

# Pretoriana

SAMUEL MARKS - HERDENKINGSUITGAWE  
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the cover.

Die inhoudsopgawe van die onderhawige nommer staan op die agter-  
sy van die omslag se buitekant.

### ORHANDIGING VAN DIE EERSTE EKSEMPLEARE VAN MARKS SE BIOGRAFIE

Op Sondag, 23 Junie 1991 was daar 'n groot byeenkoms in 'n ruim tent by die Samuel Marks-museum op Zwartkoppies wat beheer word deur die Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum in Pretoria. Verteenwoordigers van die familie van S. Marks en historici is daarheen uitgenooi. Tydens die byeenkoms is die eerste uitvoerige biografie van S. Marks, deur mnr. Richard Mendelsohn geskryf, bekend gestel en die eerste eksemplare daarvan oorhandig. Aanwesig was die outeur, mnr. Mendelsohn, mev. Fanny Beatrice ("Dolly") Maisels, die jongste, hoogbejaarde dogter van Samuel en Bertha Marks en die enigste oorlewende van hul kinders, haar seun Samuel Joseph Neill Maisels, Mrs. Sally Frankental, direkteuse van die Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies in die Universiteit van Kaapstad, mnr. D.M. Fox, voorsitter van die Kaplan Kushlick Foundation, mev. Nerina Walters, kuratrise van die Sammy Marks-museum, en mev. Sonni Tewes, gids in die Museum. Die Centre for Jewish Studies het die gewenste wetenskaplike steun verskaf, Anglo-American en De Beers het met die finansiering van die uitvoerige wetenskaplike werk vir die lewensbeskrywing van Marks gehelp. Onder die genooies was die bestuur van die Pretoriase Historiese Vereniging wat deur onder andere die voorsitter, Dr. N.A. Coetzee, en sy eggenote, mev. M. Bees, mej. E. Viljoen, mnr. en mev. Andrews en die redakteur van "Pretoriana", Dr. C. de Jong, en sy eggenote verteenwoordig is.

Die toesprake en oorhandiging van die eerste eksemplare van die biografie is gevolg deur 'n ruim onthaal. Dit was 'n gedenkwaardige geleentheid in die storie van die familie Marks en van die Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum.



*Byeenkoms vir oorhandiging van die eerste eksemplare van Samuel Marks se biografie by Zwartkoppies op 23 Junie 1991 – Van links na regs Mnr. R. Mendelsohn, skrywer van die biografie – Mevrou Fanny Beatrice ("Dolly") Maisels née Marks, jongste dogter van Samuel Marks, sittende – Mevrou Sally Frankental, direkteuse van die Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies te Kaapstad – Mnr. Samuel Joseph Neill Maisels, seun van Mevrou Fanny Maisels née Marks.*

*Foto deur Mnr. Frik Dreyer van Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum te Pretoria*

### SAMUEL MARKS, DIE PRETORIANER

Boekbesprekingsartikel van Richard Mendelsohn, "Sammy Marks, 'The Uncrowned King of the Transvaal'"; uitgegee deur David Philip, Cape Town and Ohio University Press, Ohio, in association with Jewish Publications - South Africa, 1991, 304 pp, geïll. prys R60,00 slap band.

deur C. de Jong

Artikels oor Samuel Marks het in groot aantal verskyn, maar daar was lankal behoefte aan 'n deeglike lewensbeskrywing van hierdie pionier van die ekonomiese ontwikkeling in Transvaal. Mnr. R. Mendelsohn het die gewenste biografie verskaf. Die stoot tot die skryf hiervan is gegee deur die (her)ontdekking van duisende briewe van en aan S. Marks, gebêre in 'n kluis in sy huis op Zwartkoppies, sy plaas by Pretoria. Die briefwisseling is ontsyfer en vir sover nodig vertaal in die Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies in die Universiteit van Kaapstad en is gebruik deur mnr. Mendelsohn, dosent in geskiedenis in genoemde universiteit. Sy boek is in 1991 gepubliseer met die pretensieuse ondertitel 'The Uncrowned King of the Transvaal', gelukkig tussen aanhalingstekens geplaas. Hy beskryf Marks uitvoerig as pionier-ondernemer, as sosiale persoon, as Pretorianer, as Jood en as gesinsman, met kritiese afstand en redelike objektiwiteit en met die simpatie wat vir 'n goeie biografie nodig is. Hy gee ook die nodige agtergrond met behoud van bondigheid.

Marks as pionier-ondernemer - Daar is drie tipes sake-ondernemers as pioniers of skeppers van nuwe kombinasies van produksiefaktore, van "neue Kombinationen" (uitdrukking van die vooraanstaande twintigste-eeuse ekonomis Joseph Schumpeter). Die tipes is (1) die vervaardiger of ontginner van nuwe goedere, (2) die vinder en opener van nuwe verkoop- of inkoopmarkte en (3) die finansier en amalgamator (samesmelter) van bestaande ondernemings. Die tipes is met ander woorde (1) die tegnikus, (2) die koopman en (3) die finansier. Uit Mendelsohn se boek blyk dat S. Marks uitblink het as vervaardiger en ontginner, delfstowwe inbegrepe, en as ontdekker van nuwe markte, met ander woorde as koopman. Sy lewenslange vennoot Isaac Lewis was in die eerste plek die tipe van finansier, want hy het graag in waardepapiere, by voorkeur aandele, op en buite die beurs gehandel en geldbronne opgespoor. Daarom was hy in die meeste jare van sy aktiewe lewe in Londen gevestig.

Die drie tipes het uiteenlopende mentaliteit en doelwitte. Marks was by uitstek die pionier, die durwer, met lewendige fantasie en wye visie, besig met konkrete projekte. Lewis was in die eerste plek die bedagsame rekenaar, maar ook waaglustige spekulant. Hy het meermale Marks se gewaagde projekte afgerem, maar sy gedurfde effektespekulasies het somtyds Marks se kritiek uitgelok. Dit is geen wonder dat daar meermale groot wrywing tussen hulle was nie. Dit is wel 'n wonder dat hul vennootskap hul lewe lank standgehou het.

Hulle het naamlik mekaar se saketalente erken en besef dat hulle 'n sterk kombinasie vorm.

Mendelsohn haal heelwat kwaai uitlatings in briewe van Marks aan Lewis aan. Lewis se briewe was meestal bedagsamer en besadigder, maar somtyds tog skerp. Marks se houding jeens sy medemense was altyd vriendelik en tegemoetkomend, want hy het besef dat kritiek in die oorgevoelige samelewing van Suid-Afrika onwelkom was en is. Maar soos die meeste persone afkomstig uit die Eerste Wêreld van sy tyd, moes hy sy frustrasies oor die omringende Derde Wêreld van Suid-Afrika afreageer. Hy het die frustrasies geventileer in sy briewe aan Lewis en somtyds aan sy ega Bertha.

Mendelsohn wys op die opvallende afwyking van Lewis en Marks se firma in Suid-Afrika in vergelyking met ander nuwe ondernemings. Hulle is soos ander groewe-eienaars uit die diamantbedryf by Kimberley gedruk deur De Beers. Die meeste groewe-eienaars het hul bedrywigheid tydelik na die goudmynbou by Barberton en definitief na die Groot Goudrif aan die Witwatersrand verplaas. Lewis en Marks het hulle egter toegelê op steenkoolwinning, landbou en bosbou by Vereeniging wat hulle gestig het, en op Barberton se goud waar hulle die grillige, tot 1897 baie ryk Sheba-goudmyn verwerf het. Hulle het die grootste steenkoolprodusente in Suid-Afrika geword, maar hul pogings om omvangryke belange in die Groot Goudrif en diamantbedryf by Cullinan te verwerf en aldus van 'n tweederangs 'n eersterangs mynhuis te word, het steeds misluk.

'n Tweede, nog belangriker afwyking van Lewis en Marks se sakebedryf was die stigting van industriebedrywe, waardeur Marks die vader van die nywerheid in Transvaal genoem word. Nellmapius het die nywerheidskompleks Eerste Fabrieken by Pretoria aangevoer, maar Marks het dit in 1881 gestig. Om toesig daarop te hou het hy hom in 1884 op die plaas Zwartkoppies digby Eerste Fabrieken gevestig. Bygevolg toon Marks se loopbaan 'n derde afwyking. Die meeste mynbase het hulle in Johannesburg gevestig, maar Marks het in 1884 Zwartkoppies by Pretoria verkies, ook omdat hy daar in noue voeling met die regering van die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek kon wees en gunste van regeringspersone verkry.

Lewis en Marks se pogings om die eerste nywerhede in Transvaal te stig het talle teenslae ondervind. Mendelsohn skryf daaroor: "Their experience would seem to demonstrate that in an undeveloped country like the Transvaal's, on the furthest fringes of the industrial world, extractive industry like gold-mining, serving the needs of metropolitan countries, was likely to be far more profitable than secondary industries focused on supplying small local markets" (p.85).

Lewis en Marks het talle suksesse en ook teenslae in sake en geensins 'n aanhoudende opgang ondervind. 'n Indeling van hul loopbaan in fases soos opgang, bloei en agteruitgang is dan ook moeilik. Mendelsohn noem as suksesse onder meer hul diamantbedryf te Kimberley, die steenkoolwinning en in mindere mate die bosbou en landbou by Vereeniging, die Shebamyn tot 1897, waarna die myn se opbrengste aansienlik

daal, die distilleerdery by Eerste Fabrieken tot die regeringsverbod van verkoop van sterk drank aan swartes in 1897, die kontrak vir steenkoollewing aan kragentrales van die Victoria Falls and Transvaal Power Company in 1906, die yster- en staalproduksie in die skaarste tyd van die Eerste Wêreldoorlog en ná hul aftrede die spoeldiamantwinning in Wes-Transvaal in 1927. Hulle het groot moeilikhede ondervind tydens die Anglo-Boere-oorlog en veral tydens die swaar depressie 1903-1909 en Eerste Wêreldoorlog. Teenslae na die Anglo-Boere-oorlog was onder meer die ongunstig aflopende spekulasie deur grondaankope in Kaapstad-Sentrum, waar nou die Samuel Marksgebou staan, en die saangaan met die Imperial Cold Storage Company, gestig deur David Graaff in Kaapstad, deur Marks as 'n skelm beskou.

In die laaste dekade van sy lewe het Marks groot voldoening ervaar toe hy in 1910 as lid van die eerste Senaat van die Unie benoem is en aldus as ondernemer en Jood geëer is, en in 1912 toe hy die Union Steel Corporation gestig en aldus 'n lewensdroom vervul het.

Mendelsohn noem as deugde van Marks sy durf en vërreikende visie, sy milddadigheid, familiesin en gemis aan pretensies, as sy gebreke sy onvermoë om te ontspan en die sake uit sy denke te ban, selfs tydens vakansies, en sy onwil om onrendabele projekte te los en daarmee geldelike verliese te beëindig.

Marks as 'n sosiale karakter - Hy was ook 'n opvallende persoon in die sosiale lewe. Mendelsohn benadruk dat hy, hoewel gebore in Litouë, graag 'n egte Brit wou wees, 'n Brits-Joodse skoonvader en eggenote (Bertha Gutmann) uitgesoek het en aan sy kinders 'n Engelse opvoeding gegee het om van hulle egte Britte te maak. Maar as sakeman wou hy op goeie voet met alle belangrike groepe en persone in Suid-Afrika staan, onder meer deur hulle soveel as moontlik aan hom te verplig en vriendelik te bejeën. Hy het daarin opvallend geslaag. Hy was 'n ywerige wandelgangbesoeker van invloedryke persone, Mendelsohn noem hom "the greatest of all lobbyists in the Transvaal", en hy was kwistig met skenkings en lenings aan hulle. Tans noem sommiges sy skenkings omkoopgeld, bedoel om gunste te verkry, maar destyds het die meeste mense skenkings nie as sodanig beskou nie. Hy was bevriend met sowel vooraanstaande Britse imperialiste as republikeine en Afrikanerleiers, onder wie president Kruger. Daar is talle anekdotes oor sy vriendskap met die president, die Bybeltekste waarmee hulle mekaar bestook het, en ander Boereleiers, in die eerste plek generaal J.H. de la Rey.

Dit is merkwaardig dat hy by alle groepe gewild gebly het ondanks sy herhaalde verandering van politieke kleur. Tydens die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek was hy pro-republikein, vanaf die begin van die Anglo-Boere-oorlog tot die vertrek van die Britse Hoë Kommissaris Milner uit Suid-Afrika pro-Brits, volgens Mendelsohn selfs Jingo, daarna weer pro-Afrikaner en lid van die Afrikanerparty "Het Volk". Tydens die oorlog het hy met medewete van Britse gesagsdraers in verbinding met Boereleiers soos Louis Botha, Koos de la Rey

en Jan Smuts gebly om hulle tot oorgawe te oorreed. Ondanks sy politieke opportunisme het die Afrikanerleiers goeie vriende gebly, omdat hy veel goeds vir die Afrikaners gedoen het, en hom tot lid van die eerste Senaat na die Uniestigting in 1910 benoem - 'n benoeming wat hy eers afgewys het omdat hy politiek in parlemente as tydmoers beskou het.

Sy biograaf skryf dat Marks 'n hartstog vir die doen van skenkings gehad het. Tot sy gewildheid het, afgesien van sy vrygewigheid, sy vriendelikheid, gemis aan pretensies en humor veel bygedra. Volgens Mendelsohn was hy 'n "haimischer Mensch", dit beteken in Jiddies 'n vriendelike, gemoedelike, pretensielose mens.

Dit beteken egter nie dat hy eweveel van alle groepe en persone gehou het nie. Sy innerlike mening oor die Afrikaners was ambivalent, hy het talle van hulle as traag en sonder inisiatief beskou. Weens sy Britse instelling het hy glad nie van Duitsers en Nederlanders as nasies gehou nie. Die Nederlanders was in Transvaal 'n bevoorregte groep, hulle was "Krugers Hollanders". Hulle het hulle laat geld en meermale Marks en ander pro-Britte die voet dwars gesit, byvoorbeeld by die aanleg van spoorlyne uit Britse gebiede na Transvaal. Staatsekretaris W.J. Leyds was Marks se "bête noire". Nietemin was hy jeens sy teenstanders steeds tegemoetkomend en het hy hulle, onder andere Leyds, geld geleen.

Marks as Pretorianer - Weens sy vestiging op Zwartkoppies het hy met hart en siel Pretorianer geword, veelvuldig met ampsdraers en ander bewoners verkeer en die stad begunstig. Tasbare herinneringe aan Lewis en Marks is in Pretoria veel talryker as op ander plekke van sy bedrywigheede, met name in Johannesburg, Barberton en Kaapstad. Hy was die belangrikste lid van die klein groep sakelui wat in Pretoria gevestig was, soos Hugo Nellmapius, Thomas Becket, Edmund Bourke, George Heys, John Kirkness, Thomas Cullinan en Cornelius Delfos - die meeste van Britse afkoms.

Hy het van sy plaas Zwartkoppies sy geliefde tuiste gemaak en wou dit steeds verbeter en verfraai. Na die Anglo-Boere-oorlog het die swartepunt in Lewis & Marks se sake van Pretoria na Johannesburg verskuif, onder meer omdat die Britse bestuur van Transvaal as Kroonkolonie veel strikter en ontoeskietliker as die regering van die ZAR met sy gemoedelikheid en tegemoetkomendheid jeens persone was en Marks minder as voor die oorlog in Pretoria kon bereik. Jare lank het hy na Johannesburg gependel, daarna die werksdae in Johannesburg oornag en in 1908 baie teensinnig na 'n huis in dié stad getrek en sy gesin saamgeneem. Sy hart het op Zwartkoppies gebly. Hy is in Johannesburg oorlede, maar in Pretoria-Wes begrawe - volgens Joodse tradisie onder 'n baie eenvoudige grafsteen.

Marks as Jood - Hy is ortodoks-Joods in Litouë opgevoed, het die Joodse geloof altyd trou gebly en was gekant teen huwelike van sy kinders met nie-Jode. Hy wou sulke kinders onterf. Die oorweging van sy oudste dogter Gertrud om Anglikaans te word, het hom baie sorg gegee en hy het haar onmiddellik elders in 'n ortodoks-Joodse gesin in Engeland

ondergebring. Hy het gelukkig nie geweet dat verskeie van sy kleinkinders met nie-Jode getrou het nie. Hy het in Joodse gemeentes nooit op die voorgrond getree nie, maar baie geld geskenk en die bakstene vir die sinagoge aan die Paul Krugerstraat in Pretoria verskaf. Maar hy was baie ruimdenkend, om nie te sê vrysinnig nie. Hy het hom nie altyd aan die spysgebooe gesteur nie en somtyds nie kosjer geëet nie en hy het Christelike feesdae, soos Kersfees, gevier. Hy was baie verdraagsaam jeens nie-Jode en het dikwels geld vir kerke geskenk, soos trouens in Suid-Afrika gewoonte was onder andersgelowiges.

Marks as familieman (pater familias) - Ooreenkomstig die tradisie onder die Litouse Jode het hy veel vir sy familie gedoen en hulle ondersteun, veral sy vader in Litoue en sy twee susters in Suid-Afrika wat met mans met swak karakters getroud was, en neefs. In sy gesin was hy "pater familias" volgens Viktoriëaanse opvatting en gesaghebbende gesinshoof. Hy wou meer geld aan die opleiding van seuns as van dogters bestee. Maar ooreenkomstig Joodse tradisie het hy aan sy 18 jaar jongere eggenote Bertha Gutmann grotere vryheid, onder meer geldelik, toegestaan as wat by nie-Jode gebruik was, ook al het hy haar dikwels vermaan, onder meer oor haar hoë uitgawes.

Hy het sy kinders 'n Britse opvoeding laat gee, maar die resultaat was nie altyd die verwagte nie. Sy oudste seun Louis het meer 'n Britse aristokraat as 'n Joodse sakeman geword en is "the Young Lord" genoem, 'n bynaam wat hy met humor aanvaar het.

Marks as heer van Zwartkoppies - Hy het die plaas Zwartkoppies sy tuiste gemaak en voortdurend verbeter en verfraai. Hy het daar graag elke Sondag tientalle gaste ontvang, want hy het van geselskap gehou. Sy omvangryke huishouding op Zwartkoppies is gelei deur sy jong eggenote Bertha. Mendelsohn gee iets te min aandag aan die prestasies van Bertha wat as jong dame uit die Eerste Wêreld van Groot-Brittanje na 'n ietwat afgeleë boereplaas in die Derde Wêreld van Transvaal oorgeplaas is. Sy was nie gelukkig op die plaas met haar groot verantwoordelikheid vir die ontvangste van haar eggenoot se talryke gaste nie. Vir haar was Zwartkoppies "the gilded cage", soos Mendelsohn dit uitdruk. Sy het daarom dikwels na Europa gereis en was bly toe die gesin in 1908 na Johannesburg verhuis het, waar sy meer standgenote ontmoet het.

Die Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum het Zwartkoppies in 1984 verwerf en as huismuseum ingerig. Die gees van Samuel en Bertha Marks is daar nog lewend en die huismuseum met sy tuin bied 'n sprekende getuienis van die lewe en loopbaan van Marks en van 'n Laat-Viktoriëaanse huishouding. Langs mekaar sien die besoeker daar die portrette van Britse imperialiste en Afrikanerleiers as bewys van Marks se strewe om met almal van hulle op goeie voet te verkeer.



Seuns van Isaac Lewis en Samuel Marks het die firma se sake voortgesit en baie sukses behaal by die ontdekking van spoeldiamante in Wes-Transvaal in 1927. Mendelsohn beskryf op p.258 hul soektog na goud in die Oranje-Vrystaat, waarin hulle amper geslaag het en waardeur Lewis & Marks eindelijk 'n eersterangs mynhuis sou word. Maar hulle het in 1945 die meeste aandele in hul firma verkoop aan die Anglo-American Company en as direkteure afgetree, vermoedelik om suiwer persoonlike redes. Volgens Mendelsohn sou hul terugtrede Marks geskok het.

As Jood van eenvoudige afkoms en as suksesvolle sakeman wat rykdom vergaar het, het Marks onvermydelik benydners en vyande ontmoet. Antisemitiese gevoelens het tot hul afkeer jeens hom bygedra. Sommige het hom omkoperie en monopoliesug verwyrt en sy produksie van alkoholiese drankte as nadelig vir swartes en blankes afgekeur. Mendelsohn noem hierdie negatiewe houding jeens Marks op sommige plekke, maar met reg ken hy daaraan slegs beperkte betekenis toe. Die strekking van sy biografie is dat die positiewe invloede wat van Marks uitgegaan het, die negatiewe ver oortref het.



*Byeenkoms vir oorhandiging van eerste eksemplare van Samuel Marks se lewensbeskrywing by Zwartkoppies op 23 Junie 1991 – Mnr. Richard Mendelsohn, outeur van die lewensbeskrywing, in gesprek met Dr. C. de Jong, redakteur van "Pretoriana", en sy eggenote Mevrou F.W. de Jong gebore Robers.*

*Foto deur Mnr. Frik Dreyer, Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum te Pretoria*

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SAMMY MARKS  
WITH NOTES ON THE HOUSE AND GARDEN AT ZWARTKOPPIES<sup>1)</sup>**

by S.J.N. Maisels (Administrator of the Estate  
of the Late Samuel Marks)

This Museum is named for Samuel Marks, better known as Sammy, the renowned and respected South African pioneer. He was born in Neustadt, Lithuania on 11 July 1844 from where at the age of 18 he emigrated to England and managed to establish a small knife-sharpening works in Sheffield.

In 1868 Sammy Marks emigrated again, this time to South Africa. The new diamond fields offered him the opportunity of opening a general dealer's business in Kimberley where he was joined by his cousin Isaac Lewis who had been born in the same village as Sammy in 1849. The cousins became life-long partners carrying on their business through their firm of Lewis & Marks.

It was not long before they partly gave up their general dealing operations and concentrated on working diamond claims and dealing in diamonds in the new fields. The store was left chiefly to the management of Isaac's brother Barnet who also came to South Africa at that time. In 1878 they had formed one of the first companies to own and operate diamond claims in the Kimberley area. However, in 1880 they sold most of their claims and Lewis returned to England to manage their affairs there.

Attracted by some prospecting work that had been done on the banks of the Vaal River, Sammy purchased their first coal bearing farm and in November 1880 formed De Zuid-Afrikaansche en Oranje Vrystaatsche Kolen en Mineralen Mijn Vereeniging to open up and operate coal mines in the area. It was from that company that the town of Vereeniging took its name in 1892. This was the beginning of the fulfilment of one of Sammy Marks' dreams - to establish a Sheffield on the banks of the Vaal River. To this end in 1890 he produced the first fire bricks and in 1916 formed the Vereeniging Brick & Tile Company (now trading as Vereeniging Refractories), in 1894 the Vereeniging Milling Company was established to process the maize that Sammy had encouraged the farmers in the district to grow. October 1906 saw the formation at Vereeniging of the Victoria Falls & Transvaal Power Company. In 1911 followed Union Steel Company with a capital of £250 000 to produce steel; this of course was the fore-runner of the present day Iscor. It was also on the southern banks of the Vaal on the farm Maccauvlei near the town that Sammy established extensive plantations of oak, pine and gum as well as a large apple orchard, the property of Vereeniging Estates Limited floated by the partners.

Allied to the opening of the Vereeniging coalfield was Sammy's interest in obtaining the concession to extend the railwayline from Kimberley to the Transvaal and thereby improve on the transport of coal to the Cape. Although he started lobbying the Cape and Transvaal authorities in 1882

he in fact was not ultimately granted the concession, but the line was opened in May 1892 when Presidents Kruger and Reitz met on the new rail-bridge at Vereeniging.

While visiting Pretoria in 1881 on coal mining business, Sammy met Hugo Alois Nellmapius who had obtained concessions from the Government to manufacture various products in the Transvaal. However, Nellmapius had insufficient financial resources to carry on with his plans and eventually in 1882 Sammy concluded an agreement under which Lewis & Marks took over the concessions. The first industry to be established in the Transvaal was on the farm Hatherley (adjacent to the farm Zwartkoppies) by The Eerste Fabrieken Hatherley Distillery Limited. The company's official seal and portions of the original whiskey still are now on display in The Sammy Marks Museum. The new factory was opened in June 1883 by Sammy's great friend President Paul Kruger.

When Sammy Marks first moved to live permanently in the Transvaal in 1882 he settled on the farm Hatherley. In 1883 he began negotiations to purchase a large portion of the neighbouring farm Zwartkoppies which was transferred to him in 1884 at a purchase price of £1 500. It was here that he built his home which he called Zwartkoppies Hall. Recent research indicates that the alterations and additions made in the 1890's were designed by the Dutch architects De Zwaan and Van Dyk who had done work for Nellmapius on his farm Irene.

It was to Zwartkoppies Hall that Sammy brought his very young bride Bertha Guttman whom he married in Sheffield on 16 December 1884. Apart from the cost of erecting the home and bringing furniture, silver, glass, crockery, cutlery and linen from England, imagine the problems in organising the whole project and arranging for the transport by ox-waggon of the materials required as well as all the movables. Imagine too the young bride's feelings finding herself in a strange country, among strange folk and with the nearest town, Pretoria, about 23 km away. Her husband was also away on business from time to time for a number of days. Not only did Bertha prove capable of running the very large home and coping with a great deal of entertaining, but she had to raise her family. The couple had eight children. Of course Bertha was helped by a large staff including a butler and maids whom they had brought out from England.

Although his London-based partner would not grant Sammy the funds he requested to purchase farms on the Witwatersrand some of which proved to be underlaid with gold bearing Main Reef, Sammy was able to acquire the Kriel's Oriental (Sheba) Gold Mining Company in the Barberton District. Sheba is still producing gold as one of the mines worked by The Eastern Transvaal Consolidated Mines Limited.<sup>2)</sup>

During his career Sammy was responsible for a great number of ventures in South Africa. In 1891 the Transvaal Republic formed the Nationale Bank which was the forerunner of today's Barclays National Bank<sup>3)</sup> and in which the partners had a large stake. Furthermore on several occasions Sammy was either directly or indirectly responsible for loans to the

Transvaal Republic authorities when they were short of funds. In 1894 the partnership became substantial shareholders in South African United Breweries from which the present S.A. Breweries Limited was created. The following year they bought coal bearing farms in the eastern Transvaal areas of Belfast and Witbank. Other projects included the Transvaal Fruit and Meat Preserving Works opened in Pretoria in 1895, the glass works in Pretoria which President Kruger opened on 28 November 1896, and the formation in the Transvaal in February 1902 of Imperial Cold Storage & Supply Company Limited. There is evidence that after visiting Sammy at Zwartkoppies and his nearby fruit farm Pienaarspoort, Cecil Rhodes was encouraged to open his fruit farms in the Cape and that Sammy was party to obtaining the necessary expertise and management for him. Sammy's interest in farming is evident in that in 1911 he was appointed Vice President of the Witwatersrand Agricultural Society. At that time he sponsored The Jewish Land Settlement Association of South Africa with a view to encouraging Jewish youth to become farmers.

Of course not all the ventures were successful. In 1894 Sammy had ideas of obtaining the concession to build piers in the Lourenço Marques harbour for the export of South African coal. The Portuguese government however would not grant these rights to a foreigner; that cost the syndicate about £13 000. Similarly in 1897 his partner Isaac Lewis was very keen to have the firm develop and then sell the extensive concessions he had obtained in Swaziland which could have resulted in it being exploited like Rhodesia. In fact the newly created Vereeniging Estates Company apparently had a trustdeed drawn for such eventualities. However after the British created the protectorate of Swaziland in 1906 the whole project failed.

During his lifetime Sammy Marks, unlike many of the magnates of his day, identified strongly and unambiguously with Judaism and local Jewry. He was the best known and most esteemed member of the Pretoria Jewish community and while he played little role in its day-to-day management, he served throughout as its principal financial benefactor.

Marks was active politically in his quiet way. He was always anxious that the correct action be taken in the interests of his beloved country of adoption. During his career in the Transvaal he became a trusted adviser and intimate friend of President Kruger and other Boer notables including Koos de la Rey and Piet Grobler. It was just before the outbreak of war in 1899 that he commissioned Anton van Wouw to sculpture the statue of the President that now stands in Church Square as a present to the City of Pretoria.

Immediately after the Jameson Raid and in the tense months before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, Sammy Marks attempted to use his influence to steer the Boers away from confrontation with the British. During the war itself he made frequent efforts to persuade the Boer Generals, some of them good friends of his, to abandon what he saw as a hopeless and self-defeating struggle. In the last months of the war he met

them, at their request, in Pretoria and again in Vereeniging to discuss the peace terms that Britain offered and he urged that they assent. After the signing of the treaty he worked hard at persuading his old friends to accept the new order in the general interests of South Africa. During the war Zwartkoppies Hall was visited by both Boer and English troops. The former had on occasion helped themselves to blankets and horses, much to the annoyance of Sammy. His long association with the Transvaal and his friendship with the Afrikaner leadership were recognised in 1910 with his appointment as a Senator in the first Union Parliament.

Upon Sammy Marks' death on 18th February 1920 his assets including the farm Zwartkoppies became entailed. His widow used Zwartkoppies Hall until she died in 1934 and other members of his family continued to occupy the Hall until January 1978. From time to time they modernised the interior and made alterations to portions of the exterior. However in 1984 The Trust Estate of the Late Samuel Marks came to an agreement with The National Cultural History and Open-Air Museum to establish The Sammy Marks Museum in The Hall and that organisation has set about to restore the house to its original state.

Fortunately Sammy Marks' personal papers and documents were all carefully stored in The Hall's strongroom. In 1984 they were handed over for safe-keeping to The Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research which is established at the Cape Town University. At present the documents are being researched with a view to publishing the first full and authentic biography of Sammy Marks.<sup>4)</sup> Meanwhile those who may be interested should refer to the relevant chapters in the recent book by Mendel Kaplan entitled "Jewish Roots in the South African Economy".

#### Notes on the house and gardens of Zwartkoppies

The original house was apparently designed by Sammy and the alterations and additions were carried out in the 1890's by the Dutch architects De Zwaan en Van Dyk. The exterior design is basically Victorian and has been restored with the help of old family photographs. As the home was occupied by members of the family until 1978 it was modernised from time to time, but the Museum is now restoring it to its original state when Sammy and his family lived there. The layout of the interior is based on a very detailed inventory of the movables as prepared by Bertha in 1906.

In May 1884 Sammy ordered 300 yards of coconut matting 6 to 7 feet in width to go round the stoep. Rings were to be put in on one side so that it could be hung up at night.

The immediate garden and grounds around Zwartkoppies Hall were the pride and joy of Bertha Marks. Not only were they beautifully laid out and maintained under the supervision of the head gardener, an Austrian, but they supplied cut flowers in abundance for both The Hall and the family home in Parktown, Johannesburg. The Austrian gardener also took a great delight in killing snakes on the farm and using

the skins to make purses, bags and belts. He had an Indian assistant who was responsible for the fruit and vegetable garden.

In a letter in February 1894 Sammy ordered 200 to 300 trees to plant in an avenue. They were to be evergreens but not gums.

A tennis court was located just beyond the western gates to the grounds to the right of the old road to Hatherley. Guests were also encouraged to play croquet on the front lawn.

At the back of the house is the well from which water was pumped with the aid of a steam-operated horse pump installed in February 1897.

Bertha was also an extremely keen chicken farmer and her birds won many a prize on the Pretoria shows. Sammy however maintained that every egg produced cost him £1. Unfortunately the entire chicken project was destroyed by fire over one weekend.

Sammy would not permit shooting on his farm and was very proud of his flock of about 200 guinea fowl and the buck that were to be found among the trees behind the house.

The stables for 14 horses and the coach house for the 5 carriages were located in the main farmyard remote from the museum's area.

Maintenance of Zwartkoppies Hall and all the cottages, stables and other buildings on the farm was carried out by the carpenter cum handyman Mr. James Potts who was fondly called Daddy Potts. He and his wife and 5 children lived in a cottage on the farm. One of his sons was named Sammy after Sammy Marks. The farm manager Mr. D. Hauman and his family occupied the cottage in the main farmyard opposite the coach house and stables.

In addition to the large dam on the road into the museum there was a dam fed by the canal on which two boats were kept. Punting along the canal was possible. Sammy also imported swans from England for his dams.

The entrance hall with its lovely teak stairway contains some interesting items such as the large brass gong which was sounded by the butler Mr. McCracken half an hour before dinner to encourage guests to get dressed and then of course again when dinner was served. When Mr. McCracken died he was succeeded by Mr. Winder.

There is a free-standing hot water heater at the glass door to the long passage. Originally the entire home was heated in this manner from the central boiler situated in the basement of the outbuildings. Over the years as the house was modernised these heaters were removed and have unfortunately been lost. There are still a few left in other rooms.

On the stairway is a clock, thermometer and barometer by Dollard with an elaborate carved wooden façade.

The music-room at the end of the long passage was the subject of a letter from Sammy to his wife in England when she was visiting the children at school in 1901. He wrote: "The front spare room which in future will be the music-room

is now being painted and will look very pretty when finished. Panels are being painted on the walls which look just like satin. Will have the dining-room done too."

Unfortunately over the years in the course of modernisation that work was over-painted. However a portion has now been uncovered as an example of the very fine decoration that was done. Another example is to be seen in the upstairs bedroom overlooking the front lawn. It is hoped that in due course funds will be available to completely restore all this fine work in the house.

In the large lounge cum diningroom beautiful chandeliers catch the eye. From 22 November 1896 the house was supplied with hydroelectric power from a plant located in the farmyard area. The canal off the Pienaars River which inter alia fed this plant, was built in 1885 and follows the contour from a dam on the river for a distance of about 5 km. In a letter dated November 1896 to his sons Louis and Monty in England Sammy stated that the power supply was limited in view of the drought; so he could not have all the lights in the house on at the same time. The hydro-plant was operated by a Pole who unfortunately lost an arm in an accident while working on the machinery.

The ceiling and upper portions of the walls were painted by an Italian who was also responsible for the work in the billiard-room.

In the kitchen is a very large free-standing stove which presents a puzzle at first sight. The fumes and smoke were led down under the floor to the chimney built into the adjacent wall. The tiles are marked and cracked on that wall where it runs.

The china-room off the kitchen and next door to the pantries contains some very fine china and glassware.

Two oldfashioned coolers stand outside the kitchen area. Fresh meat, groceries and fresh produce that could not be grown on Zwartkoppies as well as ice were brought frequently from Pretoria and stored in these coolers.

The upstairs bedroom next to the loft was occupied for some years by Mr. Murray who was a well educated old Scot who arrived on Zwartkoppies out of the blue one day with nothing to his name. Sammy took a great liking to him and gave him a plot near the village of Hatherley, a cart and two mules. Murray lived at Zwartkoppies and went daily in his cart to work his plot, where, according to Sammy, he was not very successful as the ground was poor. Murray tried growing oats and potatoes at one time. It is said that this friendly old man still "walks the house at night".

The upstairs bedroom overlooking the front lawn was occupied by the eldest son Louis. His father used to wake him gently in the morning by pulling his toes.

In this room the painted patterns have also been exposed as an example of the work done at one time.

The billiard-room is one of the highlights of the Hall. The table which of course was originally imported has only been recovered once and is still playable.

Both Sammy and his wife Bertha enjoyed playing billiards. In a letter to his sons Louis and Monty in November 1896 he wrote: "Electric light is a vast improvement, we play billiards now in the evening but it (the electricity) is turned off at ten o' clock." It should be noted that Sammy did not play tennis or croquet.

The ceiling was painted by an Italian, the same artist that did the work in the lounge downstairs.

The photograph of Sammy and his old father Mordechai Feit Marks was taken in Königsberg in 1903 when Sammy was visiting him. His mother was Miriam Cohen.

There are interesting illuminated addresses as well as the family photograph of Bertha and her children showing from left to right:- i) The younger daughter Fanny Beatrice who was known as Dolly in view of her weight at birth of 1½ pounds. (ii) the eldest son Louis. When he returned from schooling in England his general manner and attitude attracted the nickname "Y.L." which stood for "Young Lord"! iii) The youngest son Phillip who was known simply as Phil. iv) Sitting on the floor is Theodore known as Ted. v) Joseph Mordechai known as Joe who was the farmer of the family and lived most of his life in the Hall. vi) Bertha Marks. vii) the elder daughter Gertrude Miriam called Girlie by Sammy and later Gai by her family and friends.

The library reflects Bertha's enthusiasm for popular Victorian literature and Sammy's interest in matters technical and the important issues of the day.

- 1) With thanks taken from "Museum Memo", journal of the National Cultural History Museum at Pretoria, volume 14 nr. 4, December 1986.
- 2) A few years after 1886 the Sheba Mine was closed down because it had been worked out. (C. de Jong)
- 3) Now the First National Bank (C. de Jong).
- 4) This research has been performed by Mr. Richard Mendelsohn, lecturer in the University of Cape Town. His biography appeared in 1991 under the title "Sammy Marks, 'the Uncrowned King of the Transvaal'".





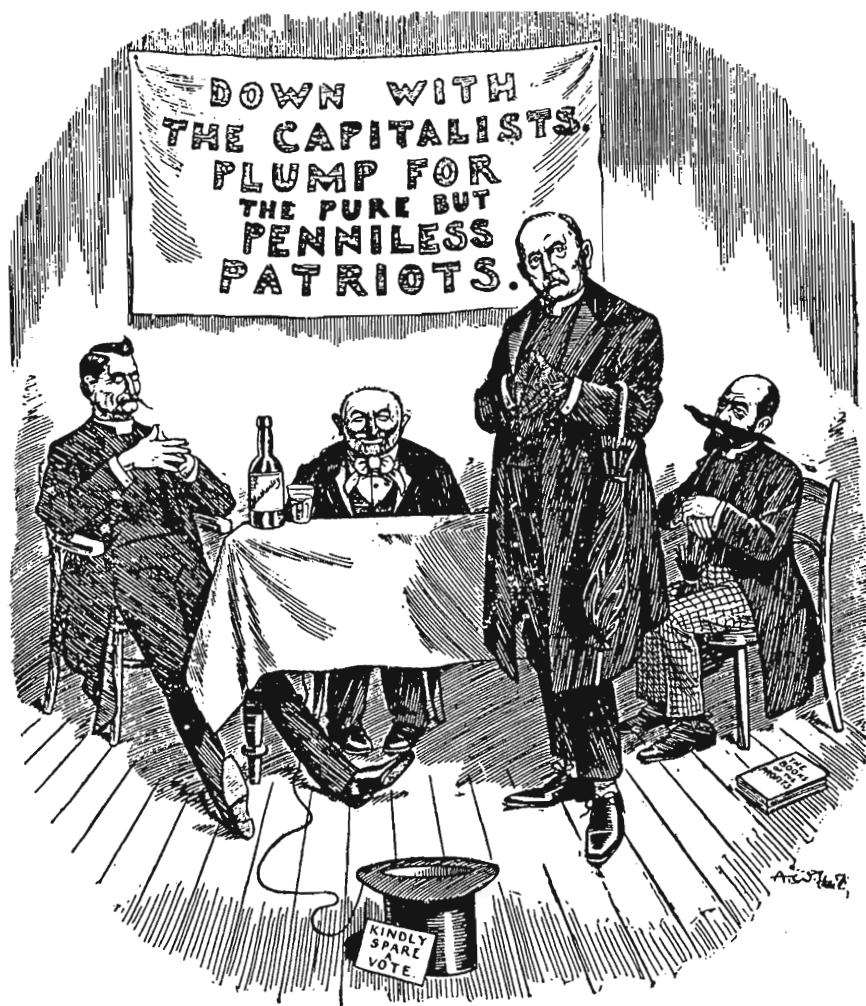
*Bertha Marks en haar kinders; van links na regs: Fanny Beatrice ("Dolly"), die jongste dogter – Louis, die oudste seun, staande – Philip ("Phil"), die jongste seun – Theodore ("Ted"), op die vloer gesete – Joseph Mordechai ("Joe"), staande – Bertha Marks, eggenote van Samuel Marks – Getrude Miriam ("Girlie"), die oudste dogter.*

*Foto: Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum te Pretoria*



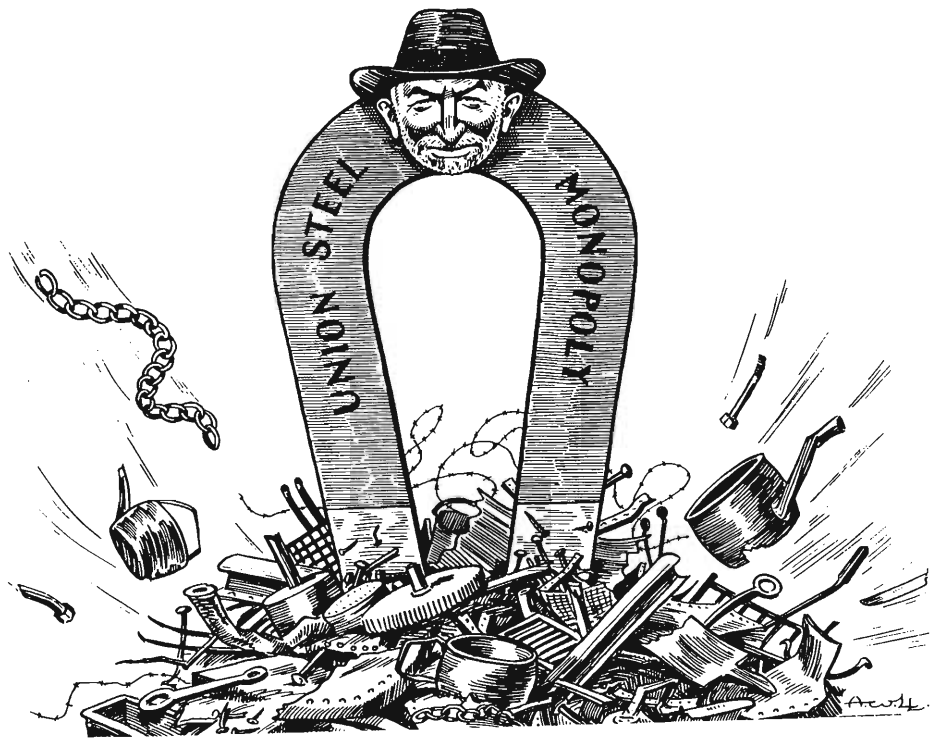
*Samuel Marks en sy eggenote Bertha, sittende, omring deur verskeie van hul kinders en aangetroude kinders; plek en jaar is onbekend.*

*Foto: Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum te Pretoria*



### THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

*Spotprent betreffende die aksie van fabrikante in 1908-1914 vir beskerming van nywerhede deur die regering, bv. met hoë invoerreëte. Vlnr Thomas Cullinan, Samuel Marks, Joseph Robinson en David Graaff. Die spotprent het verskyn in THE OBSERVER van 10 September 1910.*



Spotprent in dagblad "The Star", Johannesburg, 12 Junie 1912 op Samuel Marks wat soos 'n magneet al die yster- en staalfval na hom toe trek. Die aanleiding was die stigting van die Union Steel Corporation of South Africa en die konsessie wat hy ontvang het vir al die yster- en staalfval van die Staatsbedrywe.

Foto: Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese Museum te Pretoria



*Mnr. T.E. Andrews, bestuurslid van GOP, lê 'n blommekrans op die graftombe van Samuel Marks in die begraafplaas aan Rebekkastraat, Pretoria-Wes, op Stigtersdag van Pretoria in November 1992. Agter Mnr. Andrews staan Dr. N.A. Coetzee, voorsitter van GOP.*  
Foto: GOP



*Graftombe van Samuel Marks in begraafplaas Rebekkastraat, Pretoria-Wes; onder die Davidster bo-aan staan 4 reëls in Hebreeus; daaronder staan: Sacred to the memory of SAMUEL MARKS South African pioneer born in Neustad, Russia, 1843\* died at Johannesburg on February 18, 1920 respected by all who knew him and mourned by his loving wife and children*

*Foto deur Mnr. T.E. Andrews, GOP, November 1992*

*\*Die korrekte datum is 11 Julie 1844*