



OVI Library

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Introduction

The following eras can be distinguished in the historical development of the library:

- The early years before the construction of the present library in 1932.
- The years between 1932 and the take-over by the Department of National Education (DNE) in 1958.
- The DNE era which lasted until the founding of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) in 1992.
- The era of ARC control from 1992 until the present.

The following is reported on: management, stock, physical accommodation and staff.

Early years before the construction of the present library (1908-1932)

Little information could be found about this period in correspondence files in both the Onderstepoort and National Archives, apart from details on the library building. According to Gutsche, Theiler attempted to overcome his academic isolation from the time of his arrival in the country and throughout the rinderpest and Daspoort periods by obtaining publications from abroad with the assistance of his father and brother who were in Switzerland. She also mentions that the 'old hands' at Daspoort accompanied Theiler to Onderstepoort, including F.T. Mauchle who was in charge of the 'library' and stock records. The use of apostrophes around the word 'library' indicates that a rudimentary collection may have existed at Daspoort which was brought to Onderstepoort.

The first library at the Institute was situated in the Old Main Building, consisting of shelves along the sides and back of the lecture room. Today the room is divided into two offices with some of the shelves still present at the back of one of them. Funding for books was probably in short supply. One of Theiler's daughters, Gertrud, wrote in her short biography of her father, that later, when the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, improved library facilities were established. A formal budget for information procurement was only in place by 1912,

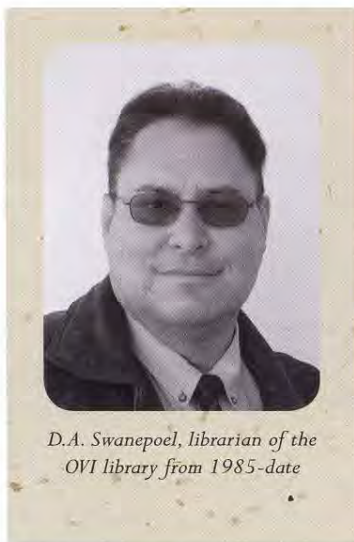
according to Gutsche.

For the Union government improving agricultural production was a priority. Some historians have described the politics of the day as the union of gold and maize. Wool and Angora fibres were staple exports, vital for the national economy. Beef and milk production became increasingly important for feeding the towns and mining compounds. It was therefore in the government's interests to further scientific research. The colonial governments had in fact been encouraging investigations into serious diseases of livestock from the 1870s and developing the library was an extension of this process.

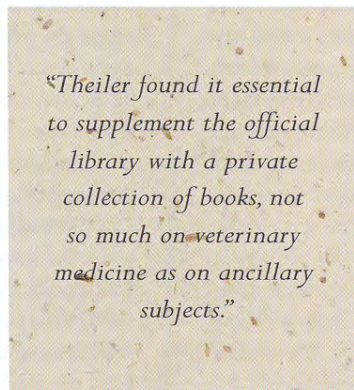
Many new journals had come into being since Theiler's arrival in South Africa, and new editions of the old standard textbooks, as well as new publications, appeared on the shelves. Yet Theiler still found it essential to supplement the official library

with a private collection of books, not so much on veterinary medicine as on ancillary subjects. He felt that improved general knowledge was necessary to understand the epidemiological problems facing the livestock industry in South Africa. Sadly, there are not many of Theiler's personal books remaining in the library. On his return to South Africa in the early 1930s, after retiring to Switzerland in 1927, financial constraints limited his shipment of books and he decided to donate them to various other institutions. Beneficiaries were the Swiss State Library at Berne, the Weybridge Bureau of Animal Care, the Berne Botanical Institute, and his family members. There are, however, a few books in the collection bearing a stamp with his name. His thesis '*Die Malaria des Pferdes*' (1901) can especially be mentioned.

An analysis of the early stock is very interesting. Most of the books/publications of the early 20th century were in Western European languages. German is well represented as can be expected, Theiler being of Swiss-German origin. He also recruited most of his staff from these countries during the early years. French was also well represented, and there are a few texts in Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, Flemish and Scandinavian languages. The following are some of the oldest books in the collection. Note that the original



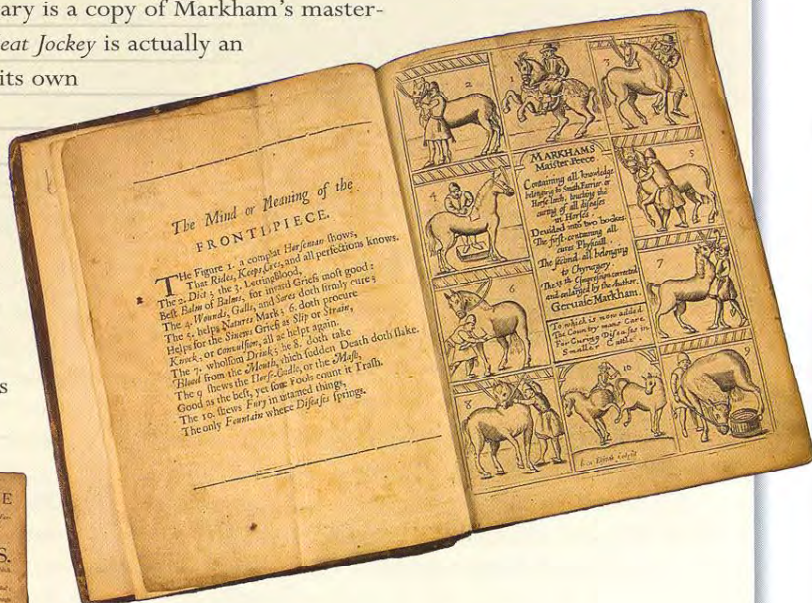
D.A. Swanepoel, librarian of the OVI library from 1985-date



"Theiler found it essential to supplement the official library with a private collection of books, not so much on veterinary medicine as on ancillary subjects."

A MASTER-PIECE DATING BACK TO 1717

The oldest item in the library is a copy of Markham's master-piece of 1717. *The Compleat Jockey* is actually an independent book, with its own lengthy subtitle. In those days all this information was included on the title page because copies were used as advertisement flyers. This book is the first English language veterinary manual to be considered a standard work on the subject. Its full title, in the style of those days, is as follows:



'Markham's masterpiece: containing all knowledge Belonging to the smith, farrier, or horse-leach: Touching the curing of all diseases in horse: Drawn with great pains, and appropriate experience, and blicke practice of the best horse-marshals in Christendom. : Divided into two books: The first containing cures physical; the 2nd, all cures chirurgical. : Together with the nature, use and quality of every simple mentioned through the whole work ... : To which is added, the exact receipts for curing all diseases in cows, oxen, sheep, hogs, goats, dogs, and all small cattle. : Also the compleat jockey ...'



spelling is used – it was verified in independent catalogues (see above). In another copy of Markham's master-piece, the title page is lost. It was replaced by a binders page containing the words: 'Presented to the Union of South Africa (Veterinary Department) by J.P. Whyte a Scottish South African Durban 1944'. The book starts on 'The first book' and *inter alia* contains the written words, 'published 1662'. It is unknown who wrote this. During the research for this chapter, technology allowed a comparison of the copy with a 1662 edition in possession of the Royal Veterinary College, UK. It could be determined that our copy is actually a 1734 edition. Although a widely read work in its time, the content is controversial. The original 'Maister-peece' of 1610 was an expanded version of the

veterinary part of the author's *Cavelarice or, The English horseman*, first published in 1607. It is based almost entirely on Thomas Blundeville's *The fower chiefyst offices belongyng to horsemanshippe* (1st ed., 1565-66). Plagiarism was clearly not uncommon in the earlier centuries.

The second oldest book in our library is dated 1729: *The compleat horseman, or, Perfect farrier*; in two parts. Part I. Discovering the surest marks of beauty, goodness, faults, and imperfections of horses ... The art of shoeing ... riding and managing the great horse. Part II. Contains the signs and causes of their diseases, with the true method of curing them, written in French by the Sieur de Solleysel. Abridged from the folio done into English by Sir William Hope.

THE OLDEST JOURNAL IN THE LIBRARY DATES FROM 1828

The oldest journal in the library is *The Veterinarian: a monthly journal of veterinary science*. It existed from 1828-1902 and was published in London by Longman. Onderstepoort's library has holdings from vol 17, no. 193 (new series, no 25, 1844), to its termination in 1902. The second oldest journal is the *Virchow Archiv für pathologische Anatomie und Physiologie und für klinische Medizin*. The original title is maintained from vol 1, 1847 to vol 340, 1966. It was then split into two subtitles: Virchow Archiv A retained the original numbering and the last volume subscribed to was 393, 1981. Subscription to *Virchow Archiv B* was cancelled at volume 40, 1982. Virchow was a progressive German surgeon whose provocative ideas generated hostility among his older peers.

In a report on typhus in 1848, he wrote that the outbreak could not be solved by treating individual patients with drugs or with minor changes in food, housing, or clothing laws, but only through radical action to promote the advancement of an entire population. He *inter alia* wrote: 'the proletariat is the result, principally, of the introduction and improvement of machinery ... shall the triumph of human genius lead to nothing more than to make the human race miserable?' Dissatisfied with the editors of various journals that refused to publish two of his manuscripts, he and Benno Reinhardt founded this journal that became one of the most prominent medical periodicals of the time. It is still in existence, even complete on the internet. There is one possible exception to the status of *The Veterinarian* and *Virchow Archiv* as being the oldest periodicals in the library: a single volume (XIII) of *The British Critic* of 1799. It is a general magazine, but contains articles on medicine, including at least one on rabies.

The fourth oldest book is by William Gibson, namely a second edition, 1754, of: *A new treatise on the diseases of horses*. Both Hope and Gibson are on undetermined loan to the Library, Faculty of Veterinary Science and are on display. Other gems from the 18th century include: *The gentlemen's farriery*, by J. Bartlet, 1777, *Schriften der Berlinischen Gesellschaft naturforschender Freunde*, erster Band, 1780 and *Der Naturforscher*, 1791, des fünf und zwanzigsten Stückes.

The library is well-supplied with books from the 19th century, but too many to be mentioned. The vast majority of them were published in the latter half of that century. Many of them have only horses as a topic, reflecting the importance of the horse in the military environment. Cattle and other species played only a secondary role. South African literature of the period consists mainly of governmental publications from the four states that later became the Union of South Africa. Sadly, our sets are not complete due to a lack of formal library facilities at the time when they were published. The following book consists of notes by a farmer (T.B. Bayley) and correspondence, reports, etc. which he gathered on the topic. It is considered to be the first fairly substantial publication on a veterinary topic in South Africa. Bayley, T.B. *Notes on the horse-sickness at the Cape of Good Hope, in 1854-1855: compiled by permission of His Excellency the Governor, from official documents*. Cape Town: Saul Solomon, 1856.

Much of the information in use at the end of the 19th century was published in Britain and other European countries, resulting from the rise of 'germ theories', the growing professionalisation of scientific research within state bureaucracies and the expansion in internationally accredited scientific journals. With exceptions such as Bayley's report and various government reports, little was published on veterinary problems in South Africa. The systematic accumulation of South African veterinary knowledge essentially began with the establishment of the Daspoort and Onderstepoort institutions. However, the *Agricultural Journal of the Cape of Good Hope*, first published in 1888, contains some information of veterinary interest.

Knuth and Du Toit's *Tropen-Krankheiten der Haustiere* (Leipzig: Barth) is a book with an interesting history. It was apparently mainly written by P.J. du Toit while he was stuck/ 'interned' in Germany during World War I. Though written in German, and for an international audience, this can be considered the first book covering South African veterinary diseases. The library only owns copies of the 2nd edition, 1921. 'Diseases of animals in South Africa' appeared in 1922. This book by C.R. Edmonds, a Rhodesian, for some reason never figured prominently in enquiries and history activities in this library.

The *Reports of the Government Veterinary Bacteriologist*

of the Transvaal for the years 1903–1910 were the predecessors of the series of reports that were continued by the Director of Veterinary Research of the Union. The name of this office changed several times and the titles of the reports were changed accordingly. These reports mainly cover research carried out at Onderstepoort. They resemble a journal in style and format, rather than a formal report to an authority. There are, however, also reports by field veterinarians and by commissions of enquiry in our collection, ranging from the 19th to the 20th century. *The Journal of the South African Veterinary Medical Association* first appeared in 1927.

Concerning the subjects covered, the changes over a century are historically revealing. The library always procured literature over a much wider spectrum than just veterinary science. Techniques used in human medicine are, for example, often applied to animals and medical journals are therefore well represented. The titles of journals subscribed to understandably reflect the traditional disciplines around which the Institute organized its activities. Titles dealing with the aetiological agents of disease, such as bacteria, viruses and parasites are prominent, as can be expected. Remarkable is the fact that the biggest subject class is not Veterinary Science. This class only holds the second largest number of books, whereas the 'Chemistry' class, mainly consisting of books on biochemistry, encompasses almost one-fifth of the book collection.

No information could be obtained about the library staff during this period with the exception of F.T. Mauchle, previously referred to. Gutsche, however, also mentions that Theiler's daughter, Margaret, acted as librarian during the second decade of the 20th century.

The period of expansion (1932-1958)

The present library building was inaugurated by the Earl of Clarendon on 12 October 1932. The eastern wing of the building housed the library whereas the present 'central hall' was the Institute's assembly hall. An extension of the assembly hall was in fact originally planned where the present western wing was later added. A large stage and cloakrooms appear on the original floor plans. The upper part of the eastern wall was supposed to contain a projector room and two galleries. Due to lack of money everything had to be scaled down and eventually only a small stage was built, of which the outlines can still be seen from polish residues. The original librarian's office was Room 7, upstairs in the eastern wing. This room is isolated from the other staff and the library users. Some librarians, including Anna du Plessis, John Frylinck and Yolanda Grundling, preferred to sit in Room 2 at the entrance.

The building was erected with money allocated by the Empire Marketing Board, which was set up to promote the economic recovery of the Commonwealth as discussed in Part 1. The British government viewed South Africa as an important leader in agricultural research due to Onderstepoort and its relative success in dealing with rinderpest and controlling diseases like East Coast fever through quarantine and dipping measures. However, the Empire Marketing Board was abolished in 1933 due to lack of funds and interest from the dominions, eager to forge their own trade policies. Another entity that did not survive until the inauguration was the construction company, Berry and Lawson. It went bankrupt and the last invoices were administered by a liquidator. The



Library building of the OVI inaugurated in 1932



Delegates to a conference admiring the fish pond fountain of the library

cost of the building was £10 000.

There are large flowerpots in front of the library. According to the files, tenders were received for their purchase, but seem to have been turned down, again for financial reasons. The

fact that they are there today either means that someone won an unminuted battle at the last moment, or that they were added later after the inauguration in 1932. The plaques in the courtyard were manufactured by the Royal Mint a few weeks before the inauguration of the building. A fish pond and symbolic fountain decorated the courtyard.

A milestone was reached with the introduction of the *Onderstepoort Library Index*. The *Index* was a classification system developed by H.O. Mönnig in the 1930s and formally published in 1937. Shelf numbers from this system appear in the first accessioning register into which new books were entered, usually numbered from no 1. Dates of accessioning of the books unfortunately only appear from the third volume onwards many years later. It can, however, be deduced that the system of accessioning registers, and the present card catalogue, must have been created after 1937. There is some information in the files which indicates that a different card system had been in place previously, and that commercial indexes had been used as additional reference tools.

ONDERSTEEPPOORT JOURNAL OF VETERINARY RESEARCH

The reports of the Director changed to a full journal format in 1933, replacing the 18 volumes of the 'Director's Report' which was published under various titles from 1903 to 1932. The title was

Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Science and Animal Industry, Volumes 1–24, from 1933 to 1950, which was changed to *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Research* from Volume 25, 1950.

The first issue of the *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Science and Animal Industry* was published in 1933

FOREWORD.

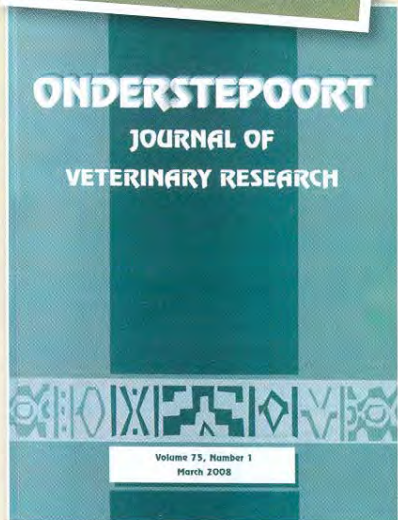
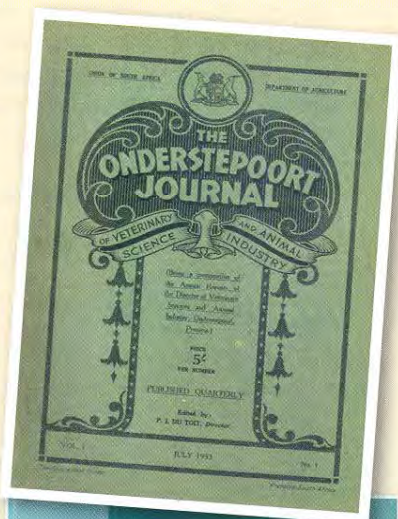
SINCE the foundation of the Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Station twenty-five years ago, the results of research work carried out at this Institution have been published in the form of "Annual Reports." This form of publication will, in future, be departed from only as regards title and frequency of publication. The intention is that *The Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Science and Animal Industry* should form a direct continuation of the "Reports of the Director of Veterinary Services and Animal Industry," and be published quarterly instead of annually. Two quarterly numbers will form one volume, so that two volumes should be completed every year.

The advantages of publishing at short intervals are obvious. Nothing is more disheartening to the research worker than to see the publication of his results delayed for months or years. It is also hoped that the change in the title of the publication will prove to be of value. "Reports" are apt to be regarded as a mere summary of routine duties or a brief indication of the work performed during the year. Such a report which incorporates a summary of the activities of the Division of Veterinary Services and Animal Industry is actually published annually by the Department of Agriculture in *Farming in South Africa*. But the "Reports of the Director of Veterinary Services and Animal Industry" were strictly scientific volumes containing original articles written by the research workers themselves. It is felt that the term "Journal" will indicate the nature of this publication better than the term "Report."

Finally, the hope is expressed that the new Journal will find a worthy place on the library shelves of all Institutes interested in biological pro-

Onderstepoort,
July, 1933.

P. J. DU TOIT.



The *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Research*