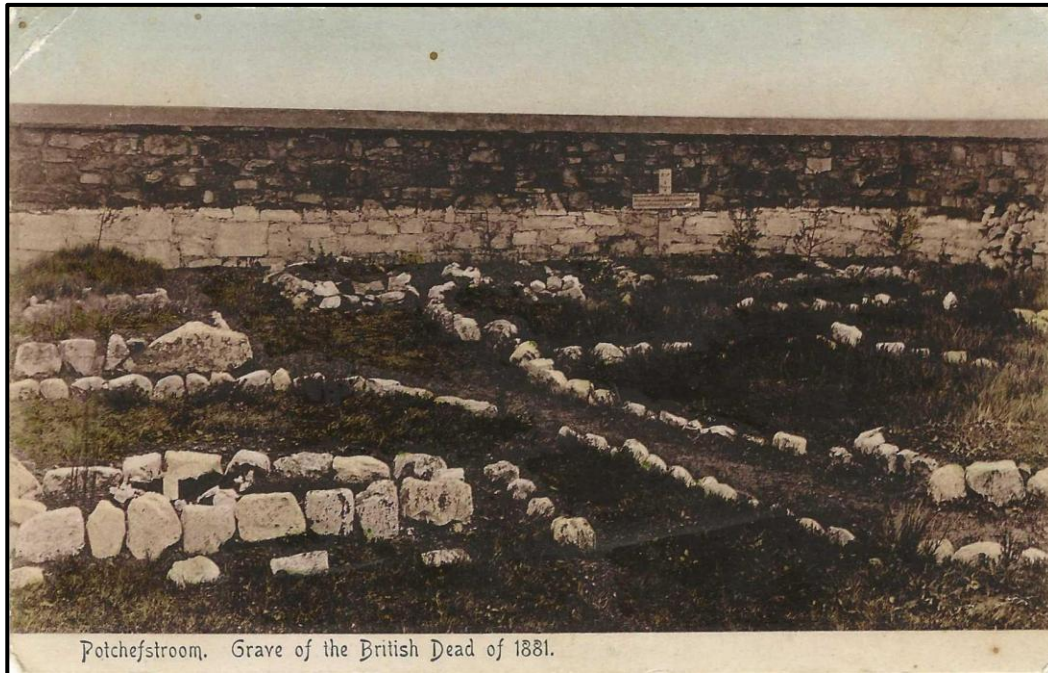
The first actions of the War took place on 20th December at Potchefstroom where a siege of the British garrison began, and at Bronkhurstspruit, where some 250 men of the 94th Regiment were ambushed and 155 became casualties.

10 years later the Paardekraal Monument had been built and covered the cairn (inset).



The Siege of Potchefstroom

On 15 December 1880, a large group of Boers on horses rode up to Potchefstroom. Major Thornhill, who saw them, raced back to a fort constructed by the small British garrison. Soon afterwards, the Boers started firing on the fort from three directions, but the fort's low walls provided minimal protection.



On 16 December, the Boers replaced the Union Jack at the Landdrost's office, and its thatched roof was set alight. The Boers, commanded by Generaal Piet Cronje, demanded the British surrender, but Colonel Winsloe refused. The siege continued with the defenders suffering severe privations and lack of food. After 95 days. On 20 March 1881, a negotiated end was agreed. The garrison left the next day.

Two cards, one showing the graves of the British dead, the other the trees that subsequently grew upon them.

Laing's Nek

General Colley, in response to the action at Bronkhurstspruit, moved some 1200 officers and men to the Transvaal border, with the aim to relieve British garrisons in the Transvaal.

The first British encampment was near Laing's Nek, a ridge in the foothills of the Drakensberg. However, there were some 2000 Boer forces in the area, commanded by Commandant Generaal Joubert. On 28th January 1881, Colley tried to force a way through to Standerton. Several actions ensued in which Colley lost 84 killed and 113 wounded. Boer losses were 14 killed and 27 wounded. Colley was forced to withdraw his force.

The card illustrates a striking and unusual memorial in Winchester Cathedral to Lieutenant Colonel C.B. Pigott, DSO, inscribed 'Laing's Nek 1881'. He was awarded his DSO helping wounded soldiers in the later stages of the action. The memorial depicts Pigott leading a wounded man to safety. It is on oxidised silver on a pink marble background.



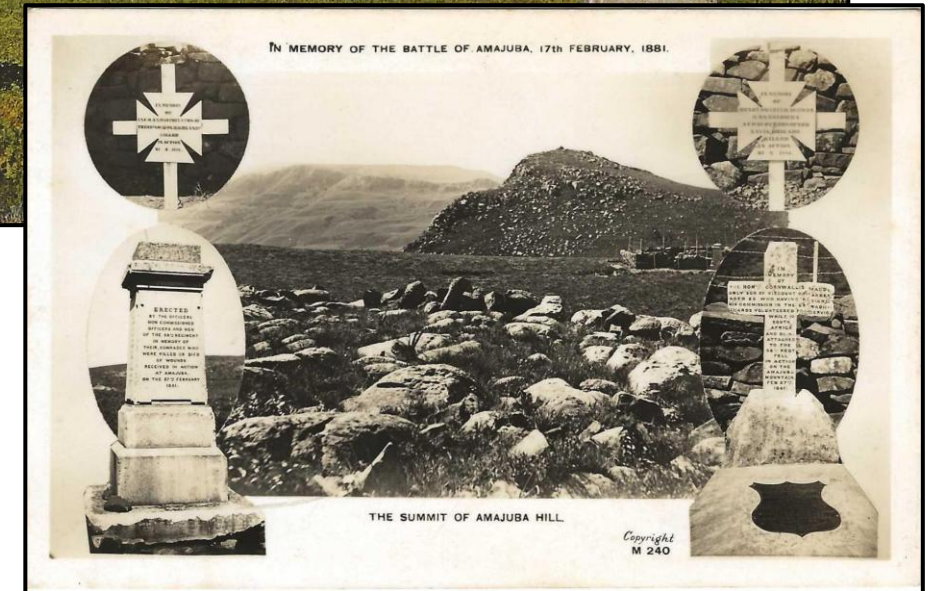
Majuba

After Laing's Nek, General Colley ascended Amajuba Mountain, on the Transvaal-Natal border, with 554 men on the night of 27th February 1881.

The following morning, 200 Boer volunteers, under Boer Generaal Nicholas Smit, stormed the mountain, and broke the British ranks, forcing a retreat.

Colley and 91 of his men were killed, 114 wounded, and several taken prisoner. The Boers lost only two killed.

Two cards showing Amajuba Mountain, its summit and O. Neil's Farm. The memorials are to members of the Naval Brigade, the 92nd Gordon Highlanders, the 58th Regiment, and to Cornwallis Maude (of the 58th).



Majuba The 58th Regiment

During the battle on Majuba, the Boers moved to attack five companies of the 58th Regiment who were advancing to the summit. They were fired upon from Boers concealed in trenches at a distance of 150 yards.

The 58th suffered major losses, including their senior officers. Overall, they lost 76 killed and 103 wounded, some 35% of their strength.

The losses on Majuba, including half a battalion of infantry, led to the downfall of Mr Gladstone's Government.



Erected by the Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men of the 58th Regiment in memory of their comrades who were killed or died of wounds in action at Amajuba on 27th February 1881.

Inset: The Memorial and Cemetery

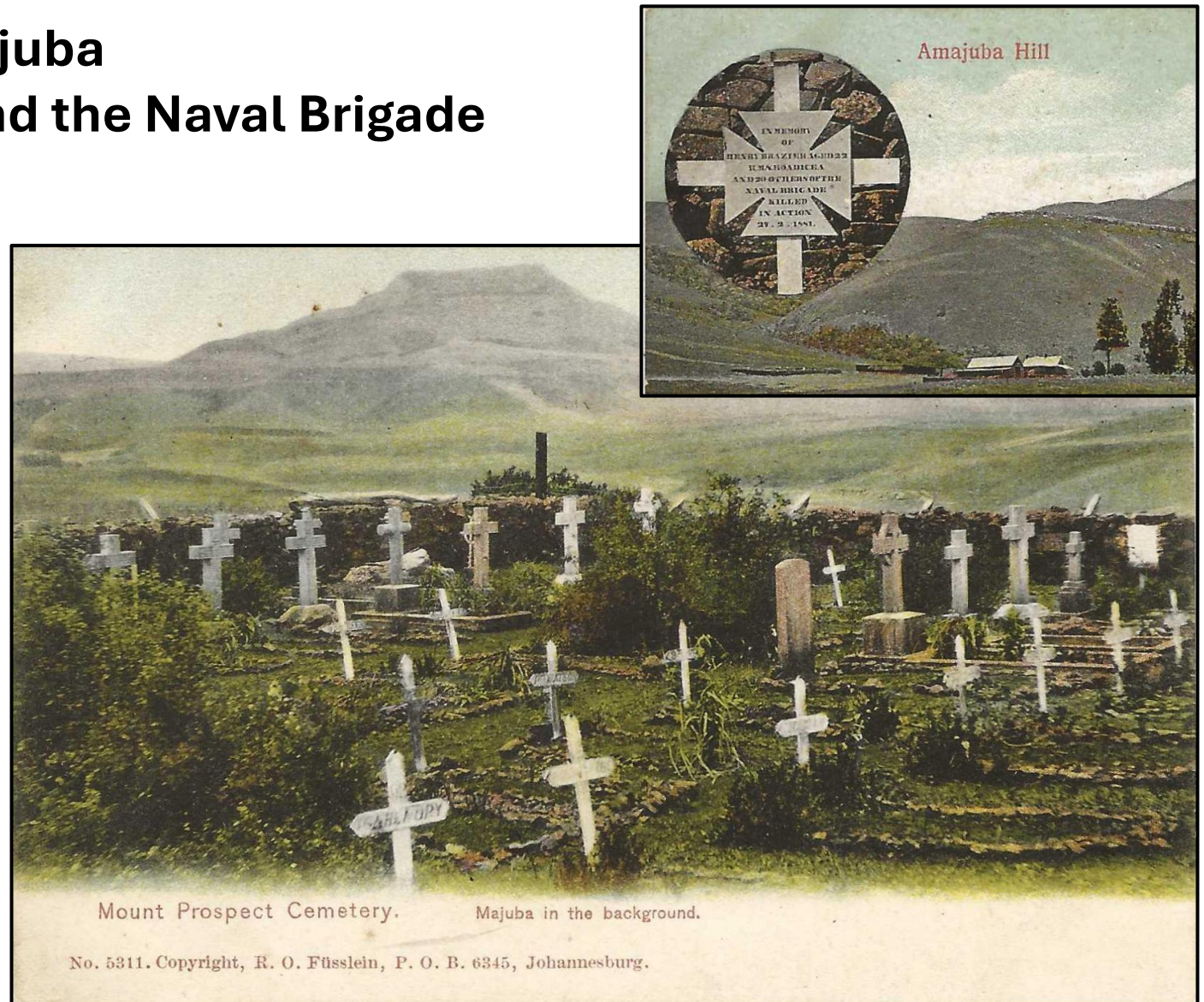
Majuba

Mount Prospect and the Naval Brigade

During the battle on Majuba, a small party of Boers advanced from their positions under the mountain and engaged men of the Naval Brigade at Mount Prospect Camp, but the advance was halted, though the Brigade suffered losses.

The Memorial Cross (inset) is inscribed:
*“In memory of Henry Brazier, aged 22,
HMS Boadicea,
and 20 others of the Naval Brigade
killed in action on 27th February 1881”*

The postcard depicts the Cemetery at Mount Prospect with Majuba in the background.

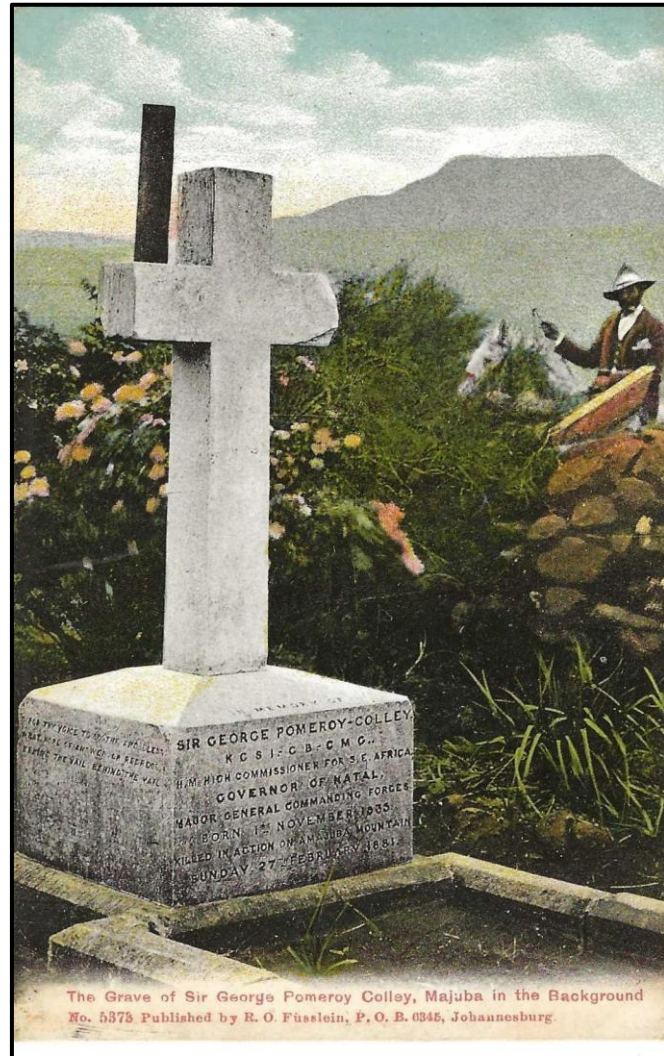


General Colley

His Grave and where He Died

Left: Colley's Grave at Mount Prospect Cemetery

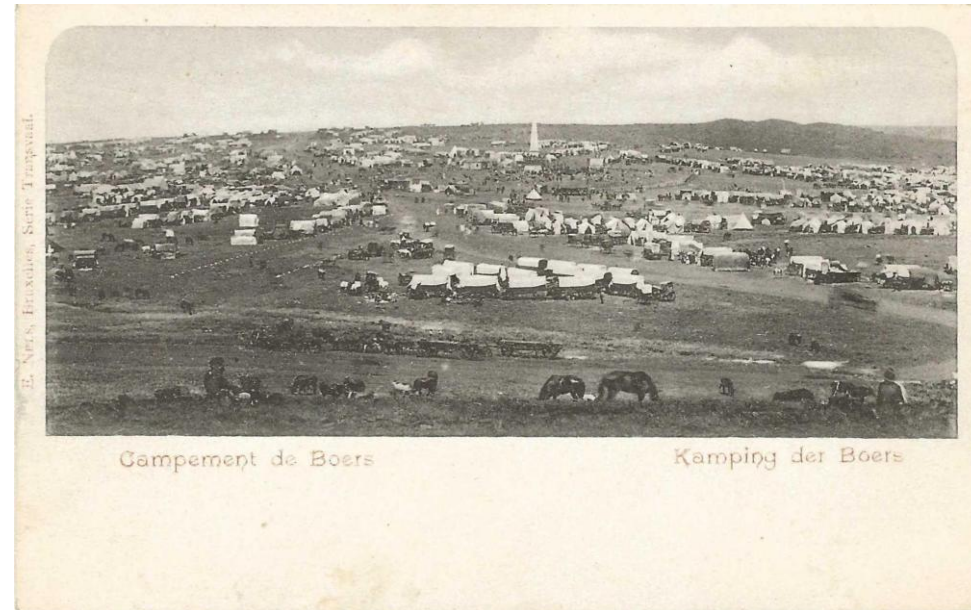
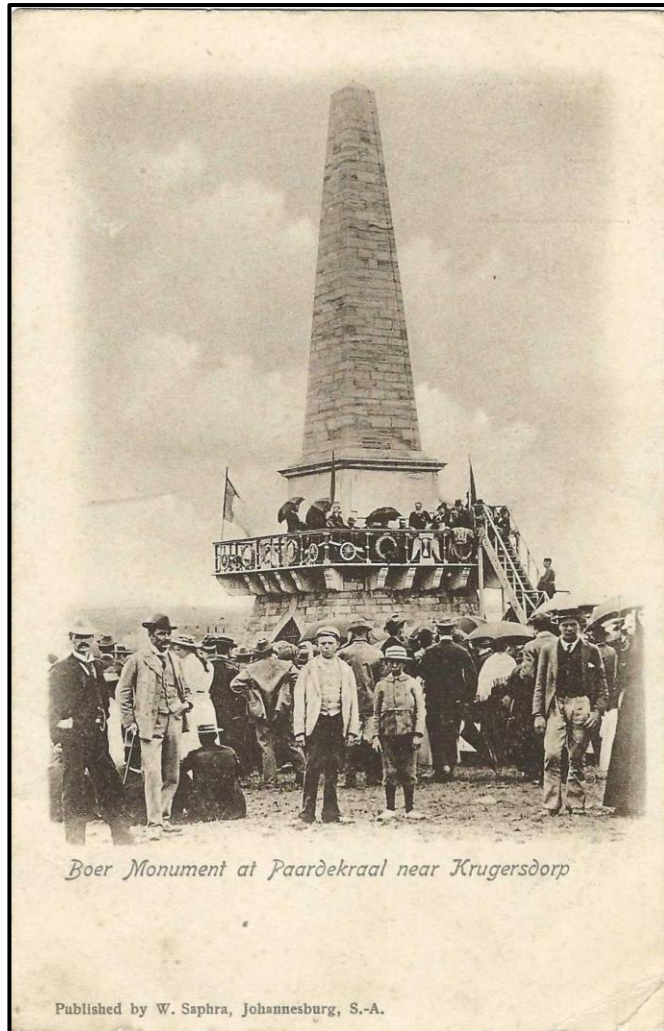
Below: The Cairn on Majuba marking where Colley fell.



The Armistice of 6th March 1881, signed at O. Neil's Farm, Majuba, was followed by the Pretoria Convention on 3rd August 1881.

The Inauguration of the Paardekraal Monument by President Kruger 13th December 1881

The Monument was built over the cairn of stones placed there a year earlier. *Left:* President Kruger on the Monument's balcony.





1981

100 years after the Vow

The Paardekraal Monument in 1981: very different to the scene when it was inaugurated. Now with encroaching trees.

No 'Cairn of the Stones of the Vow' inside. These stones were removed in act of desecration during 1900 by British troops and thrown into a nearby river.



The Later Years of President S J Kruger, His Funeral and His Monument

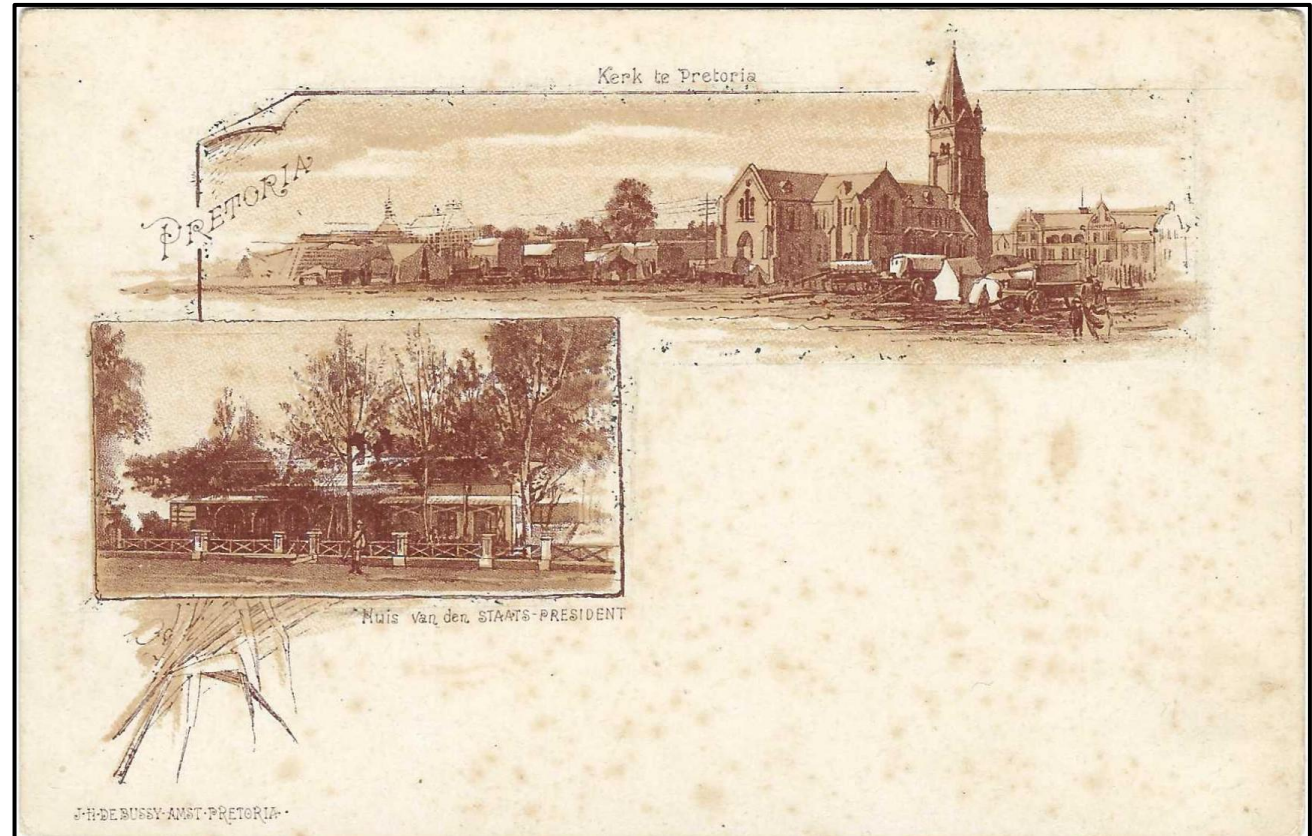


Kruger's House and Kerkplein, late 1890s

An evocative postcard, circa 1898, with two sepia vignettes of Pretoria just prior to the ABW, with the imprint J.H.DE BUSSY.AMST.PRETORIA. The address side is printed in red. Both vignettes are relevant to President Kruger.

One of a series of 12 cards with this DE BUSSY imprint, some recorded in 1898 without the 'AMST' in the imprint, plus the same cards (without AMST) as 'proofs' - blank address sides - for all 12 cards.

The firm of de Bussy is listed in *Longland's Pretoria Directory. 1898* as trading as 'stationers and booksellers', their address being Box 460, Pretorius Street E.



Unusual CGH 1d Postal Stationery Card – A Prelude to War?

In 1897, the CGH Post Office issued a series of UPU 1d postcards with local vignettes on the reverse. One had vignettes associated with the ZAR - an extraordinary choice of subject! A possible explanation is that the Cape and ZAR Governments were in discussions regarding increasing tensions between the two, and this card was issued to supplement these discussions.

The vignettes are captioned

- o *Paul Kruger, President S.A.R.'*
- o *Boers Outspanning, Transvaal'*
- o *Government Buildings and Dutch Reformed Church, Pretoria'.*

"With kind regards and best wishes!"

The message is headed 'Cape Town 28.VI.99'. The card is addressed to Germany, the arrival being 17 JUL 99.

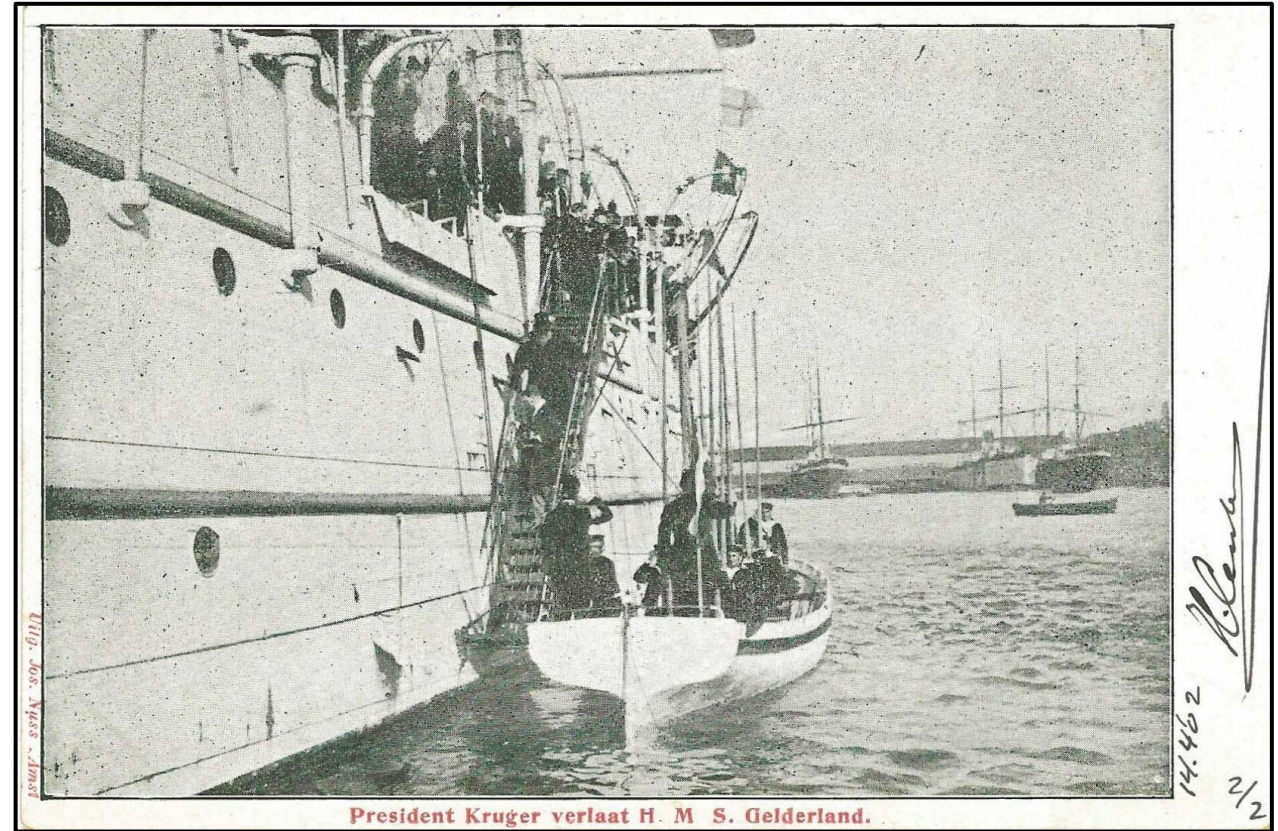


Into Exile via HNLMS Gelderland

After the Fall of Pretoria in June 1900, President Kruger went into exile in Lourenço Marques.

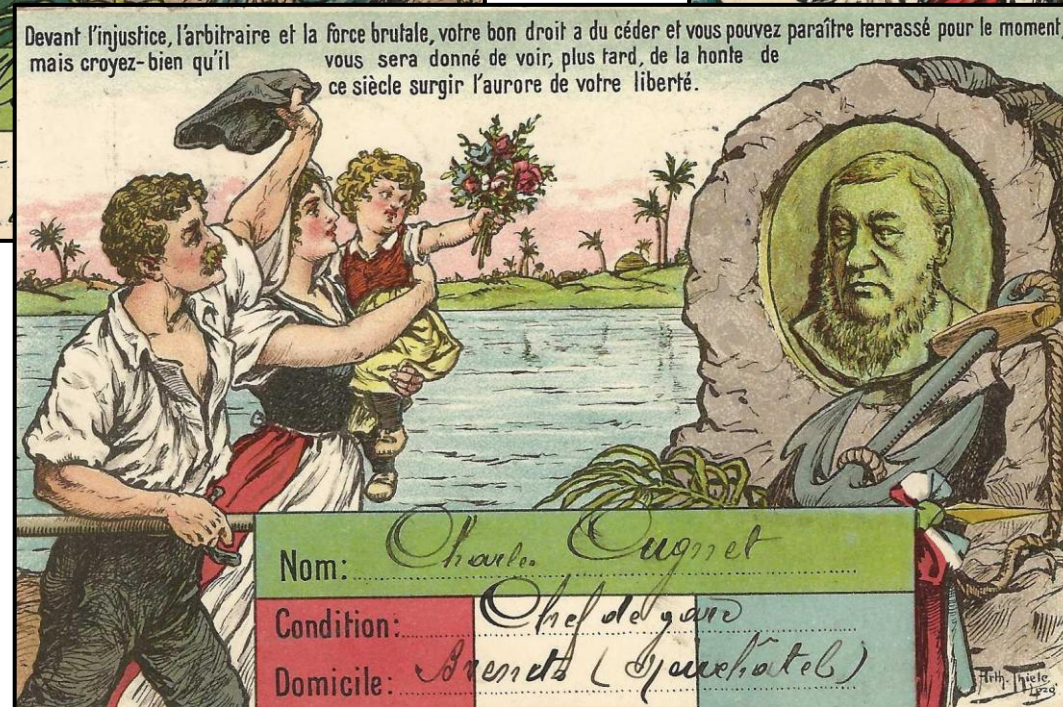
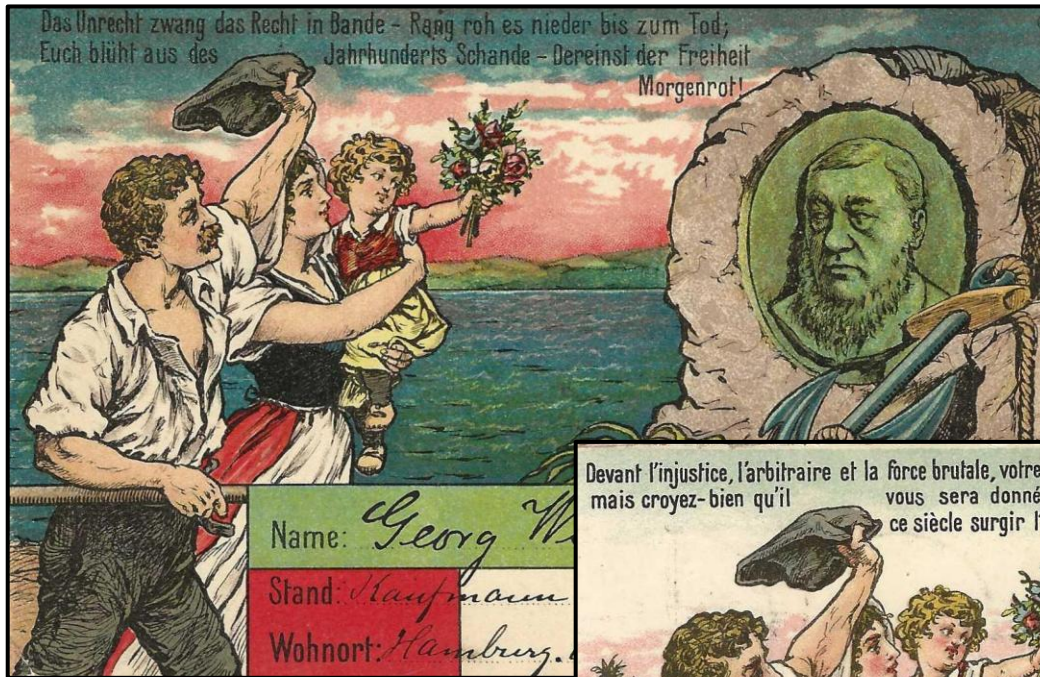
Queen Wilhelmina sent the cruiser *HNLMS Gelderland* of the Royal Netherlands Navy to bring him to the French port of Marseille.

The *Gelderland* left Africa with Kruger on board on 20 October 1900, arriving in France on 22 November, where a crowd of 60,000 awaited.



Kruger resided in the Netherlands, visiting capitals of Europe, where several series of “Sympathy Cards” were issued, to be sent to him at various consulates. He resided at Clarens in Switzerland for the last six months of his life. Upon his death in Switzerland in 1904, his body was repatriated to South Africa for burial.

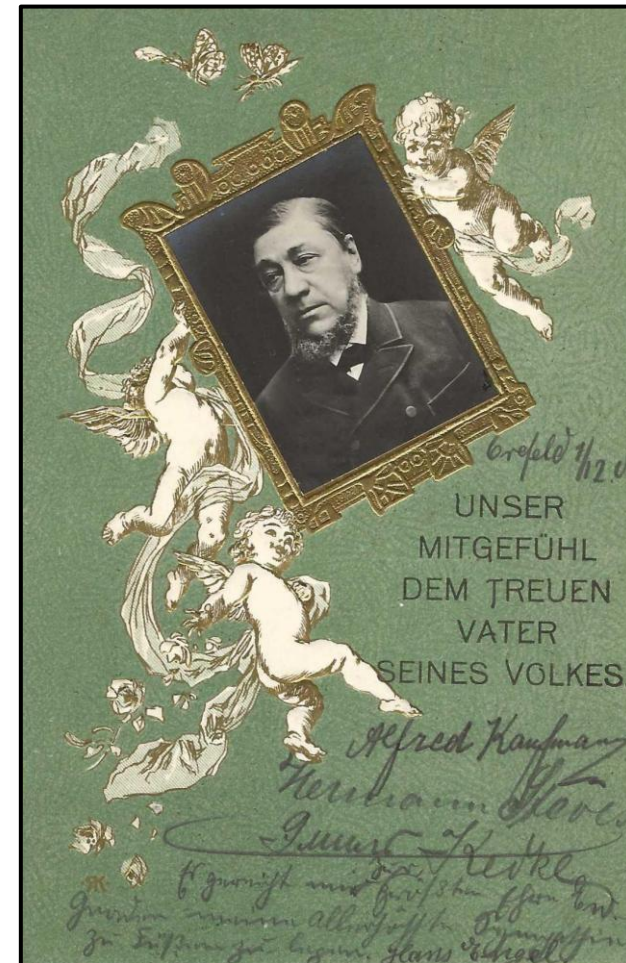
The Paris Sympathy Cards



Three versions:
text in English,
French and
German

French version
has different
signature and a
background with
palms.

The Cologne (Köln) Sympathy Cards



At least four card colours were used: yellow, green, grey and beige, some with the imprint 'Rud Kñuffmann's, Kunsiverlag, Krefeld' at left.

The Berlin Sympathy Cards



The Berlin Cards

Most common type.
Many from non-German countries.
This example from Leeds, Yorkshire.

The Brussels Cards

Not often seen. This example redirected to Cologne.

The Brussels Sympathy Cards



The Repatriation of President Kruger

President Kruger settled in Clarens, Switzerland for the last six months of his life where he died of heart failure and pneumonia on 14 July 1904. His body was embalmed, transferred to The Hague to await repatriation to South Africa, he having expressed a wish to be buried next to his wife, Gezina Susanna.

Lord Milner and his advisers consented to the interment of the late President Kruger in Pretoria.

Ex Hansard: Telegram to Lord Milner: *Please inform General Hildyard that any military honours he may consider proper to arrange for in connection with the funeral of the late President Kruger will have the fullest sanction of His Majesty's Government. Such a recognition of the conspicuous position so long held by the late President Kruger in South Africa may be acceptable to the family and the Boer community at large.*

President Kruger's Arrival in Pretoria



The President's funeral train arrived at Pretoria Station at 11 a.m. on 10th December 1904. He was then taken to Suzanna Zaal for his lying-in-state.

Suzanna Zaal, where President Kruger lies in state

Mourners outside Suzanna Zaal, where President Kruger was lying in state

The Suzanna Zaal (named after President Kruger's wife) was built during 1903 whilst the Groote Kerk (next door) was also built in 1903, once the Suzanna Zaal was completed.

Card published by Braune & Levy, JHB, No 625

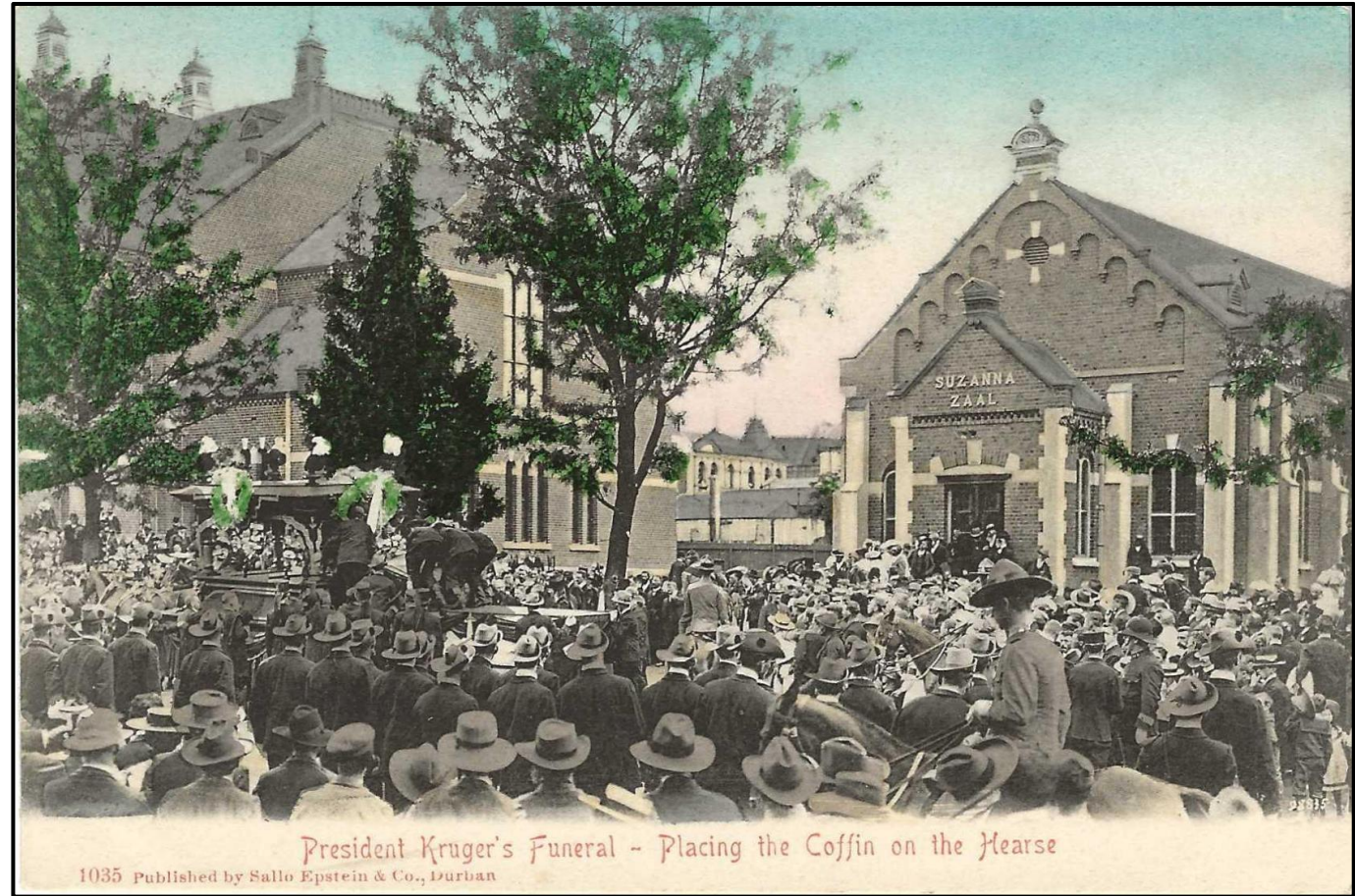


Placing President Kruger's Coffin on the Hearse

16th December 1904

The doors of Suzanna Zaal are now closed, and the mourners' attention is turned to the placing of the coffin on the hearse. The escort is in place.

Card published by Sallo Epstein
& Co., Durban (No 1035)



President Kruger's Funeral - Placing the Coffin on the Hearse

1035 Published by Sallo Epstein & Co., Durban

President Kruger's 'Last Trek'

President Kruger's funeral procession passing the Groote Kerk, a large escort forming part of the cortege. The hearse is drawn by two pairs of horses.

Captioned
*President Kruger's
Last Trek*

Card published by
Sallo Epstein & Co.,
Durban (No 1033)



Dear Mum Hope this President Kruger's last trek will find you well with love Ethel Jack
1033 Published by Sallo Epstein & Co., Durban

President Kruger's Funeral Service, 16 December 1904

The NHK/NGK Church on Church Square, Pretoria

Although not visible, the demolition of the church tower had already started. The formal ceremony therefore took place outside the church.

Shortly after this event, the complex was demolished entirely. Just prior to the demolition, the Bible was ceremoniously removed from the complex and carried to the new church in Kock Street by Reverend Bosman.



Card published by Sallo Epstein (No 1034)

The Interment of President Kruger

He was interred next to his wife in Heroes' Acre in Church Street Cemetery in Pretoria. Gezina Suzanna's grave is seen centre, with black headstone.

The area is shown being prepared for the erection of his memorial.



President Kruger's Grave — Pretoria.

616. Published by Sallo Epstein & Co., Durban.

President Kruger's Grave and Monument



Left: after the erection of the monument.

Right: a later view of the Kruger graves

Paul Kruger's Statue

The statue was sculpted in 1896 by Anton van Wouw following a commission by Sammy Marks, an enthusiastic supporter of the President. The ABW and later problems prevented the statue, sentinel Boers and plinth being installed in Church Square. The statue's pedestal in this view was first installed at Prince's Park and then moved to a location outside Pretoria Railway Station (shown in this card), where the statute was finally unveiled in 1925.

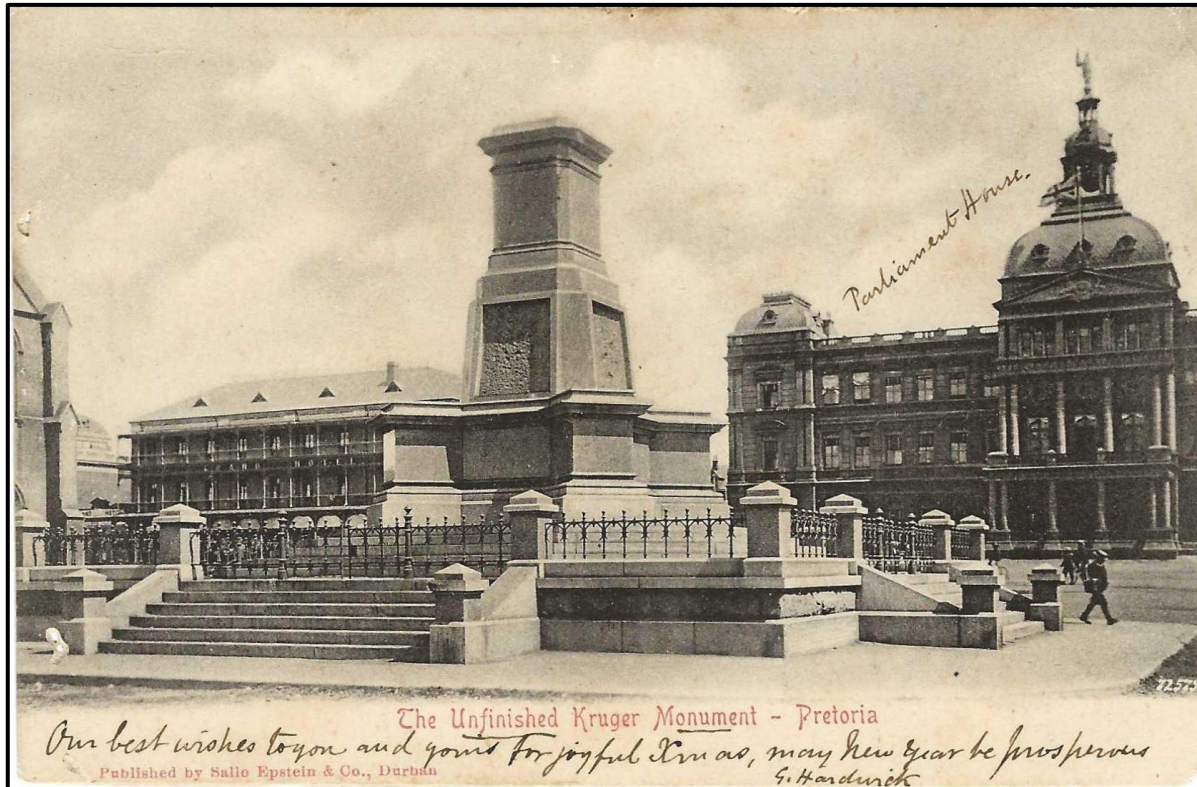
The statue portrays Paul Kruger wearing a top hat and presidential sash with a cane. The sculpture has four unnamed Boer soldiers at the corners below the main plinth. In 1956, the statue was moved to its current location at Church Square with a new pedestal and was unveiled there by D.F. Malan.



Kruger Statue, Pretoria.

H. & CO.
P. E.

The Original Plinth for the Kruger Monument in Church Square



Marks had 200 tons of red, smooth-polished Aberdeen granite ready in July 1899 for the plinth, but this plinth was never used.

On 11 October 1899, shortly before the cast models and panels were due to arrive in South Africa, the ABW broke out. Van Wouw was eager to put up the statue, but Kruger said it had to wait until the war was over. The sculptures were being imported from Europe, but they could not go past Delagoa Bay, as they were deemed non-priority.

Marks felt it wasn't worth the cost to salvage them, losing interest when he realised the Boers would lose the war after the British took Pretoria.

He allowed the four sentinel statues to be taken to England by General Kitchener.

The Sentinel Statues in England



S. A. WAR MEMORIAL, CHATHAM

A view of the Royal Engineers' Memorial Arch at Brompton Barracks, Chatham. This was unveiled by King Edward VII in July 1905. [Card used locally in 1908.]

In the foreground is one of the two sentinel statues (see top left on next slide) which General Kitchener gave to the Royal Engineers.

The other two he retained at his estate.

The Four Boer Sentinel Statues before their return to South Africa

There are two figures as Voortrekkers (right-hand vertical pair) and two then modern Boers (left-hand vertical pair). Sculpted in 1896 by Anton Van Wouw following a commission by Sammy Marks.

After the Anglo-Boer War, these statues were taken to England, two held by the Royal Engineers, and two held by General Kitchener. Protracted negotiations prevented their early return.

Cards printed by W.N. Eastgate Series, Rochester.

