

coffee house on the North-West corner of St. (as it then was) Andries Street and Bureau Lane pencilling figures and sketches on the marble-top tables and sipping the superb coffee ever freshly made from Java grown beans new-roasted and ground by Turkstra himself — coffee whose like in aroma and taste one can savour no more!

He belonged to the Pretoria Racing Club whose course was on Church Street West. Like his contemporaries he owned and used horses for everyday transport and for pleasure and exercise. He often rode through what was still largely virgin veld to the Pretoria Country Club which he had formally opened on 10 October 1910.

### THE FIRST MOTOR CYCLE IN PRETORIA

**H**E had a carefully chosen and well read library of historical, biographical, travel and scientific works in English, Dutch, German and French and kept himself up to date in science and engineering.

He owned the first motor cycle in Pretoria. The explosions in its internal combustion engine were effected not by an electric spark but by rapid hot-rod insertions and withdrawals in and from the gasfilled cylinder. His next powered cycle was a “Singer” operated by an engine within the back wheel. The last was a Belgian “F.N.”

He showed his interest in the first South African heavier-than-air flying



*The house (in 1949) reflected in the canal at Linschoten, Holland, in which Johann Rissik was born on 2 February, 1857.*

by becoming first President of the Aeronautical Society of South Africa. Its other Officers included Lord Methuen, Sir Thomas Cullinan of Cullinan Diamond fame and Sir Johannes van Boeschoten, a well known Pretorian.

## RECREATION

**H**E was a life member of the Caledonian Society which owned the large athletic stadium on the East bank of the Aapies River between Schoeman and Pretorius Streets. As a younger man he enjoyed golfing on a course between the present Kirkness Street and the Delagoa Bay railway line. Attorney Edward Rooth and he each seated in his own study, contested many games of chess over the telephone when that contrivance was still a servant and time no tyrant to Pretorians. He was a keen and regular player first of whist then of auction bridge. He and General Louis Botha both masters of the game, often joined in with other excellent players such as H. C. Jorissen the banker, Charles Bramley, Baron von Eeghen the stockbroker, Carl Jeppe and his brother Julius when in Pretoria. He frequently played for Pretoria Club against the Rand Club.

Johann Rissik appreciated music but was no pianist like his father. The only musical instrument he operated was a "Pianola" acquired in 1906. This was fixed to the piano and when pumped by pedals it caused the keyboard to be struck by artificial fingers working by air sucked through a moving perforated paper roll. It played remarkably well and the physical exertion of working the pedals and moving the controls produced a feeling of personal achievement lacking when a radio, disc or tape is merely switched on.

## RISSIK—THE POLITICIAN

**J**OHANN RISSIK took a leading part with General Louis Botha and General J. C. Smuts in forming the "Het Volk" party which contested the first general election under Responsible Government in the Transvaal on 20 February 1907.

Johann Rissik and F. J. Lunnon a well-known Pretoria attorney were the opposing candidates in the North Central Pretoria constituency. Lunnon wrote afterwards "It unfortunately fell to my lot to oppose Johann who stood as the candidate of the then "Het Volk" party. We had both expected to fight other opponents, and when we found, to our mutual dismay, that we were to meet one another, we both agreed that the fight should be as pleasant as possible, free of all sort of feeling or acrimony. As an amusing illustration of how this peaceful pact was carried out, I may mention that we both received invitations to attend a particular smoking



*Johann Rissik and General Louis Botha outside the Pretoria Club on Election Day for the first Transvaal Parliament under Responsible Government, 20 February, 1907*



concert. I at once sought out Johann and asked whether he was going and he said he was, whereupon I informed him I must go too. He offered to drive me down to the meeting and we arrived together. The Chairman, after informing the meeting in a mild outburst of alcoholic excitement that the occasion was one unique in the political history of South Africa if not the whole world, called upon Mr. Rissik to speak. Johann whispered to me 'We can't talk politics, Freddie — what are we to do? You sing and play the piano, don't you? (I admitted I did a little of each). I can do



*Johann Rissik, Minister of Lands and Native Affairs, and head officials of the Transvaal Lands and Native Affairs Departments, 1909*