

CHAPTER V

DETAILED ANALYSIS : COLLECTIONS DOCUMENTATION AT THE TRANSVAAL MUSEUM

1913 - 1953

For decades, record-keeping took a back seat to collecting and preserving objects and came to be viewed as a task of secondary importance ... Rather than functioning as a coherent, interrelated system of information, collection documentation at many museums devolved into a series of disjointed, poorly integrated files and ledger books.¹

In addition to the above, Sarasan is of the opinion that particulars about the collections were also maintained through the collective memory of the staff, and that almost no information exist on the documentation procedures followed by the older generation of curators and other staff members.² This, then, is the aim of this chapter: to record in detail the collections documentation of the anthropological, archaeological and historical collections at the Transvaal Museum during the period 1913 - 1953. This, it is argued, will lead to a better understanding of the current documentation situation.

The documentation procedures applied to objects in a collection, according to Roberts,³ may be broken down into seven stages. These are the pre-entry stage, the entry stage, the acquisition stage (in this case called the cataloguing stage), the post-acquisition stage, the item stage, the output stage and the exit stage. The object documentation of the anthropological, archaeological and historical collections at the Museum has been analyzed in terms of these stages, if applicable. Primarily, the sources used are the extant acquisitions entry registers, catalogues, loans registers, labels and indexes.

¹ L. Sarasan, Why museum computer projects fail, in A. Fahy (ed.), *Collections management*, p. 187.

² Ibid.

³ See D.A. Roberts, *Planning the documentation of museum collections*, p. 27.

1. PRE-ENTRY STAGE

This stage deals with the management of objects prior to their entry into the museum. This involves the particular way in which information on objects, that may become part of the museum collection by donation, purchase or field work, is recorded and linked to cataloguing.⁴

Anthropology

At the Transvaal Museum anthropological objects were collected during field trips undertaken by the professional officers. Radcliffe-Brown collected Swazi objects in August and September 1924 and later Rossouw collected material in Gazaland and Portuguese East Africa. Whether they made use of field-notes is unknown. Rossouw clearly identified each object that he collected on his field trips by entering them into the catalogue under an appropriate heading.⁵

Without doubt, the most valuable parts of the collection, according to Van Warmelo,⁶ were some objects donated by the Department of Native Affairs and the extensive and carefully recorded field-collections made by Beukes from the Sotho, Venda, Tsonga and Xhosa speaking groups.⁷ The journeys undertaken by Beukes were very fruitful and the collection was extended considerably. He undertook the following trips:

- 29 June - 4 July 1934 Portuguese East Africa
- 30 October - 31 October 1934 Enkeldoorn, Pretoria
- 5 January - 24 February 1935 Basutoland and Transkei
- 13 April - 17 April 1935 Renosterhoek, Rustenburg
- 28 June - 25 July 1935 Venda
- 16 January - 13 February 1936 Basutoland
- 1937 Sekhukhuneland.⁸

⁴ Ibid., pp. 27 and 205.

⁵ Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 2, ET. accession nos. 6818 to 6904.

⁶ NCHMA, Diary, FitzSimons, 1947, letter N.J. van Warmelo to FitzSimons, dd 1 January 1946.

⁷ C.S. van der Waal, "Gesiedenis van die Volkekunde-afdeling van die Nasko-Museum, Pretoria 1893 - 1977" (unpublished article), pp. 6 - 7.

⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

The objects collected by Beukes were entered in a separate catalogue.⁹ The information is direct and easy to understand, which is an indication that documentation at the pre-entry stage must have been done efficiently by Beukes himself. He was well-qualified and ably recorded the essential information, meticulously entering the acquisitions in the acquisitions entry registers and catalogues. There is no sign that he used any field work records or notes during cataloguing.

Objects that were donated to the Museum and those that were purchased were sometimes accompanied by basic information.¹⁰ Some were accompanied by letters, such as the descriptions provided by Earthy for the collection from the Chopi and Lenge speaking groups in Mozambique.¹¹ Beukes solicited objects by asking people for items that he felt might be of interest to the Museum and he followed up old correspondence and previous donations.¹² These actions may be regarded as part of the pre-entry stage. Information obtained in this way was filed on the correspondence files and added either in condensed or complete form to the catalogue. Information in the correspondence files was sometimes added to the relevant accession at a later stage when it was discovered by a curator.¹³

It appears that some objects remained in the pre-entry stage for quite some time. For example, on 3 January 1934 a Masai shield purchased on 21 January 1911 was entered in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa.¹⁴ Similarly bellows found in

⁹ Catalogue used for the Nel-Blom Collections and collecting done by Dr W.T.H. Beukes.

¹⁰ NCHMA, System 1 No 3 TM1/31 - TM1/33, letter Swierstra to T. Moore, dd 29 June 1933, in which Swierstra thanks the donor for a salt-basket "... the particulars supplied herewith greatly enhance its value from a scientific point of view. It will form a very fine addition to our Ethnological collection".

¹¹ Ibid., TM137/21 (copy in file Korrespondensie 1921: Etnologie), letter Earthy to the director, dd 17 September 1921 and descriptions; J.A. van Schalkwyk, Radcliffe-Brown at the Transvaal Museum, *Research by the National Cultural History Museum*, vol. 5: 1996, p. 42.

¹² Ibid., System 1 No 4 TM1/34 - TM1/42, letter Beukes to Zammit, dd 14 August 1934, asking for information about boats from Chikomo; System 1 No 3 TM1/31 - TM1/33, letter Beukes to J.H. Grobler, dd 18 December 1933, asking whether he has perhaps made other discoveries in the meantime.

¹³ See for example, Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 1, ET. accession no. 4312, particulars added by Beukes.

¹⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, ET. accession no. 7982.

the storage cupboard without a number or information was only entered into the catalogue in 1934.¹⁵

Archaeology

The archaeology collection of the Transvaal Museum consisted of objects that had either been donated or purchased. There were also some that were inherited from the Staatsmuseum. Archaeological fieldwork was not undertaken until the 1940s when the assistant for archaeology started examining archaeological sites. A cave on the Gatsrand, in the Potchefstroom district and a gravesite at Pienaar's Poort near Pretoria are two examples.¹⁶ Although there is no indication of pre-entry records of these and other site visits, the entries in the catalogue are efficient and include hand-drawn maps.

History

Potential donations for the historical collection were either brought or sent to the Museum. Alternatively a letter was written, asking whether the Museum was interested in accepting or buying a particular object. Swierstra dealt with such enquiries, but no field work was done.

The information on the stamps included of date of issue, description of definitive or commemorative, the name of designer and/or printer, perforations, watermarks and explanatory historical references. These facts were culled from printed stamp catalogues and magazines, such as the *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, but other sources were also used if the particulars were not readily available from the catalogues.¹⁷ The numismatics collection of the Transvaal Museum was inherited from the Staatsmuseum. Information on numismatics came from donors or other reference works such as the *Spink & Son's Monthly Numismatic Circular* or the *Encyclopaedia of Gold & Silver Coins of the World*, that were procured by the Staatsmuseum in August 1898, as the subscription for the numismatics periodicals was

¹⁵ Ibid., ET. accession no. 7995.

¹⁶ Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1939 - 1940 and 1940 - 1941, reports of the departments of archaeology, ethnology, numismatics and philately, pp. 2 and 1. No corresponding accessions were found.

¹⁷ B.J. Versfeld, The Transvaal Museum postage stamp collection, *Bulletin of the Transvaal Museum*, no. 6, January 1961, p. 3.

discontinued in 1914.¹⁸

2. ENTRY STAGE

The entry stage is concerned with the curation or control of objects when they first enter the museum.¹⁹ The objects received in the Transvaal Museum, whether the result of fieldwork, donation or purchase, were duly entered in four acquisitions entry registers, kept in the administrative office, when they were received.²⁰ The entries were thus, for the most part, probably written by an administrative staff member and not the curator of the collection. This practice is consistent with the method started at the Staatsmuseum, where objects received were entered into two acquisitions entry registers. The acquisitions covered natural history and anthropological, archaeological and historical objects, and no distinction was made between the different collections or kinds of objects or specimens.

The Staatsmuseum acquisitions entry registers are important because they contain objects that were inherited by the Transvaal Museum and have been re-catalogued from time to time. Some objects dating from the Staatsmuseum may still be traced in the collections today. From a collections management point of view these entry registers constitute the earliest stage in the documentation of the collections of the National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria. In some cases they are the only source because all the objects were not necessarily entered into catalogues.

Staatsmuseum

Acquisitions entry register

The first entry register kept by the Staatsmuseum began, in Dutch, with a pasted cutting²¹ dated 30 December 1893, signed by the assistant custos [curator], M. Rossteucher, and the chairman of the Curatorium, N. Mansvelt. It records objects numbered 1 to 726, so a

¹⁸ Transvaal Museum Committee minutes, meeting 7 April 1914.

¹⁹ D.A. Roberts, *Planning the documentation of museum collections*, p. 27.

²⁰ NCHMA, Box 515, file Memoranda dealing with Tvl Museum matters – space, finance, collections etc. etc. 1955, Functions of a museum – Transvaal Museum, p. 3.

²¹ Lists of donations were printed in newspapers.

numerical sequence was used. The objects were divided into 18 categories.

This is followed by a monthly handwritten register of new acquisitions, starting in January 1894 and ending in December 1897. The acquisitions are numbered consecutively from 727 to 4732. This means that even more than 4 732 objects were received into the Staatsmuseum's collection during this period because a set or group was sometimes acquisitioned as a single unit. For example:

- Acquisition no. 4351: Drie honderd Planten uit het Dist Lijdenburg
[Three hundred plants from the Lydenburg district]
- Acquisition no. 4340: Een aantal munten
[A number of coins]
- Acquisition no. 3869: Kraalwerk Zwasi
[Swazi beadwork]
- Acquisition no. 3182: 23 stuks Boschjesman-gereedschappen
[23 pieces of San implements].

There was no further attempt to classify or arrange the acquisitions into categories, except where a group of similar objects was received simultaneously, for example, a group of coins. The acquisitioning indicates that the objects or specimens were acquisitioned as they were received. In a few additional newspaper cuttings pasted in the back of the register, the objects were categorized.

The second register starts with the heading "Lyst van Geschenken voor het Staatsmuseum van af 1 Sept 1897" [List of Donations to the Staatsmuseum from 1 September 1897]. The first acquisitions, covering the period September to December 1897, are not consistent with the last acquisitions of the same period in the first register. The language is still Dutch and the acquisitions are again given per month up to September 1898. From October 1898 the information is given in columns with the headings: "Datum, Be/Omschrijving van voorwerp, Aangekocht van/Geschenk van, Adres" [Date, Description of object, Purchased from or Donated by and Address] (figure 21).

The headings of the columns changed several times in order to add information, such as the number of objects and remarks. In this register there is no consecutive numbering. Some

acquisitions were numbered per month, or per year while others were not numbered. A set or group was sometimes, as previously, acquisitioned as one unit. Not all objects received were entered into the register.²² The last object, a Canadian note of 25 cents, was received on 28 August 1900, almost three months after the occupation of Pretoria by British forces.

The essential information in the entry register consists of the object or specimen name and the name of the donor, seller, or lender and the date of acquisition. Additional information on the history or provenance of the acquisition is sometimes given, for example:

Acquisition no. 2012: Een zilveren Bandelieggespen door zijn oor oor groot vader Jean Labuschagne naar Afrika gebracht. [One silver bandolier clasp, brought to Africa by his great-grandfather, Jean Labuschagne.]

In the acquisitions entry registers references are made to various catalogues that were compiled after the Anglo-Boer War (figure 21). The annotated acquisitions correspond with those in the various catalogues as indicated, but not all acquisitions have been designated in this way.

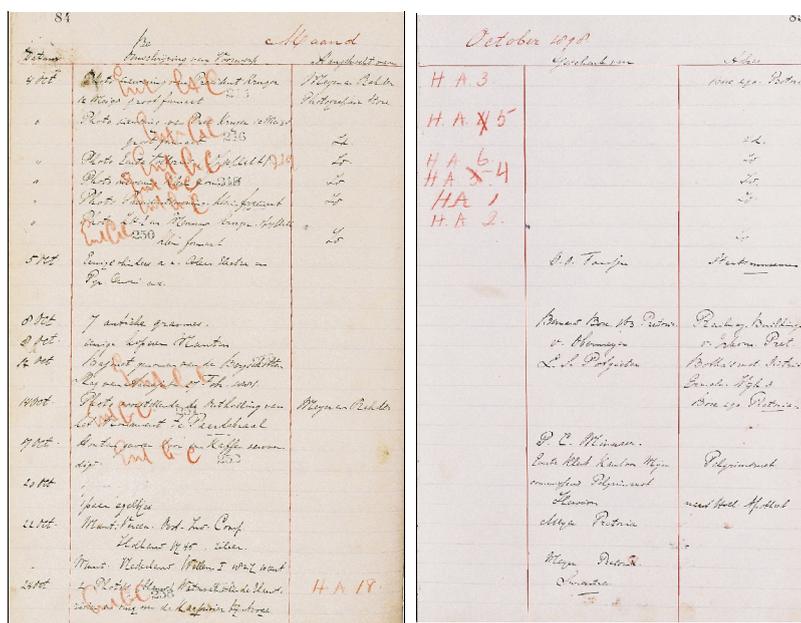


Figure 21

Page from the Acquisitions entry register of the Staatsmuseum, showing the headings and annotations

²² See for example, Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 1, ET. accession nos. 3922 to 3954, which were presented by J.T.E. Canneel in January 1898. They could not be traced in the Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry registers under that date, although there is a similar donation, dated 14 March 1898.

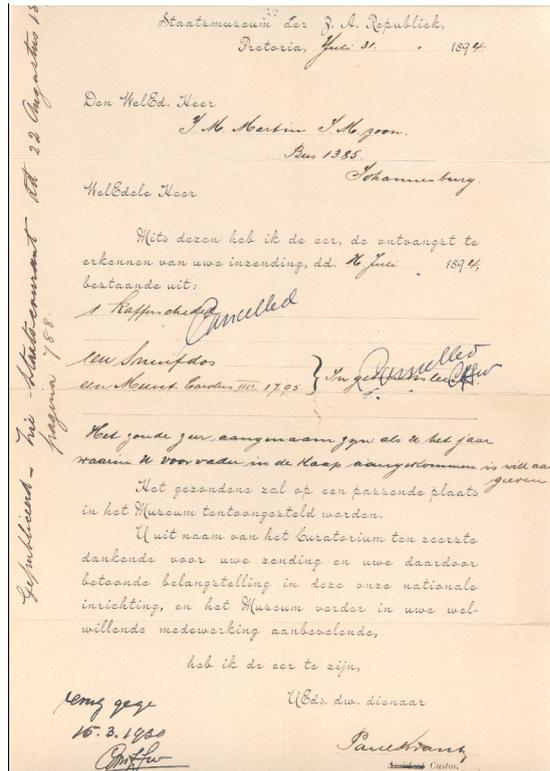


Figure 22

The entry form used by the Staatsmuseum for new acquisitions

Entry form

Acquisitions were acknowledged by means of an entry form (figure 22), with standard wording, thanking the donor for the presentation in the name of the Curatorium and promising to display the objects in the Museum. As far as can be ascertained no copies of the entry forms were kept by the Staatsmuseum.

Transvaal Museum

Acquisitions entry register

The entries in the registers are in English, but from 1940 some are given in Afrikaans. The first register deals with the period 1906 to 1908, indicating clearly that in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War little attention was paid either by the public or by the Museum to the anthropological, archaeological and historical collections. The first recorded acquisitions date from 1 July 1906, namely three Basotho bracelets. In total, 257 acquisitions were received up to 17 September 1906 for that year. The majority are natural history objects and

literature, with only 12 anthropological, archaeological and historical objects. There is among others a stone axe (no. 2), a double-barreled percussion lock fowling piece, made by Joe Manton (no. 19), a sewing machine picked up in the veldt during the war (no. 30), and a pipe from 1853, an old Bible and a marriage waistcoat, dating from 1860 (no. 68).

The acquisitions for 1907 begin in July 1907, and 50 acquisitions were received up to 30 December 1907, of which nine were anthropological, archaeological and historical objects. The entries include two shields, one assegai, two wooden dishes and one wooden pillow, with the remark that these were picked up on the battlefield during the [Bambatha?] rebellion of 1906. Only one acquisition is recorded for 1908, namely three serviette rings, one egg cup, two spoons and one pen holder, purchased and made in Ceylon by a prisoner of war, and given the number 51 (the acquisition numbers for 1908 continued from number 50).

The next acquisitions entry register was opened with acquisitions acquired in November 1927. It covers the period up to March 1938 (acquisition numbers 1 to 3043). This register was begun by the director, who informed the Museum Committee “that a separate Acquisition Book had been started, where all acquisitions were recorded from month to month and from which a list was drawn up & published monthly in several Newspapers”.²³

All acquisitions received by the Transvaal Museum, including natural history specimens and anthropological, archaeological and historical objects, were recorded and given an acquisition number that was called a general reference number or a general serial number. Therefore one finds that acquisitions such as bird skins, Paul Kruger’s hair in a frame, a striped lizard, a Voortrekker double-barreled gun, powder horn and bullet mould, herbarium specimens, a newspaper article, section of a tree eaten by white ants, government notes, two geckos and a native assegai may follow one another at random (figure 23).

²³ Transvaal Museum Committee minutes, meeting 15 December 1927.

Acq. No.	Nature of Acquisition	No of Specimens	Received from Locality	How received	Date	Remarks
2744	Antelope skulls	6	Dr. C. Rankin - New Bedford	Purchased	7/6/1936	Cl. 2350 June 1936
2745	Small bones (Dudleyton)	3	J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop	Purchased	10/7/36	
2746	Red kangaroo hair in frame	1	Mr. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop	Presented	9/6/36	Presented by Mrs. Louis Giesberg 619 Swartkops Rd, Mankop
2747	Striped dog tail (with faked)	1	C. J. Strydom - Mankop		16/36	
2748	Van Rensbrouck's horned gnu, a powder horn & bullet	3	J. S. Schreiner - Mankop		9/6/36	Specimen two pieces, missing lower part
2749	3 deerskins of bones	3	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		10/7/36	
2750	Montage of bones on the left of (skull of?) animal	1	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		19/6/36	
2751	piece of (hair) tail of a gnu	1	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		29/6/36	2 - gnu in possession
2752	3 skulls of the S. A. Kudu	3	J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		10/6/36	1 of 23/32 - late date 1941
2753	2 antlers	2	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		6/4/36	
2754	Antelope skull which was removed by means of a knife (the skull of a gnu)	1	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		7/6/36	Antelope skull was a gnu skull, gnu skull taken during [unclear] of 1936
2755	Antelope skull of a gnu	1	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		6/7/36	Antelope skull of a gnu made by persons of War during the Boer War
2756	Small bone (skull)	1	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		15/7/36	used more than 100 years ago
2757	Antelope skull of a gnu	1	Mr. J. P. van Rensburg - Swartkops - Mankop		19/7/36	

Figure 23

Page from the Acquisitions entry register of the Transvaal Museum

The information noted in the columns changed from time to time, but included the number, the nature of the acquisition, the number of specimens in the acquisition, the date and locality, the name of the donor, seller or collector, the collecting method and remarks. They give collection documentation information on a variety of issues, for example, on reference files, the catalogue numbers, descriptions of the objects, the history of the objects, and the return of an object to the owner or the relevant purchase price. Objects acquired during field trips were also acquisitioned.²⁴

The next volume covers the period 31 March 1938 to 17 March 1952 (acquisition numbers 3044 - 4782). Objects that had probably been overlooked previously were entered towards the end of the register.²⁵ This register contains no references to accession numbers, but the practice of giving collection documentation information in the various columns continues

²⁴ For example, Transvaal Museum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 2, acquisition no. 2207(a), Collection of Etn. spec., Locality Museum expedition to Port. E. Africa in July, ETH 34:253 to ETH 34:421.

²⁵ For example, *ibid.*, vol. 3, acquisition no. 4670, a soapstone artefact received in 1936.

in this register. Volume 4 covers the period 27 March 1952 to 20 May 1966 (acquisition numbers 4783 - 7023), and follows the same pattern as the previous registers.

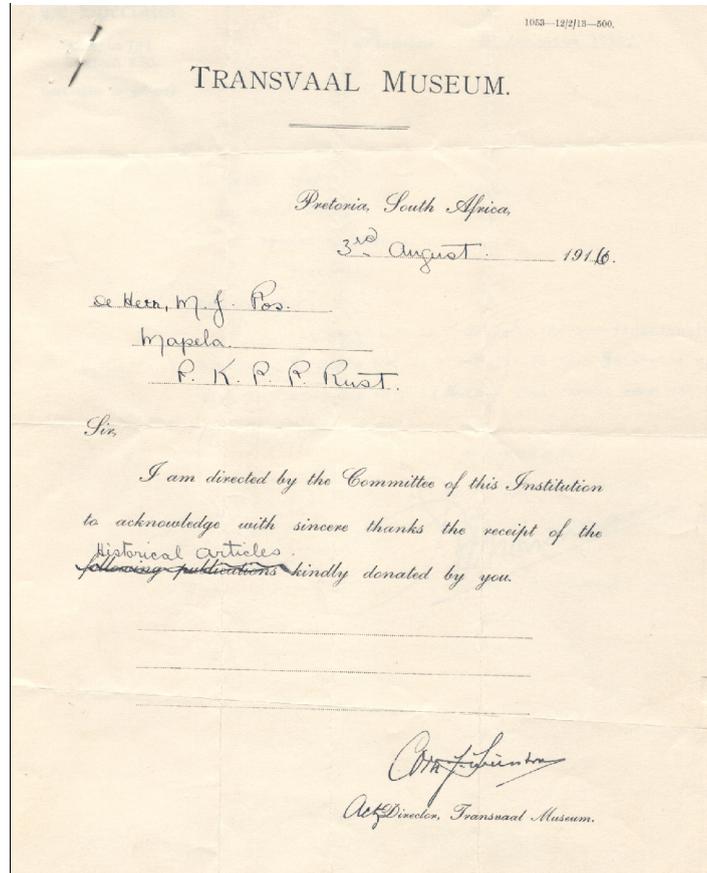


Figure 24

The entry form used by the Transvaal Museum for new acquisitions

Entry form

The first entry form used by the Transvaal Museum was a printed letter, to be completed as required (figure 24),²⁶ but a blank note with the letterhead of the Museum was also used. As far as can be ascertained no copies of the entry forms were kept at the Museum from 1913 to 1953. A letter of thanks was written to the donor, particularly if additional information in respect of the objects had been provided.²⁷

²⁶ NCHMA, Box 515, TM5/8, entry form Swierstra to M.J. Pos, dd 3 August 1916.

²⁷ See as examples, *ibid.*, Letterbook 4, letters Breijer to Mrs Botha, dd 28 July 1919 and System 1 No 3 TM1/31 - TM1/33, letter Swierstra to M. du Toit, dd 26 January 1933.

3. CATALOGUING (ACQUISITION) STAGE

Roberts defines the acquisition stage as the curation and control of items during their formal incorporation into the collection, either as a permanent accession or long-term loan.²⁸ The process of formal incorporation entails the allocation of an accession number to the object in an accessions register; this was called the catalogue at the Transvaal Museum. Preference is therefore given to the term cataloguing instead of acquisitioning in this context.

Permanent accessions : general

General Catalogue

Probably during the Anglo-Boer War or shortly thereafter a G.C.²⁹ [General Catalogue?]³⁰ was compiled in English. The work was done primarily by Gunning. This is the only general catalogue for the anthropological, archaeological and historical collections at the Transvaal Museum that could be found and it contains accession numbers 1 to 1054. Whether this was actually an attempt to begin a new acquisitions entry register or a new catalogue for the new dispensation is not clear. For the purpose of this research, this record is regarded as a catalogue.

A decision must already have been taken to compile other catalogues, with the result that each accession in the General Catalogue is preceded by a rectangular stamp (figure 25) with the following information:

No
Received
Entered
Replied

Not all these categories were completed for each accession, notably the categories “Received” and “Replied”. The General Catalogue accession number in the margin was

²⁸ D.A. Roberts, *Planning the documentation of museum collections*, p. 27.

²⁹ Letter codes were used to distinguish between the different catalogues/collections. For example, H. was used as abbreviation for historical and E., Eth. or ET. for ethnological objects (see annexure 3). There is no indication of the date when the use of codes was made compulsory and added to the accession number on the objects. In this research code letters are used to facilitate comprehension, except where no code letters exist, for example for the Coins and Medals Catalogue.

³⁰ There is no name or heading in the catalogue.

always repeated in the “No” (number) category and the new catalogue number written in the “Entered” category, thus adding yet another number to the object and indicating that the object had been accessioned in another catalogue.

The Eth. numbers referred to in the General Catalogue in the category “Entered”, probably refer to an ethnology catalogue that had been mislaid, or to the so-called Ethnographica Catalogue. They (the Eth. numbers) do not correspond with the accession numbers given to the same objects in the first extant catalogue used at the Transvaal Museum for the anthropological collection, the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa (E. Catalogue). There had probably been some attempt to correlate the Eth. numbers in the General Catalogue with the E.C. numbers as there are pencilled Eth. numbers in the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa (E. Catalogue).³¹ The same happened with objects in the General Catalogue that have been accessioned in the E.E. Catalogue there are corresponding pencilled Eth. numbers that appear in the General Catalogue and the E.E. Catalogue.³² The highest Eth. number in the General Catalogue is Eth. 781³³ (corresponding to E.C. accession number 288). As these pencilled Eth. numbers go up to 1221 - 1222³⁴ the lost ethnology catalogue must have contained at least that many accessions.

³¹ Baskets made of grass, accessioned as G.C. accession nos. 1002 - 1003, appear as E.C. accession no. 271, with the pencilled Eth. accession nos. 761 - 763, as they have been entered in the G.C. rectangular stamp.

³² A Chinese fine hair comb and brush accessioned as G.C. accession no. 1008 appear as E.E. accession no. 47, with the pencilled Eth. accession no. 767, as they have been entered in the G.C. rectangular stamp. When Ratcliffe-Brown accessioned the comb in 1921 in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 1, ET. accession no. 3984 the brush had apparently already been lost or mislaid. Since 1921 the comb has thus had four accession numbers.

³³ According to a note written in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 1, p. 280, the final accession number in the Ethnographica Catalogue (E) was 781, which has since been lost.

³⁴ Indicated at E.C. accession no. 446.

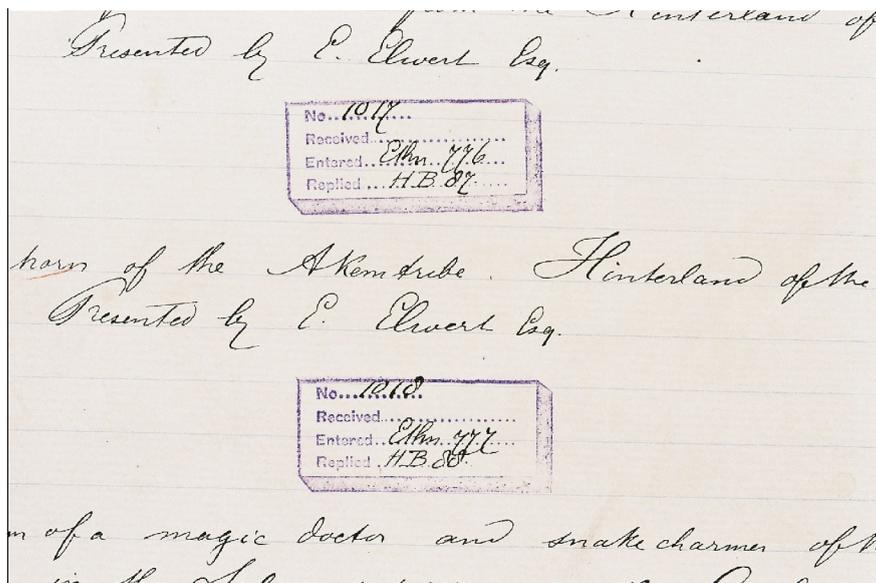


Figure 25

Page from the only General Catalogue of the Transvaal Museum
with rectangular stamps

In the General Catalogue there are references to H.A. and H.B. accession numbers, but the opposite also happened: the General Catalogue numbers were written in the H. catalogues by referring to G.C. Page ... No ... The General Catalogue contains a variety of objects that were received by the Staatsmuseum, such as documents, newspapers, photographs, Bibles, spoons, assegais, spears, arrows and coins, but also eggs, skulls and trunks. The last few accessions may well be new, but no dates are given. There is only one additional note in this catalogue, and this is a reference to the H.C. Catalogue.³⁵ In this respect the General Catalogue differs from all the other catalogues, which abound with notes and cross-references that have been added at a later stage.

Permanent accessions : Anthropological collection

Apart from new objects obtained for the ethnology collection during the early years at the Transvaal Museum, there also was the existing ethnology collection of the Staatsmuseum.

³⁵

The note on page 8 reads: Ent. HC 168.

Staatmuseum

At the beginning of the first acquisitions entry register of the Staatmuseum the categorized sections included “Ethnographische Voorwerpen” [Ethnographic objects] and listed ten objects. The section “Antropologische Voorwerpen” [Anthropological objects] listed two skulls.³⁶ Under the category “Diverse Voorwerpen” [Diverse objects] is mentioned a small collection “Kaffercuriositeiten, wapenen, gereedschappen, enz.” [African curios, weapons, tools, etc.]. This was also done in the printouts that followed, but in the registers there were no further attempts to categorize or classify, the objects were simply acquisitioned as they were received.

- Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie van het Staats Museum (Catalogue P)
[Catalogue for the Ethnographic Collection of the Staatmuseum]

The Staatmuseum used an accessions register, called a catalogue, for its ethnology collection, with the heading “Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie van het Staats Museum. Alle voorwerpen zijn gemerkt P”. This probably means that the objects themselves were marked with the code letter P (figure 26). According to the label on the cover this was Catalogue II.³⁷ A note by Rossouw, probably made in 1924, also indicates that this catalogue was designated Catalogue P. The letter P in the card index and in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa refers to this Staatmuseum catalogue. It is also the first indication that there was an existing card index.

The catalogue is written in Dutch and the objects are numbered 1 to 1522. An additional note on a loose page identifies (with a red cross) objects that were sent to the Exhibition in Paris in 1899 on loan. The note also indicates that all objects of Bawenda or Bagwamba origin were bought from J. Flygare³⁸ by the Commission that handled the Paris Exhibition and that these had been donated to the Staatmuseum,³⁹ but that there was no further indication to this effect in the catalogue (Dutch: *zonder verdere aanduiding*).

³⁶ This is consistent with the field of study of anthropology at that time, i.e. the study of physical anthropology.

³⁷ There is no indication so far (2005) of a Catalogue I.

³⁸ Johannes Flygare (1868 - 1899) published a booklet on “De Zoutpansbergen en de Bawenda natie” in 1899, a copy of which he presented to Gunning. It is still in the library of the National Cultural History Museum.

³⁹ The ZAR took part in an international exhibition held in Paris in 1900 and won twelve awards. See S. Brink, Die Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek se deelname aan die Internasionale tentoonstelling in 1900 in Parys, Frankryk. *Navorsing deur die Nasionale Kulturhistoriese Museum*, 2(4), 1992, pp. 119 - 146.



Figure 26

Neck rest in the anthropology collection of the National Cultural History Museum,
still marked with the letter P on the right
(Collection: National Cultural History Museum ET. 140)

Objects in the two Staatsmuseum acquisitions entry registers were accessioned in the above catalogue.⁴⁰ In this catalogue some objects have been annotated later in various ways, for example, with the word “Entered” (in red pencil), Ent GC (red pencil), Ent. GC with numbers (pencil) and Ent M.C. with numbers (red ink). The annotations are indications that the re-accessioning of the collections was done after the Anglo-Boer War, as they are in English. They also indicate that some, but not all the objects, have been re-entered in various catalogues at the Transvaal Museum. For example, the reference GC refers to objects re-accessioned in the General Catalogue. Some of the objects without any note or cross reference have also been re-accessioned. This means that there is a degree of inconsistency in the annotations.⁴¹

⁴⁰ See for example, Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 1, acquisition no. 71 and Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie, P. accession no.123, knopkieries found on location in Zululand where Prince Napoleon fell in battle.

⁴¹ See for example, Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie, P. accession no. 569 and General Catalogue, G.C. accession no. 601, madolla's (witchcraft implements) found in the royal hut of M'Pefu.

Transvaal Museum

- Ethnographic Catalogue Africa
(E. Catalogue)

The first extant catalogue for the ethnology collection at the Transvaal Museum was the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa, designated E.C. (ECat), as identified in two comments by Rossouw in February 1924.⁴² This catalogue was started after the Anglo-Boer War as the date on the fly-leaf is 1904 and had already been abandoned when Rossouw located it. According to a label on the cover this was Catalogue III.

In the catalogue there is also a variety of notes, for example, numbers that refer to the Eth. accession numbers in the General Catalogue (in pencil), numbers written above each other separated by a line (red ink), the letter C and Ent. M.C. with numbers (blue and red ink). There are also additions here and there and some changes to the object descriptions.

The catalogue was written in English, with accession numbers 1 to 797. It cannot be regarded as a copy of the *Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie van het Staats Museum*, as it contains fewer entries (797 in comparison to 1 522). On the other hand, most of the entries in the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa were, according to Rossouw, transferred to the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa and the historical catalogues.⁴³ This was not done in the case of all objects, but quite how choices were made is not clear. Nor is there any apparent reason why this catalogue was abandoned in favour of a new Main Catalogue. The catalogue was probably withdrawn in 1908, or shortly afterwards, because, although very few entries are dated, one of the last accessions was donated to the Transvaal Museum in 1908.⁴⁴

There are objects in the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa (E.Catalogue) that can be traced back to the acquisitions entry registers, as well as the *Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie* of the Staatsmuseum and sometimes to the General Catalogue (and even to the lost ethnology catalogue and the *Ethnographica Catalogue*, should they be found) and

⁴² Notes by Rossouw on the front page and p. 1 of the catalogue.

⁴³ Ethnographic Catalogue Africa, note on front page.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, E.C. accession no. 715, i.e. an accession number in the last hundred accessions; Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1907 - 1908, p.14.

forward to the new ethnology catalogue of the Transvaal Museum. This means that some objects have been acquisitioned and catalogued no less than five or six times (figure 27).⁴⁵ The description of the object may also differ: in four of the five entries it may almost be exactly the same, but in one less or more information is sometimes given.⁴⁶ There is no indication of the source of such additional particulars.



Figure 27

Although six acquisition and accession numbers
have been allocated to this pot, only two numbers were marked on the object,
and the final number, ET. 5085, is given twice
(Collection: National Cultural History Museum, ET. 5085)

⁴⁵ For example, a pot, dug up on the farm Buffelshoek and made c. 1836, has had six numbers, viz. Staatsmuseum acquisition entry register no. 4413, and the following accession numbers, Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie, P. no. 1175, General Catalogue, G.C. no. 320, Ethnographica Catalogue, Eth. 79, Ethnographic Catalogue Africa, E.C. no. 24 and Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology, vol. 2, no. 5085.

⁴⁶ Compare the description "Pot opgegraven op de plaats 'Buffelshoek' Vaalrivier, distr. Potchestroom, in een voor ongeveer 60 à 70 jaar verlaten kafferkraal vroeger bewoond door de 'Bantukaffers', welke door 'Moselikatzé' in de jaren 1824 - 30 vermoord zijn" in the Catalogus der Etnographische Collectie with the condensed description "Old Bantu kaffir pot; dug out at the farm Buffelshoek. This pot was made about 1836" in the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa. [Pot dug up at the farm Buffelshoek, Vaal River, district Potchefstroom, in African kraal which had been abandoned for 60 to 70 years. It was inhabited by indigenous blacks, who were murdered by Mzilikazi during the years 1824 to 1830. (Translated from the Dutch.)]

New objects, either donated or purchased, were also entered into the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa, for example, objects either bought from or presented by J.R. Ivy, a dealer in curios in Pretoria. Towards the end the purpose of the catalogued changed somewhat and included items that should have been part of the historical collection.⁴⁷

- E. E. Catalogue

According to an undated note by Rossouw there is also an E. E. Catalogue.⁴⁸ This catalogue contains accessions numbers 1 to 117 and seems to have been used for non-Southern African objects, for example, those that came from Batavia, Java, China, India, New Guinea, North America, New Zealand, Holland, Egypt and Crete.

The catalogue was annotated with notes in pencil, blue ink and blue pencil, referring to E or M E C followed by a number. These numbers refer to numbers in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol 1. Pencilled numbers refer to the Eth. numbers given to objects in the General Catalogue. There are references to various other catalogues too, such as P. Cat, and C. Cat. A few items have been allocated to the H.C. and A.C. Catalogues. The initial re-accessioning in the Main Catalogue was done by unknown persons, but Radcliffe-Brown and Rossouw were responsible for some re-accessioning. A.J. Swierstra wrote A.C. and H.C. cross references, dating one of his notes 8/5/34. There are also notes by Coetzee. This means that the catalogue was still consulted as late as 1953 and was probably still in a bound volume at the time. A few items were reported missing during re-accessioning.

Most of the items seem to have been received at the end of the nineteenth century, but again there are items in the acquisitions entry registers of the Staatsmuseum that also appear in this register. The information in the E.E. Catalogue is very basic, with only the name of the object, occasionally with the donor and date. In a few instances additional information has been added.

⁴⁷ For example, Ethnographic Catalogue Africa, E.C. accession no. 758, an old boerewoman's kappie.

⁴⁸ At present (2005) consisting of unnumbered loose pages cut from a register, without any heading except Rossouw's note. The E.E. may be an abbreviation for Ethnology European or Ethnology Elsewhere.

- Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa (ET.)

This catalogue is still used by the National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria, for its Anthropology Collection.

- Volume 1

Volume 1 was probably started in 1912 or 1913, with the first few accessions being clay pots, purchased by Swierstra in January 1912. The next date is May 1911 (accession numbers 78, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 104 and others). Objects donated in 1898 only appear under accession numbers 3922 to 3954, and the Leith Collection, purchased by the Museum in 1905,⁴⁹ follows from accession number 1512, but objects donated by Trevor in 1909 appears in accession numbers 1911 to 1937. It is clear that the objects were not entered in any specific order, either in terms of the previous catalogues, or as new objects were received. Nor were they entered according to a system of classification.

As is the case with the other catalogues, this catalogue contains new purchases, new donations and objects from previous collections and catalogues. There are many references to the previous catalogues. Sometimes these are correct, but there are also those that are incorrect or obscure.⁵⁰ For example, accession numbers 198, 224, 225 and 226 are annotated “From the old Collection”. The corresponding numbers in the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa (E Catalogue) are correct, but numbers added to both catalogues probably refer to the mislaid catalogues. Acquisitions registered in the E. E. Catalogue were also re-accessioned in the Main Catalogue.

The catalogue was regarded as a basic workbook by the ethnology curators and it abounds with notes, annotations and references, often making it difficult to read. It is clear that the first keeper in charge of the ethnology collection, Swierstra, and the three professional curators for ethnology (Radcliffe-Brown, Rossouw and Beukes), did not always agree on the information that was written down. Nor did they regard all objects as being worthy of collecting or placing in the collection. They made their divergent opinions quite clear in the catalogue.

⁴⁹ The Leith collection was bought with contributions of members of the public and the Museum Committee. E. Grobler, “Die Staatsmuseum van die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek en sy historiese en etnografiese versamelings” (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Pretoria, 1994), pp. 229 - 230.

⁵⁰ In the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol.1, p. 280, note 1, Rossouw gives an explanation of the problems he encountered with regard to the cross reference techniques previously used.

Accession numbers 1 to 1501 were recorded by unknown registrars,⁵¹ but Radcliffe-Brown accessioned numbers 1502 to 4896. He had to contend with objects that had been in the collection for many years, such as the Leith Collection.⁵² Although Radcliffe-Brown wrote that the collection was not catalogued by Leith and many of the specimens had not been marked,⁵³ he does refer to “Leith’s own catalogue” by numbers.⁵⁴ These (Leith’s) numbers should not be confused with the accession numbers of the Transvaal Museum catalogues. Where there was no record, Radcliffe-Brown noted that this was the case.⁵⁵ Radcliffe-Brown also refers to the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa (E Catalogue) and accession numbers in the mislaid catalogue.

Volume 1 of the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa was continued by Rossouw with accession numbers from 4897 to 4945. This means that Rossouw accessioned 50 objects from 1 to 8 February 1924. Rossouw was the first curator who tried to make sense of the existing registers and catalogues. He gave a lucid explanation of what he intended to do about previous accessions.⁵⁶ He also wrote a clear heading to volume 1 of the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology, and ended the volume with this note: “This book is continued in Main Ethnographic Catalogue Vol 2 GSHR. Feb 8 - 1924”.

⁵¹ One may have been J.T. Jenkins, a clerk at the Museum. The Museum Committee gave the acting director permission to utilize his services for cataloging. Transvaal Museum Committee minutes, meeting 15 July 1913. The same handwriting appears in several catalogues, such as the Historiography, the E.E., the Coins and Medals and the H.A. Catalogues.

⁵² E. Grobler, “Die Staatsmuseum van die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek en sy historiese en etnografiese versamelings” (unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Pretoria, 1994), pp. 229 - 230.

⁵³ NCHMA, Letterbook 5, letter Radcliffe-Brown to J Hewitt, dd 5 March 1921.

⁵⁴ For example, Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 1, ET. accession nos. 2361 to 2496.

⁵⁵ For example, *ibid.*, ET. accession nos. 1851 and 1854.

⁵⁶ Rossouw writes that no cross references will be given in the Main Catalogue, but that objects already accessioned in previous ethnology catalogues will be viewed and then entered into the Main Catalogue by continuation number. The cross references will be made in the previous catalogues. *Ibid.*, pp. 280 - 281, note II.

- Volume 2

Volume 2 is again clearly identified as

The Transvaal Museum

Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology

Africa Vol II Continued from Vol I

note This catalogue started 8 Feb - 1924 GSHR.

In March 1924 Rossouw wrote the following note:

Henceforth entries made in this catalogue will have the year when specimen was received at the Museum attached. When the year number is not given then specimen was received prior to June 1921. Specimens having numbers like 21/1 to 21/156 and 22/1 to 22/31 have been numbered by Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and will be given their continuation numbers of this catalogue. The 21 and 22 of Radcliffe-Brown's numbers refer to 1921 & 1922. Fairly full descriptions and correspondence references will be given where possible.

G.S.H. Rossouw 15/3/24.⁵⁷

No objects using the above numbering system by Radcliffe-Brown are recorded in a catalogue, but it is possible that he visited the Museum as honorary curator for ethnology and numbered objects during these visits without actually entering them in a catalogue. There are objects in the collection marked with these numbers, such as the Earthy Collection, which he was instrumental in obtaining for the Museum.⁵⁸ These objects have also been allocated numbers in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 2 – again a case where objects received at least two accession numbers and were marked in this way (figure 28).

Rossouw was responsible for the accessions up to ET. accession number 7364, May 1925. In many cases Rossouw wrote the year in which the object was received at the end of the entry, namely 1922, 1923, 1924, etc. In some, but not all cases, a note was made, such as “(prior to 1921)”. As is the case with volume 1, objects received by the Transvaal Museum and even the Staatsmuseum over a long period were entered into the catalogue by Rossouw

⁵⁷ Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 21 - 22.

⁵⁸ J.A. van Schalkwyk, Radcliffe-Brown at the Transvaal Museum, *Research by the National Cultural History Museum*, vol. 5: 1996, p. 42.

in the years 1924 to 1925.⁵⁹ Again, although the so-called Historiography Catalogue already existed, historical items were entered into this catalogue.⁶⁰ Some of these were re-accessioned in the Historiography Catalogue and the numbers annotated.⁶¹



Figure 28

Fertility doll purchased by Dora Earchy, accessioned by Radcliffe-Brown (left) and Rossouw (right), with no code letters, with the original label attached by Earchy still intact (2005)

(Collection: National Cultural History Museum ET. 6446)

There is no indication who accessioned object numbers 7365 to 7909, but Beukes, who regarded cataloguing as part of his curatorial duties and reported on this annually was responsible for the cataloguing of numbers 7910 to 8001 (except 7996). Again these objects include items obtained before Beukes' time, as well as objects that were purchased and donated. The catalogue was kept up until October 1934 with three additional accessions by A.J. Swierstra, and thereafter no other objects were registered in this catalogue for five years. In 1939 accessioning was re-started by Haughton with a large collection donated by

⁵⁹ For example, a collection of ostrich eggs, shell beads and perforated pieces, donated in 1905 was accessioned as Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vol. 2, ET. accession no. 6159.

⁶⁰ For example, a revolver (ibid., ET. accession no. 7398), Voortrekker toys (ET. accession no. 7409), and an old Dutch Bible (ET. accession no. 7574).

⁶¹ For example, ibid., ET. accession no. 7572 is described as a small wooden butter or milk tub, with no particulars, but probably of Voortrekker manufacture, with note: "Entered H.C. 3373 A.J. Swierstra".

the Native Affairs Department, Pretoria. Objects were accessioned until 1945. Haughton usually wrote the date of the acquisition or acquisition number and the Museum file reference. She was responsible for accessioning up to number 8648.

The catalogue was clearly scrutinized by later staff members and there are many additional numbers, names, re-accessioning and notes on identification, authenticity, files and loans. Some pages were also cut out (between pages 121 and 122 and 209 and 210, for example). The Main Catalogue is boldly cancelled with red ink to show which numbers have been re-allocated to the archaeological collection.

- Catalogue used for the Nel-Blom Collection and collecting done by Dr W.T.H. Beukes

For the years 1934 (overlapping slightly with the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa) to 1937, Beukes used a new catalogue for the objects collected on fieldwork, purchases, exchanges and donations. He introduced a new system, combining the year (19)34, (19)35, (19)36 and (19)37, with the object number, starting with number one each year.

The first 252 and a few other accession numbers in this catalogue refer to the Nel-Blom loan received from the University of Pretoria.⁶² The numbers 1 to 252 were written by A.J. Swierstra, the assistant for ethnology who worked under Beukes' supervision and have not, moreover, been prefixed with 1934 or 34. The first number entered in this way is 34:253 by Beukes, but no letter code was used.

The documentation done by Beukes was of a high standard. He differentiated between his fieldwork expeditions, giving place and dates.⁶³ Each object is clearly named, in Afrikaans and the indigenous language. Objects are described and often he also gives an explanation

⁶² At present (2005) there are also two catalogues from the University of Pretoria, presented to the National Cultural History Museum in 1997, one with the heading "Universiteit van Pretoria. Dept van Bantoeïstiek Etnografiese Versameling". It contains information on the loan. The other catalogue, without any caption, contains information on the gifts to M.C. de Wet Nel.

⁶³ For example, "Die volgende voorwerpe is aangekoop deur W.T. Beukes, gedurende 'n ondersoektog na Basoetoeland en die Transkei. 5 Januarie - 24 Feb 1935" [The following objects were purchased by W.T. Beukes during a field trip to Basutoland and the Transkei. 5 January - 24 Feb 1935. (Translated from the Afrikaans)].

of the usage, and when applicable the purchase price. Accession number 35:43 - 44 serves as an example:

Twee kalbasse om mee te drink. No. 44 het gebreek, maar die stuk is weer aangewerk met garing. Op 'n vraag van my waarom so groot moeite geneem word om 'n ding te herstel wat tog relatief maklik deur 'n ander vervang kan word, was my geantwoord dat die kuns om so te werk opgehou moet word. Daarom as sulke voorwerpe soos kalbasse breek, dan word die werk gewoonlik aan jongere meisies gegee om oefening te kry in hierdie soort werk. By Pitseng in noord Basotholand as geskenk ontvang. Heet: "Mohope"⁶⁴

Most of the objects were catalogued as soon as possible. Beukes remarked that after his return from a trip to Portuguese East Africa during 1934, 168 new specimens acquired for the Museum were disinfected, catalogued and packed away. The next year, Beukes also mentioned that a few hundred objects were catalogued, fully described and disinfected. In this way he worked off the cataloguing arrears, including those collected during the trip he had undertaken to Basutoland and the Transkei in January and February 1935 and had not catalogued earlier, because he had been pressed for time.⁶⁵ Beukes also took many photographs during his field trips. He catalogued the old photographs that were already in the Museum and then started on his own, but could not complete the whole collection.⁶⁶ After 1937 (last accession number 37/278 - 9) no accessions were made until 1954. There are only a few annotations in the catalogue, although almost all the entries have been crossed out in pencil (probably when the catalogue was retyped in ledger format).

Permanent accessions : Anthropological photograph collection

Transvaal Museum

There were two catalogues for photographs in use at the Transvaal Museum without any letter codes.

⁶⁴ [Two calabashes for drinking. No 44 was broken, but the pieces had been sewn together with thread. In answer to my question "why repair a thing that can easily be substituted for another", the reply was that the art of doing this must continue. That is the reason why objects such as broken calabashes are given to younger girls so that they can gain experience in this kind of work. Received as donation at Pitseng in northern Basutoland. It is called "Mohope." (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

⁶⁵ Transvaal Museum Annual Reports, 1934 - 1935 and 1935 - 1936, departmental reports for ethnology, p. 1.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 1936 - 1937, p. 1.

- Catalogue of Ethnological and Archaeological photographs and drawings

This catalogue was started in 1921 by Radcliffe-Brown. It had the following headings in columns: no., by, subject, size, location, negative and remarks.

The first fourteen photographs were taken by Reinhardt Maack and entered by Radcliffe-Brown. There are 138 photographs, including copies of San paintings, ethnology practices and Peruvian scenes. As usual, un-accessioned objects, even dating from the Staatsmuseum, were now entered, in this case drawings dated 21 June 1899. (accession numbers 106 - 109). This catalogue was probably used by Rossouw until 1924.

- “Katalogus van volkskundige Portrette. 1934” [Catalogue of ethnology Portraits. 1934]

This catalogue for ethnology photographs was begun in 1934 by Beukes. Although he took most of the photographs himself, being a prolific photographer, he also accessioned old photographs found in the collection, such as those donated by George Leith (accession numbers 34:1 - 6 Tasmanian objects). The descriptions of his photographs are meticulous and are dated. He was responsible for accessions 34:1 to 37:68 (April 1937).

Permanent accessions : Archaeological collection

Transvaal Museum

For cataloguing purposes no distinction was made either in the Staatsmuseum or the Transvaal Museum between ethnology and archaeology during the period 1892 to 1938. In all the above registers and catalogues objects are found that eventually would be classified as archaeology. The most interesting example is probably the Egyptian mummy, donated to the Staatsmuseum in 1899, and entered in the acquisitions entry register.⁶⁷

The mummy was originally accessioned in the Ethnographic Catalogue Africa (E Catalogue) as E.C. accession no. 450. In the E.E. Catalogue it was duly entered, but then deleted without an accession number. At no stage was it ever entered into the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, but it is recorded in the Historiography Catalogue. One can only speculate why the choice was made to accession the mummy as part of the history collection (H.C. accession no. 74) because archaeology, including

⁶⁷ Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 2, acquisition no. 91, dd 28 April 1899.

Egyptology, was already an established science at the time of accessioning, c. 1915. It was only in 1968 that the mummy was classified as an archaeological object and re-accessioned in the catalogue of archaeological specimens as ARG. accession no. 68/68.

- Catalogue of Archaeological specimens (ARG.)

Despite the fact that archaeological objects were accessioned in the the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, the honorary curator for archaeology, Van Riet Lowe, was of the opinion that the greater part of the collection was not catalogued. This “was regarded as a great handicap in making any use of the collections for study purposes and moreover it was a great obstacle in building up a proper show collection”.⁶⁸

The first archaeology catalogue was opened by Haughton in February 1938. This task was done in preparation for displays that would make archaeological material more available to students. In addition it was regarded as fundamental to the duties of the curator, that: “every one of the thousands of specimens has to be numbered and entered into the catalogue”.⁶⁹ According to the director Haughton had done nothing but catalogue stone implements since the day she started working, and she showed herself to be a very painstaking and conscientious worker.⁷⁰ The catalogue was started in English, but changed to Afrikaans from ARG. accession no. 9297.

The numbering in this catalogue does not start with accession number 1, but with ARG. accession no. 1496 (previous ET accession no. 1496) because the ethnology numbers have been retained (i.e. the numbers that have been allocated to the archaeological objects in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa, vols.1 and 2). Only the code changed. The result is that the numbers of archaeology objects in the new catalogue do not follow consecutively, because the remaining ethnology objects are still registered in the Main Catalogue, where they are interspersed with cancelled archaeology objects. They kept their ET. numbers, and have of course been left out of the archaeology catalogue.

⁶⁸ Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees meeting, minutes, 3 March 1938.

⁶⁹ Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1937 - 1938, pp. 4 - 5.

⁷⁰ Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees meeting, minutes, 3 March 1938.

No descriptions are given in the new Catalogue of Archaeological specimens, for example, accession numbers 7193 - 7323 refer to the Peruvian objects now in the archaeology collection, but the information in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa was not repeated. At the back of the archaeology catalogue some preceding and other numbers that were omitted when the catalogue was first compiled,⁷¹ have also been recorded. This could indicate that these objects were only found, either as show or study items, after some headway had been made with the catalogue. Numbers written in red in the margin refer to these objects.

From number 8005 the accession numbers follow in sequence. They cover a variety of objects donated or found in the collection as far back as 1905 and 1909, but were not registered at the time.⁷² Objects with no information at all have now been registered.⁷³ There are a few references to previous numbers in the later records, indicating that although the objects may have been part of previous acquisitions, they were not registered *in toto* at the time,⁷⁴ either in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa or in the new Catalogue of Archaeological specimens. For example, only eleven scrapers from the donation by C.D. Braine were registered initially; the other items were registered at a later stage.⁷⁵ This donation was dated 1909. The catalogue was “completed” in 1939, and was kept up to date until 1945.⁷⁶

⁷¹ For example, Catalogue of Archaeological specimens, ARG. accession nos. 1036 - 1038, 1417 - 1419, 1440 - 1469 and 4000 - 4008.

⁷² Ibid., ARG. accessions nos. 8019 - 8032, a collection of fourteen perforated stones was donated in 1905 and accession nos. 8604 - 8617, a collection of fourteen small scrapers, in November 1909.

⁷³ For example, *ibid.*, ARG. accession no. 8123, Trimmed point MSA (no record).

⁷⁴ For example, *ibid.*, ARG accession nos. 8513 - 8516 with the note “They belong with the collection 5456 - 5469”.

⁷⁵ Catalogue of Archaeological specimens, ARG. accession nos. 5819 - 5829 and nos. 8785 - 8811.

⁷⁶ Transvaal Museum Annual Reports, 1941 - 1942 and 1945 - 1946, departmental report for archaeology, pp. 2 and 3.

New donations were also recorded, as were the objects recovered by the archaeologist, for example, from an archaeological site at Vereeniging (Klip River gravels).⁷⁷ Drawings of sites and notes accompany some of the acquisitions found by Haughton (figure 29). For a period of eight years (1946 - 1953) no accessioning was done as there was no staff member dealing with either the anthropological or archaeological collections.

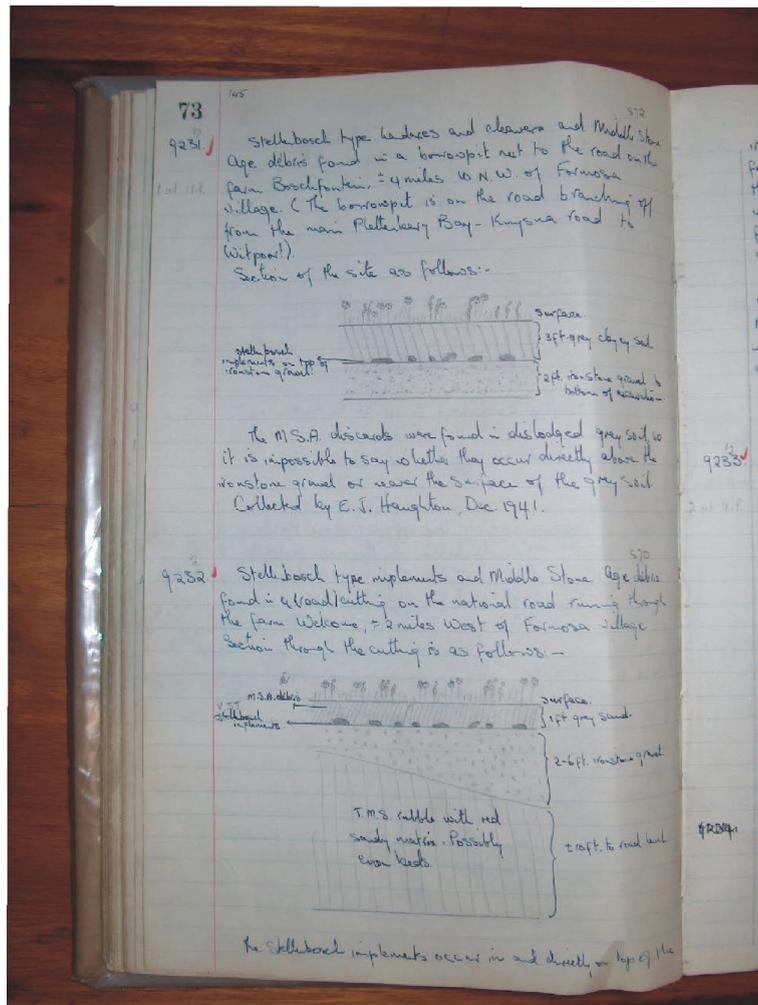


Figure 29

Example of drawings in the Catalogue of Archaeological specimens,
done by E.J. Haughton

⁷⁷ Ibid., ARG. accession no. 9131a - f, a collection of eleven Stellenbosch I implements, collected by B.D. Malan and Haughton, 8 March 1939.

Permanent accessions : Historical collection

Staatmuseum

There seem to have been many efforts to accession, re-accession and even categorize the objects in the history collection. The first attempt took place at the Staatmuseum when the history objects in the acquisitions entry registers were categorized as

- Nationale Relikwieën en andere Herinneringstukken van vroegeren tijd
[National relics and other memorabilia of early times]
- Munten en Medailles [Coins and medals]
- Documenten, enz. [Documents, etc.]
- Kunstvoorwerpen, Photographieën, enz. [Art objects, photographs, etc.]
- Diverse Voorwerpen [Diverse objects]
- Boeken [Books]

The division “Munten en Medailles” was later extended to include bank notes. Some of these categories formed the basis of a range of extant catalogues, but no catalogues for numismatics, books and diverse items could be found.

- “Bescheiden, voorwerpen, enz, betrekking hebbend op de Transvaalsche Deputasie in Europa 1883/1884.
- Documenten, van min of meer belang voor de Geschiedenis van Transvaal”⁷⁸

The above two headings are used in the catalogue of the Staatmuseum for historical documents and photographs, containing accession nos. 0001 to 0139 for the first section and accession nos. 0140 to 0273 for the second section, in Dutch. Objects in the acquisitions entry registers of the Staatmuseum were accessioned in the Documenten Catalogue.⁷⁹ The last 20 accession numbers, in English, were probably entered after the Anglo-Boer War.

⁷⁸ [Records, objects, etc. on the Transvaal Deputation to Europe 1883/1884. Documents more or less of interest for the history of the Transvaal. (Translated from the Dutch.)] This catalogue is referred to as the Documenten Catalogue.

⁷⁹ For example, a Government Gazette of the New Republic, Staatmuseum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 2, acquisition no. 24, dd 14 March 1898, was accessioned in Documenten Catalogue, Docum. accession no. 0205.

As usual, objects in the catalogue have been annotated in various ways, for example, with the word “Entered” (in red pencil) and with blue, grey and red pencil marks. A note at the beginning of the catalogue indicates that “Transvaal Dep” and “Historica” have all been entered, and at the end a final assurance: “All entered”. Abbreviations, such as T.D. and D. and D. Hist. (probably for Transvaal Deputation, Deputation and Documents History), are also used. This indicates that the objects have been re-entered in various catalogues at the Transvaal Museum. The accession numbers in the C.G., H.A. and H.B. catalogue have been noted in some instances, again corroborating the fact that the objects had been accessioned more than once.⁸⁰

Transvaal Museum

- H. Catalogues

After the Anglo-Boer War two catalogues were compiled at the Transvaal Museum for historical documents (“Historische zaken”), viz. H.A. (Africa) and H.B. (Europe), both written in English. They were probably preceded by the General Catalogue.

- H.A. (Africa)

The heading of this catalogue is “Historical. documents. (South African).” in the catalogue itself, but it includes a variety of items such as photographs, chairs, a cannon, buckles, and even a hairball out of the stomach of an ox (H.A. accession no.158). There are 245 accessions.

In the catalogue some objects have been annotated in various ways, for example, with the word “Entered” (in red pencil) and with other blue, grey and red pencil marks. There is a note at the beginning of the catalogue that curios, photographs, historica, newspapers, maps and documents have all been entered, and at the end again the final statement “All entered”. This indicates that all the objects have been re-entered in various catalogues at the Transvaal Museum. A column on the right side of each page gives references to G.C. Page ... no ... for all the accessions.

⁸⁰ An inventory of the State Printing Office July 1869 was accessioned three times, in Documenten Catalogue, Docum accession no. 0169, General Catalogue, G.C. accession no. 92 and Historical documents (South African) Catalogue, H.A. accession no.127.

Although the catalogue contains a few new items, such as a copy of the new Transvaal Constitution printed on silk, dated 25 April 1905,⁸¹ the accessioned objects consist primarily of objects received by the Staatsmuseum.⁸²

- H.B. (Europe)

This catalogue consists of 13 loose pages, covering accession nos. H.B.1 to 96. The heading of this catalogue, “Historical documents Historische Zaken”, refers to the general historical catalogues, with a sub-heading H.B. (Europe). The objects cover a range of items such as bank notes, revolvers, antique busts, a water tank, clothes and bottles.

In the catalogue some objects have been annotated in various ways, for example, with the word “Entered” (in red pencil) and with other blue and red pencil marks. There is a note at the end: “All entered except notes”. This indicates that some, but not all the objects have been re-entered in various catalogues at the Transvaal Museum. A column on the right-hand side of each page gives references to G.C. Page... no... for all the accessions. In a few instances objects have clearly been noted E.E., and these objects can be traced in the E.E. Catalogue. This indicated that they have been re-accessioned again and at that stage had been assigned at least four numbers.⁸³

- Historiography Catalogue (H.C.)

This catalogue, usually called H.C., is still in use by the National Cultural History Museum for its historical and cultural history collections.

⁸¹ Historical documents (South African) Catalogue, H.A. accession no. 244.

⁸² For example, one silver bandolier clasp brought to Africa by the donor’s great-great grandfather, Jean Labuscagne, Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 1, acquisition no. 2012, Historical documents (South African) Catalogue, H.A. accession no.110 and General Catalogue, G.C. accession no. 74.

⁸³ Two antique busts found when digging in the bed of River Tiber near Rome (Italy), with the following numbers: Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 1, acquisition no. 3175 - 3176, HB (Europe) Catalogue, H.B. accession no. 15, General Catalogue, G.C. accession no. 104 and E. E. Catalogue, E.E. accession no. 55.

- Volume 1

The catalogue was written in English up to accession no. 3372 (with accessioning in Afrikaans here and there), and was thus probably started after the Anglo-Boer War. It contains accession numbers 1 to 4664. The first accession is devoted to “Books, papers, documents etc. relative to the Transvaal Deputation in Europe. 1883/1884”. In other words, this catalogue follows the same pattern as the Documenten Catalogue, but the two entries differ. Only 65 entries, numbered from 1.a. to 1.mmm., in comparison to the 139 entries in the catalogue of the Staatsmuseum (“Bescheiden, voorwerpen, enz, betrekking hebbend op de Transvaalsche Deputasie in Europa 1883/1884”) were recorded. The next section, called “Historica”, commences from accession number 2.

This catalogue was regarded as a workbook by the staff dealing with the historical collection. It abounds with notes, cross-references, attempts at classification and indexing, alterations and additions. It contains new acquisitions and the collection inherited from the Staatsmuseum. Many objects have been accessioned at least three or even four times. The description of the object may also differ: two of the three entries, for example, may be identical, while another has had extra information added that does not appear in the first entry.⁸⁴ No indication is given of the source of such additional particulars.

In the first few pages of the H.C. Catalogue there are references to various other catalogues, for example, P. Cat, C. Cat (figure 30), D. Cat and N. Cat. Only one of these catalogues has been discovered, namely the Photograph catalogue (P. Cat), containing 35 entries. One may surmise that the letter references could represent categories in the collection such as curios, documents and newspapers.

⁸⁴ Compare the description “Twee oude silveren voet gespen, door een der Hugenotten, n.l. Jan Labuschagne, naar Africa meegebracht” [Two old silver shoe buckles brought to Africa by a Huguenot, Jean Labuschagne] in the Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry register, acquisition no. 776, with the description “Two silver buckles brought from France to S. Africa by Jean Labuschagne. During the great trek saved from a fire of a laager in Natal (1834) later taken by Christian Labuschagne on the [trek] to Humpata, he died in the desert and the buckles were returned by an old native servant to his daughter Susanna Catherina (Labuschagne)” in H.A. accession no. 98 and H.C. accession no. 21.



Figure 30

Anglo-Boer War prisoner-of-war object, presumably regarded as a curio, still (2005)
marked only with the C. accession number

(Collection: National Cultural History Museum C. Cat. 72)

Various unknown staff members did the cataloguing until 1924 when the following note was made by Rossouw : “Cat. continued by G S H Rossouw - May 6 - 1924”. As the previous accessioning was probably done in July 1920, a period of little less than four years had elapsed during which no accessioning was done. Rossouw was appointed as ethnologist, but according to Swierstra he was also in charge of historical matters and used the designation historiographer.⁸⁵ He did a great deal of accessioning, (called “cataloguing” by Swierstra), being responsible for H.C. accession nos.135 to 3372 from May 1924 to October 1925. He also packed the objects away.⁸⁶

Whenever possible Rossouw grouped items belonging together (items associated with one person, items from one donor, or items of the same kind). For example, H.C. accession nos. 407 to 418 were all objects belonging to Joubert, while numbers 453 to 499 was a group of weaponry and numbers 699 to 792 comprised uniforms and accoutrements. Accession nos. 793 to 809 were cannons and accession nos. 878 to 1063 were objects associated with

⁸⁵ NCHMA, System 1 No 1 TM1/12 - TM1/26, letter Swierstra to F.V. Engelenburg, dd 22 September 1924; in letter Rossouw to Mrs Botha, dd 23 June 1924 he signed as Historiographer.

⁸⁶ Ibid., letter Swierstra to F.V. Engelenburg, dd 22 September 1924.

General P. Cronjé. This may have been an attempt at a rudimentary classification. In this way too collections within the historical collection were formed and named, but all still belonged to the main collection of the Transvaal Museum, and there was no intention whatsoever to separate them from the main collection or to earmark them for a particular museum. Rossouw for example, identified the following collections:

- Note: Specimens 878 - 2041 have been received from 'Het Zuid-Afrikaansch Museum at Dordrecht, Holland, the so-called "**Dordrecht Collection**",⁸⁷
- Specimens 1064 - 2015 are with reference to Pres Kruger ("**Kruger Collection**")⁸⁸ & other Historical Figures, Die Kruger Kolleksie van Dordrecht ontvang,
- Note: The following nos. 2103 -2526 belong to the **Genl. Louis Botha Collection** presented by Mrs Genl L. Botha March 1924 ...

For eight and a half years no accessioning was done for the historical collection. The next accessions were written in Afrikaans by A.J. Swierstra in 1934, identifying himself as A.J. Swierstra 23/3/34 (H.C. accession no. 3379). He followed Rossouw's example of identifying the collection and noting it, for example:

- Nommers 4250 tot 4450 was gegee deur Mevr. Gen L Botha en behoort aan die Botha Versameling 6 Maart 1935,
- No. 4506 tot 4649 behoort by die Botha versameling en is deur Mevr. Botha Gestuur 22 Maart 1935.⁸⁹

It is interesting to note that Rossouw and A.J. Swierstra were appointed in the Ethnology department, but that both also worked with the historical collection.

The next accessioning was probably done more than twelve years later. H.C. accession nos. 4650 - 4669, in English, were done by Schiel. While preparing an index for the historical collection he found numerous unnumbered objects, which had either never been accessioned

⁸⁷ My bold.

⁸⁸ The name Kruger Collection was probably coined by Leyds. See NCHMA, Box 515, TM 5/11A, copy of letter by Leyds, dd 13 November 1920, to which Rossouw had access.

⁸⁹ [Mrs General Botha donated object numbers 4250 to 4450 on 6 March 1935, and they are part of the Botha Collection, and numbers 4506 to 4649 also belong to the Botha Collection and have been sent by Mrs Botha 22 March 1935. (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

or the accession number had disappeared. This meant that accessioning became one of his main tasks.

- Volume 2

This volume was started by Schiel, who used both Afrikaans and English. New acquisitions were accessioned. As usual objects donated in the past that had not yet been accessioned, were duly handled. In some cases no information could be located on the objects and the phrases “So far no information”, or “Particulars so far unknown” and “Geen verdere besonderhede” [No further details] were used frequently.⁹⁰ Very often one accession number was allocated to a group or unit of objects, for example, documents, photographs, spoons, a hat badge and a buckle, were all accessioned under one number – probably because they were received from one donor.⁹¹ Schiel often used descriptions such as “a nice little collection”, “a double parcel”, “an interesting collection”, “bundle of old newspapers” and even “a cardboard box with ...” to indicate an acquisition. In other cases sub-numbers were allocated to the different objects in one accession.⁹²

Objects already accessioned in the Historiography Catalogue were re-accessioned, without any explanation provided for the re-accessioning.⁹³ Coetzee could not fathom why Schiel had decided to renumber and recatalogue some objects. Schiel himself remarked that the markings and the numbers of the first three pages of the Historiography Catalogue caused some confusion. Objects were incorrectly numbered, and he also re-entered numbers that could not be distinguished. At a later stage he remarked that the confusion created by wrong entries had been corrected.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ For example, Historiography Catalogue, vol. 2, H.C. accession no. 5611, “Wafelpan van koper uit die vroeë tyd van die 18de eeu (omstreeks 1725). Verdere besonderhede het verlore gegaan”. [Copper waffle-iron dating from the early years of the 18th century (c. 1725). Further information is missing. (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

⁹¹ Ibid., H.C. accession no. 4759, souvenirs from Boer camp at Magersfontein.

⁹² For example, *ibid.*, H.C. accession no. 5499 (numbered 1 - 9), the uniform and accoutrements belonging to T.C. Robertson of the Voluntary Corps.

⁹³ For example, *ibid.*, H.C. accession no. 5149: original H.C. accession nos. 4369 - 4371: Windsor Castle. Two volumes plus accessory volume with maps & plans of castle.

⁹⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 6, 58 and 170.

Additional information about the objects was added from time to time, such as the condition of an item,⁹⁵ and the storage or display location.⁹⁶ When objects were donated under certain conditions, these were noted as part of the entry information.⁹⁷

The descriptions given by Schiel were evaluated at a later stage. For example, Schiel remarks that a porcelain washbasin probably belonged to the Voortrekkers, but a note was added in pencil saying that it was questionable to make this claim. Similarly, the description of a doll as wearing Voortrekker clothing was altered to a doll in the clothing of ca. 1875.⁹⁸

Parts of some pages were also left open, presumably so that information could be added at a later stage, as the word “reserved” is sometimes written in pencil.⁹⁹ No accessioning done, however, and those numbers were never allocated to an object.¹⁰⁰

This catalogue was regarded as a workbook even more so than volume 1, as there are numerous notes, cancellations, catchwords, and references to other entries (either in red and grey pencil, red ink or ball-point pen). Many of the accessions had been cancelled with a note that they had been sent to the Archives. There are instances where the original entry had been covered and replaced by a new entry.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ According to a pencilled note the photographs (ibid., H.C. accession no. 4764) were unfortunately in a bad condition.

⁹⁶ For example, the Botha objects on display in the leaf exhibition stand and the Botha showroom were listed. Ibid., pp. 55 - 63.

⁹⁷ For example, ibid., H.C. accession no. 5777: “Die Bybel en al die ander goed sal in die Museum bly as onverganklike erfpag vir die nageslagte. Die kleingeslag wat dit wil sien, kan dit in die museum gaan sien”; H.C. accession no. 5808: “Hierdie oudhede word geskenk deur Catherina Schutte, aan die Transvaalse Museum met dien verstande dat geen enkele stuk ooit uit die Museum uitgeleen sal word nie”. [The Bible and all the other objects will remain in the Museum as a legacy for future generations. The children who would like to see it, can go to the Museum. These antiques are being donated to the Transvaal Museum by Catherina Schutte, on condition that no piece will ever be loaned out by the Museum. (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

⁹⁸ Ibid., H.C. accession nos. 5247 and 5101.

⁹⁹ For example, ibid., H.C. accession nos. 5199 and 5238.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., H.C. accession nos. 5495 and 5496.

¹⁰¹ For example, ibid., H.C. accession no. 5595.

In volume 2 Schiel did the accessioning from numbers 4670 to 5663, but from 5190 to 5663 Malan and Coetzee did some of the work in between. The last object accessioned by Schiel is dated 30 November 1951, his very last day in Museum service. During his time at the Museum, Schiel had been engaged almost exclusively on cataloguing and recording material so that the director reported that the collection was in good order.¹⁰² This statement is belied by the numerous additions and corrections Coetzee found it necessary to make to Schiel's work. By 1952 it is reported that the work of re-cataloguing and annotating of material was more or less brought up to date and that Malan continued with the work after Schiel's resignation.¹⁰³ Malan accessioned numbers 5664 to 5857 in volume 2. This section of the catalogue contains less additions and alterations than the first.

Permanent accessions : Art collection

There was an art collection on display for many years, first at the Transvaal Museum and later at the Old Museum, Boom Street. The only stipulation for collecting was that works of art had to be of high aesthetic value. This rule was clarified further in the Art Catalogue.

Transvaal Museum

- Art Catalogue (A.C.)

According to a note by Rossouw the catalogue was "designated 'Art Catalogue' (A.C.) to contain a record of objects of art such as Oriental Porcelain, etc, European paintings etc. & S African Art – Paintings, Drawings, Furniture etc – in short the history of art". Also according to Rossouw, the catalogue was started by Radcliffe-Brown, who wrote the heading of the catalogue:

Numbers 1 to 319. Collection of Oriental Porcelain etc. presented
(anonymously) through Lt. General the Right Honourable J.C. Smuts.
8/vi/1918.

Rossouw added the name of the anonymous donor, Whitwell, and a chronological list of Chinese dynasties.

¹⁰² Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1950 - 1951, departmental report for division of history, pp. 31 - 32.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 1951 - 1952, p. 32.

Several pages have been torn out of the register so that the information about A.C. accession numbers 314 to 417 is missing,¹⁰⁴ as are the last few numbers in the Whitwell Collection and the objects accessioned by Rossouw, who made the next entries up to number 438. The next cataloguing was done ten years later in 1934 by A.J. Swierstra. Another ten years passed before Schiel and Malan continued the work.

Although Rossouw claimed that the Art Catalogue would contain a record of paintings, he also accessioned paintings and portraits in the Historiography Catalogue. Whether this was done before or after he worked in the Art Catalogue, is not clear.¹⁰⁵ Schiel re-accessioned the art collection, making the following note in the Historiography Catalogue: “All pictures are now numbered and entered in the Art Cat. See Index”.¹⁰⁶ Many years later (probably in the 1980s) some art works were again re-accessioned in the Historiography Catalogue, with the result that they may have at least two but even as many as three accession numbers.¹⁰⁷ The A.C. Catalogue also abounds with various notes and additions.

Permanent accessions : Numismatics collection

Staatsmuseum

The numismatics collection dates from the time of the Staatsmuseum, and in the first acquisitions entry register numbers 99 to 403 were allocated to coins and medals, including a complete set of coins minted at the Pretoria Mint. Nonetheless, there was no separate numismatics catalogue in the Staatsmuseum although the collection was one of the biggest in that Museum.

Transvaal Museum

- Coins and Medals Catalogue

The Coins and Medals Catalogue was probably started in 1913 after a decision by the

¹⁰⁴ It is possible to list missing A.C. accession numbers from sources such as the database of the National Cultural History Museum and Schiel's index and information book, but when or why these pages have been removed, is a mystery.

¹⁰⁵ For example, Historiography Catalogue, vol. 1, H.C. accession nos. 859 to 874.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁰⁷ For example, the painting by F.J. Oerder, *Bloedronken*, A.C. accession no. 419, Historiography Catalogue, vol. 21, H.C. accession no. 18046 and vol. T14, H.C. accession no. 32733.

Museum Committee to take the cataloguing of this collection in hand.¹⁰⁸ The headings for the columns (No., Country, King, etc., Year, Description, How received and Remarks) and the information are in English. There are 2 321 accessions, with almost no indication of the method of procurement. There is also no indication of code letters used for this catalogue.

The catalogue made provision for coins, medals and medallions.¹⁰⁹ There must have been some attempt to sort the collection into coins and medals of a particular country, such as the English coins.¹¹⁰ Other countries represented were Portugal, Spain, France, Holland, Japan, Brazil and Austria. This catalogue often contains only the most basic information on some coins, for example, for accession numbers 641 - 656 the words “Japan Different Copper Coins” and “Different Coins” are written vertically in the “Country” column, with no other information (figure 31). From accession number 1967 the style of accessioning appears to have changed and contains more detailed descriptions, some given in Dutch.¹¹¹

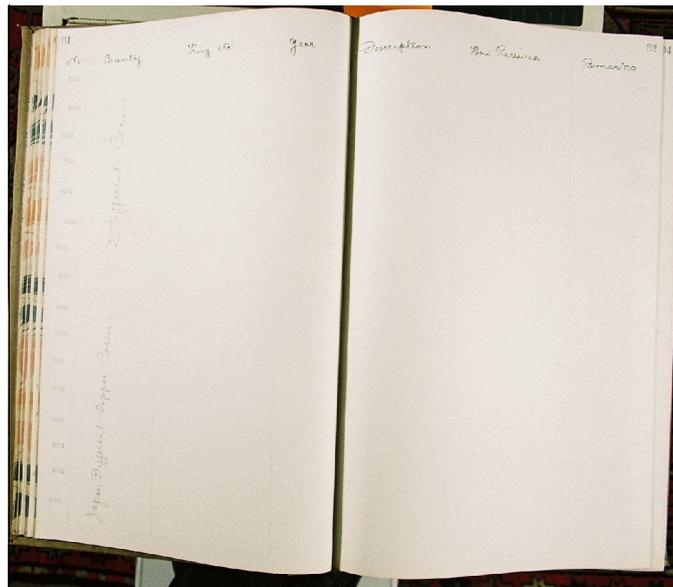


Figure 31

Page from the Coins and Medals Catalogue with hardly any information at all

¹⁰⁸ Transvaal Museum Committee minutes, meeting 15 July 1913.

¹⁰⁹ A medallion is called a “gedenkpenning” or a “legpenning” in Dutch in the acquisition entry registers and catalogues.

¹¹⁰ For example, accessions nos. 1 to 167 refer to coins from England and accession nos. 1589 to 1612 to British medals.

¹¹¹ For example, accession no. 2146, “Belooningspenning voor Doctoren en Chirurgen die meer dan 100 personen in een jaar ingeënt hebben” [Medal given as reward to doctors and surgeons who vaccinated more than 100 persons in one year. (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

At least until 1919, and probably much later, there was nobody at the Museum who understood anything about numismatics¹¹² or who dealt with the collections management of the numismatics collection. For 20 years or more no cataloguing for numismatics was done at the Transvaal Museum and the above catalogue was apparently forgotten. As the director in 1939 said, there was no catalogue in existence nor anything on record that showed how the original collection was acquired.¹¹³ It is probably for this reason that a new catalogue was opened.

- Numismatics Catalogue (Nu.)

According to a note, on the first page of volume 1, the catalogue was begun in February 1939 by Haughton. She was appointed in the archaeology division, but she also worked with objects in the ethnology, history and philately collections. Probably prior to or simultaneously with the accessioning, the numismatics collection had to be identified. Very few difficulties were experienced with the modern coins, but the ancient coins took a great deal of research. Even with the use of reference books not all coins could be identified beyond doubt. The project took two full years.¹¹⁴ The catalogue appears to have been intended mainly for items included in the usual definition of numismatics, including medals,¹¹⁵ but objects falling outside this category have also been accessioned, such as a badge, a seal and a ticket.¹¹⁶

- Volume 1

The first part of the catalogue contains the re-accessioning of an already classified and ordered numismatics collection, starting with Abyssinia (Nu. accession no. 1). As is the case with all other registers, coins and medals that have already been accessioned in the Coins and Medals Catalogue were not only re-accessioned in the Numismatics Catalogue,

¹¹² NCHMA, Letterbook 5, letter Breijer to T. Parks, dd 22 October 1919.

¹¹³ Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees minutes, meeting 20 April 1939.

¹¹⁴ E.J. Haughton, A plea for a wider numismatic interest in our museums, *SAMAB*, 2(16), December 1942, p. 404.

¹¹⁵ Numismatics is the study, science and collecting of coins, paper money, tokens, and related items with a relevance to currency, but also includes medals, orders and decorations that are produced by a minting process.

¹¹⁶ G. Balkwill, "Subdivision of items between Numismatics (Nu) and Miscellaneous Collection (Misc.)" (unpublished report), p. 1.

but the descriptions were also changed to standardized numismatics terminology. For example, compare the description “Spain, Isabella II 1833 - 1869, 1862, 25c de Real” in the Coins and Medals Catalogue, accession no. 249, with the new description for the same Spanish real:

Numismatics Catalogue, Nu. accession no. 859

UN-CILO

25-cent piece (copper) (1^{1/16} diam.)

Obverse: Bust to the right crowned with a laurel wreath and also surrounded by “ISABEL 2A POR LA G. DE DOIS Y LA CONST.” (“1862”)

Exerque: “L.M.”

Reverse: Coat-of-arms flanked by two sprays of laurel leaves and surmounted by crown. Figure below coat-of-arms. Whole surrounded by: REINA DE LAS ESPANAS.”

“UN C^{ILLO}” “25 CENT DE REAL.”

Edge plain

Spain Isabella II, 1833 - 1868

- Volumes 2 and 3

Accessions up to no. 3115 were done by Haughton, presumably until her resignation on 31 May 1946. No further work was done in these volumes until Versfeld was appointed in 1951. Because she resigned in November 1953, and was re-appointed in September 1954, it is difficult to ascertain when she began accessioning.¹¹⁷ Both old and more recent acquisitions were accessioned. In 1940 an outstanding donation, that formed a magnificent addition to the numismatics collection, was bequeathed to the Transvaal Museum by J. de Villiers Roos. The collection was identified, catalogued and many coins incorporated in the collection.¹¹⁸

The Numismatics Catalogue was also regarded as a workbook and numerous notes and changes appear. One of the most significant alterations in the catalogues pertains to the number of coins or notes in the numismatics collection. For example, the original Nu. accession no. 2065 consisted of two £1 bank notes. In the catalogue the number two had

¹¹⁷ G. Balkwill, “Subdivision of items between Numismatics (Nu) and Miscellaneous Collection (Misc.)” (unpublished report), p. 2.

¹¹⁸ Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1940 - 1941, p. 3. By incorporate was meant that the coins were given the same accession number as similar coins already accessioned.

been deleted. The numbers five and six had been entered and were also deleted, and the present number is ten. This means that there are ten similar £1 notes from different donations or sources in the collection. Additional sub-numbers had also been added, as were the previous accession numbers (figure 32). These changes comply with the general practice not to accession new, but similar acquisitions and the existing accession number is used. Duplicate coins or notes in the collections were exchanged for others to fill shortages. When or where the practice of “ non-cataloguing” started, is difficult to establish.

- Numismatics Presentation Catalogue (P.C.)

According to the heading on the flyleaf, this catalogue contained coins and medals presented to the Transvaal Museum. As usual, donations stock-piled over many years were at last catalogued, the very first accession dating back to 1928 and the second one dating from 1914. An alphabetical numbering system was used, from Aa, Ab, etc. to Ck., with the letter code P.C. The last accession is dated 1945.

The presentation collection was catalogued by Haughton in 1940 and comprised 733 pieces.¹¹⁹ In 1941 a policy decision was taken to incorporate all presentation collections into the general numismatics collection. In the past the policy has been to keep the two separate, but as this system has been found unsatisfactory, the presentation coins had to be given numbers and incorporated into the general collection.¹²⁰ In a few instances this fact was noted in the catalogue.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 1939 - 1940, departmental report for archaeology, ethnology, numismatics and philately, p. 2.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 1941 - 1942, departmental report for archaeology, p. 3.

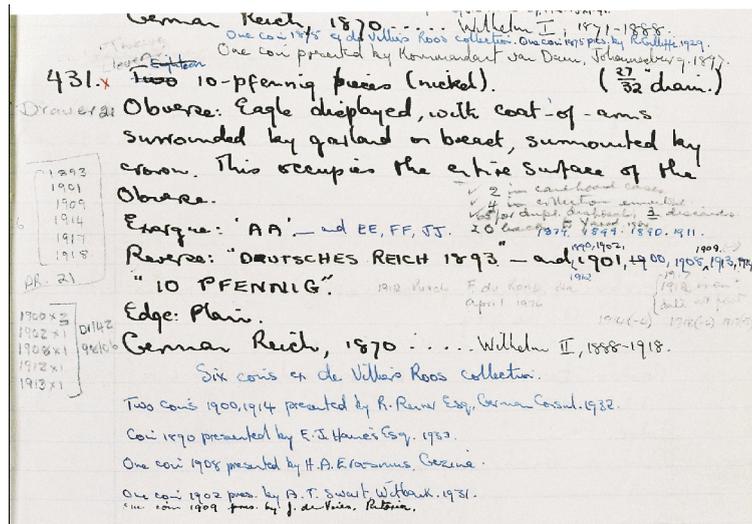


Figure 32

Page from the Numismatics Catalogue, showing the process of “non-cataloguing”

Permanent accessions : Kruger Collection

Transvaal Museum

The Kruger Collection was first recognized as a cataloguing unit by Rossouw who wrote the following remark in the Historiography Catalogue:

Specimens 1064 - 2015 are with reference to Pres. Kruger (“Kruger Collection”) & other Historical Figures.

Die Kruger Kolleksie van Dordrecht ontvang”.¹²¹ [The Kruger Collection received from Dordrecht.]

Clearly the objects received from the Zuid-Afrikaansch Museum were the starting point for cataloguing the Kruger Collection, which Rossouw sorted into five categories and accessioned in the Historiography Catalogue. At this stage this Kruger/Dordrecht Collection did not include objects associated with Kruger already in the Museum’s collection prior to the arrival of the Dordrecht Collection or received afterwards.¹²²

- Kruger Catalogue (Kr.)

¹²¹ Historiography Catalogue, vol. 1, p. 77.

¹²² For example, *ibid.*, H.C. accession no. 5 (a medallion in relief of President S.J.P. Kruger) and H.C. accession no. 2564 (framed photograph of a painting of President Kruger).

- Volume 1

Perhaps with a view to consolidating all the Kruger objects, Schiel opened a new Kruger Catalogue, probably in the late 1940s. This abounds with notes and explanations of Schiel's activities and is almost impossible to understand or to analyse. He first wrote a note on the various presidential elections in which Kruger was involved and then provided an explanation (Afrikaans: *Kataloog 'n Skets en verduideliking*) in which he set down his interpretation of the President's intentions: "Ek probeer my in die gedagtegang van hom as president te verdiep en rangskik die boeke wat die versameling bevat, daarin [daarom?]"¹²³ He also wrote notes on the demise and funeral of the President and the genealogy of the Kruger family.

He started the new catalogue with an exposition (he called it an index), of the groups in which the objects were placed. There are 109 groups in total. These groups relate to a variety of subjects and objects such as President Kruger in France, religion and poetry, music, framed portraits and flags. The package/parcel numbers and corresponding catalogue numbers with which each group commences are provided. He used the code letters K.A.C., an abbreviation for Kruger Section No. C. (Afrikaans: *Kruger Afdeling No. C*). The catalogue proper starts with Group 1, K.A.C. no. 1a. Up to accession no. 278 the code K.A.C. was definitely used, as indicated by Schiel at the top of the margin, but where and when the code Kr. was introduced, is not known. The corresponding H.C. (and later HKF) numbers are given in a column from accession number 241 to 776. This section ends with a group of objects called "Los" [loose, unsorted].¹²⁴ Then follow 15 pages (of which 10 appear to have been cut out), which were reserved for additional objects. Schiel noted "Hierdie 15 bl. bly as 'n reserwe vir nog Kr. eksemplare wat mag inkom. In die geval met B805, – B meen Bygekom. Uitstallings begin met 805 sonder die B".¹²⁵ This means that accession numbers 805 - 838 were preceded by the letter B, and presumably these objects were marked as such. Most of them were donated in the years 1951 - 1953, and were therefore catalogued by Schiel and Malan. As usual objects donated previously and not

¹²³ [I try to become engrossed in the thoughts of the President and to arrange the books in the collection appropriately. (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

¹²⁴ Kr. accession nos. 797 - 804.

¹²⁵ [These 15 pages remain as a reserve for objects associated with Kruger that may still be acquired. In the case of B805, B means "added": displays begin with 805 without the B.] (Translated from the Afrikaans.)]

entered at the time, were simply “found”.¹²⁶ In the catalogue some B’s have been deleted.

The next section of the catalogue is devoted to the displays in the Kruger House, starting with Schiel’s “Voorbeskrywing”. [An introduction about the master bedroom]. The objects in the rest of the house are accessioned room by room, cupboard by cupboard, corridor by corridor, on stands and in the outbuildings, up to Kr. accession no. 1119.

The numbering of the first part of this section poses a problem because Schiel started numbering with accession no. 805, the consecutive number following the previous accession (and omitting the B numbers). In practice this means that there were two Kruger objects with the same number, one with and one without a B. At a later stage a decision must have been taken, probably by Malan, that the B numbers should hold good. The result was that the numbers 805 to 838 were deleted and replaced by the numbers 1121 to 1154. This juggling with the numbers is almost impossible to comprehend, but a copious note to explain it was compiled, and it is indicated in the catalogue.¹²⁷ In practice this means that there are objects that were accessioned in the Historiography Catalogue and two Kr accession numbers were allocated to one object.¹²⁸

Permanent accessions : Historical photograph collection

Transvaal Museum

- P. Cat.¹²⁹

According to a decision made by the Museum Committee in 1913,¹³⁰ the photograph collection was to be taken in hand, catalogued and arranged in albums. The photographs were in fact mounted in albums (figure 33),¹³¹ and catalogued in a so-called P. Cat. This catalogue has only 35 entries, including some photographs that were donated to the

¹²⁶ For example, accession no. B836, 42 documents in a file, were found in a photograph cupboard in office no. 2 on 30 October 1952.

¹²⁷ Kruger Catalogue, vol. 1, p. 148.

¹²⁸ For example, a framed portrait of General de Wet was accessioned as Historiography Catalogue, vol.1, H.C. accession no.1390 and Kruger Catalogue, vol. 1, Kr. accession nos. 815 and 1131.

¹²⁹ The P. Cat is in the same volume as the HKF Catalogue.

¹³⁰ Transvaal Museum Committee meeting, minutes 15 July 1913.

¹³¹ At present (2005) these albums are still extant.

Staatsmuseum. Of particular interest to the history of the Staatsmuseum are photographs of the laying of the foundation stone of the new museum building in Boom Street, a corner in the Staatsmuseum on Market Square, and models of ships in the Museum. Reference to the H.C., E.E. and Eth. catalogues are given where relevant.

After accession no. 33 a note explains that the catalogue was continued under the directorship of Breijer in 1914, but only two accessions were made in 1918. These are photographs and plates of ticks and a portrait of Sir Lowry Cole. There is an annotation indicating that the catalogue was discontinued and that the Historiography Catalogue should be consulted instead.

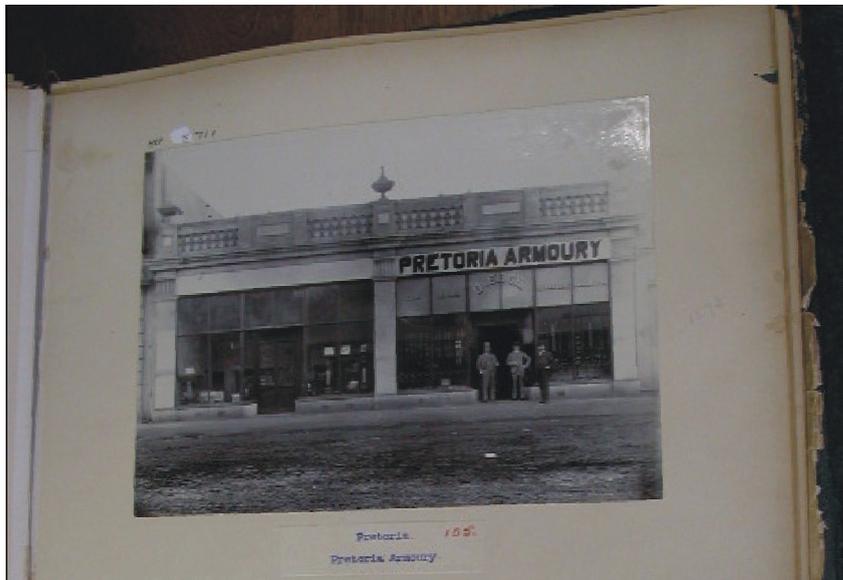


Figure 33a

Page in album showing photograph of a street scene in Pretoria, with typed caption

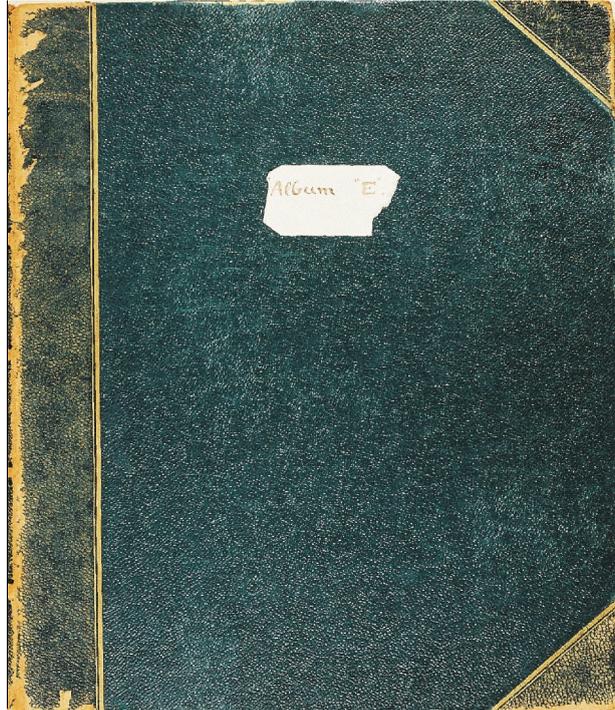


Figure 33b

The photograph collection was mounted in albums in 1913

Permanent accessions : Philately collection

Staatsmuseum

There are two stamp albums in the National Cultural History Museum that were made for the Staatsmuseum with the designation “Postzegelverzameling van het Staatsmuseum der Z.A.R.”. The first volume contains a collection of eight pages of stamps. Whether these stamps formed part of the small philately collection at the Staatsmuseum, or whether they were specially collected and prepared for the ZAR pavilion at the international exhibition in Paris in 1900, is impossible to say at this stage. They were on display in Paris. The collection consists of fiscal stamps of the ZAR, and the accompanying text is written in French. After the exhibition the album formed part of the so-called Dordrecht Collection that was returned to South Africa in 1921.¹³²

¹³² M. Esterhuysen, “From the collection of the National Cultural History and Open-Air Museum, Pretoria, South Africa” (unpublished article), p. 1; S. Brink, Die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek se deelname aan die Internasionale Tentoonstelling in 1900 in Parys, Frankryk, *Navorsing deur die Nasionale Kultuurhistoriese*

Although the one album (volume 2) is empty, the Postmaster-General of the ZAR presented the Staatsmuseum with a collection of unused stamps and other philatelic material from the various countries that were part of the Universal Postal Union.¹³³

Transvaal Museum

The philately collection had never been accessioned, in other words an accession number was not allocated to each stamp, either at the Staatsmuseum or at the Transvaal Museum, and therefore there is no catalogue for this collection. In exceptional cases only was a Historiography (H.C.) accession number allocated to a philatelic item.

Loans

Transvaal Museum

Even in Gunning's time loans had already been accepted for the Transvaal Museum.¹³⁴ Both loans-in and loans-out were regarded as standard museum practice.

- Loans-in

There is evidence that there were objects at the Museum on loan for considerable periods. Two bronze statuettes that were in the Museum from 1911 to 1955 are a case in point.¹³⁵ Loans were not accepted during the First World War, Breijer maintaining that the public tended to regard the Museum as a cheap storage place.¹³⁶ Swierstra also agreed that it was not museum policy to safeguard objects for members of the public.¹³⁷ He was adamant that a loan could only be accepted by the Museum for a period of at least five years, because he argued that the Museum could not keep objects for people who had the right to take them away at their convenience.¹³⁸

Museum, vol 2: 4, 1992, p. 132.

¹³³ Staatsmuseum Acquisitions entry register, vol. 2, acquisition no. 22 dd 16 February 1898.

¹³⁴ NCHMA, Box 515, TM5/8, loan acceptance, Gunning to J. Oudhoff, dd 15 April 1910.

¹³⁵ Transvaal Board of Trustees minutes, meeting 17 August 1939. The Board decided not to buy the statuettes as they were not regarded as museum specimens. According to Dutch loan certificate no. 5 they were bought by the firm Braak in 1955.

¹³⁶ NCHMA, Letterbook 2, letter Breijer to M. Burgers, dd 22 October 1917.

¹³⁷ Ibid., System 1 No 3 TM1/31 - TM1/33 letter Swierstra to D.J. Geysers, dd 14 September 1931.

¹³⁸ Ibid., Box 137, TM18/35, letter Swierstra to W. H. Neethling, dd 2 September 1935.

A policy was followed that all objects that were left in the Museum on loan for a period of more than 30 years automatically become the property of the Museum,¹³⁹ but this was not always applied consistently, as in the above case of the bronze statuettes. There are also cases where the objects that were in the Museum for an extended period were eventually given back to the lender, as happened with the Musschenbroek paintings that were returned in 1952.¹⁴⁰

The so-called permanent loan, in itself a contradiction in terms, was also used at the Transvaal Museum. One of the earliest loans accepted by the Museum as “permanent loan” was a collection of 16th and 17th century arms and armour, comprising back and breast plates, skullcaps, plaquets and secretes, arm pieces and gauntlets, helmets and lances from the Royal Armouries at the Tower of London in 1920, that remains in the National Cultural History Museum to this day. The loan, although not solicited by the Transvaal Museum, was accepted by Breijer on 7 December 1920.¹⁴¹ The objects were regarded as being a permanent part of the collection and were given accession numbers.¹⁴²

Formal documents for the loan of objects from private individuals or institutions (the lender)¹⁴³ to the Museum were prepared in the form of numbered loan certificates (figure 34). The certificate had two parts, i.e.

- a stub that remained in the loans register that gave details on the name and address of the lender, the date, description of the article on loan, and other particulars about the loan,

¹³⁹ Ibid., System 1 No 3 TM1/31 - TM1/34, letter Swierstra to J.M. Martins, dd 12 March 1931.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., System 1 No 6 TM1 /52 - 1/53, note with regard to the return of four paintings by the Transvaal Museum to the lender, dated 2 August 1952.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., Department of collections management, loans-in file 7/1/3/2, Tower of London, letter director to curator, Office of the Armouries, dd 7 December 1920 and reply, dd 17 February 1921 and Issue of arms and armour on permanent loan to the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.

¹⁴² See Historiography Catalogue, vol.1, H.C. accession nos. 2973 - 3088.

¹⁴³ See glossary.

- the certificate, on which the director of the Transvaal Museum acknowledged the receipt of the objects on loan to the Museum from the lender, with the proviso that the objects remained the property of the lender and could be taken back by him/her or a legal representative on presentation of the certificate.

Loans that had been returned to the owner were sometimes treated in a more informal manner with a handwritten receipt by the lender.¹⁴⁴ There are also instances where a note was made in the catalogue that the object had been returned to the owner, and often this was done many years after the loan object had been accessioned.¹⁴⁵

There were two loan registers, one in Dutch and one in English, both with 100 certificates. The registers were used from 1911 to 1961 and 64 certificates were issued, of which 15 loans were returned with the loan certificate, and 10 loans without the certificate. Many of the loans were for an indefinite period, for example, a judge's cloak, loaned by J.A. Denyssen on 2 May 1913, on the issue of English loan certificate no.12. The loans were sometimes given an acquisition number, for example, Dutch loan certificate no. 28: acquisition no. 4607. On other occasions they were given an accession number, for example, English loan certificate no. 17: H.C. 4246 - 4248.

¹⁴⁴ Four paintings that were exhibited in the Museum for many years were received by the artist E. Musschenbroek by means of a handwritten note. The accession numbers were also given. NCHMA, System 1 No 6 TM1/52 - 1/53, receipt, signed E. van Musschenbroek, dd 2 August 1952.

¹⁴⁵ For example, Historiography Catalogue, vol. 2, H.C. accession no. 5622.

LOAN CERTIFICATE. 22 TRANSVAAL MUSEUM. 22

CERTIFICATE.

The undersigned, in his capacity as Director of the Transvaal Museum, acknowledges to have received on loan from _____

Director, Transvaal Museum.

Pretoria, _____

The above-mentioned article remains the property of _____ and can be taken back at any time by ^{her}him or ^{her}his legal representative on the return of this Certificate.

P.O. Box 413. Posbus 413. Telephone 2-8801. Telefoon 422



TRANSVAAL MUSEUM,
PRETORIA, 23rd August, 1940.

Received from the
Transvaal Museum: 1 Pestle &
Mortar, Acq. No. 2464, which
was lent to the Museum
5 years ago by Mr. A. J. Kruger,
Provincial Administrator's Office, Pretoria.

(Sgd.) A. J. Kruger

Figure 34

Example of loan certificate with stub on the left (top)
and handwritten return of loan (below)

The objects borrowed by the Transvaal Museum from the University of Pretoria, such as the Nel-Blom and Mapungubwe Collections, were handled differently.

- The Nel-Blom Collection

This Collection was loaned to the Transvaal Museum by the University of Pretoria in 1934.¹⁴⁶ The catalogue used by the University¹⁴⁷(nos. 1 to 252) was rewritten by A.J. Swierstra in a new catalogue at the Transvaal Museum.¹⁴⁸ It had a note to the effect that those numbers also had the code “Nel U.P.” on the objects themselves and correspond with the University catalogue. This means that there was a clear distinction between the ET. accessions nos.1 to 252 in the Main Catalogue of the Department of Ethnology Africa and the Nel U.P. loan numbers 1 to 252. Numbers. 34:425 to 432 was added to both catalogues by Beukes at a later stage. Part of the collection was stored and part was put on display.¹⁴⁹ This is an example of objects on loan which were given accession numbers in a catalogue used for permanent accessions.

The inventory compiled by Beukes was tabled at the meeting of the Board of Trustees and approved.¹⁵⁰ The collection (except the items listed) was returned to the University in 1952. The return of the loan was signed by the University and the Transvaal Museum in both catalogues.¹⁵¹

- Mapungubwe Collection

Probably the most important loan effected by the Transvaal Museum was the Mapungubwe material from the University of Pretoria.¹⁵² The Museum and the University agreed to

¹⁴⁶ This is a collection of ethnological objects from the Pietpotgietersrust district, received by the University of Pretoria from M.C. de Wet Nel and Maria Blom. Transvaal Museum Committee minutes, meeting 8 June 1934.

¹⁴⁷ The catalogue used by the University of Pretoria, had the following heading “Universiteit van Pretoria. Dept. van Bantoeïstiek Etnografiese Versameling” to indicate the Nel-Blom collection and other objects in the ethnology collection of the University. The collection was donated and returned to the National Cultural History Museum in 1997.

¹⁴⁸ Catalogue used for the Nel-Blom Collection and collecting done by Dr W.T.H. Beukes.

¹⁴⁹ Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1934 - 1935, departmental report for ethnology, p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees minutes, meeting 8 August 1952.

¹⁵¹ The University catalogue includes a note to the effect that the Nel-Blom objects were given back to the University, signed by A.J. Janse as acting director of the Transvaal Museum, dd 15 October 1952. In the Beukes Catalogue a pasted typewritten note acknowledges receipt of the objects, with a few exceptions, signed by the Head of the Department of Ethnology, Prof. P.J. Coertze, dd 16 October 1952.

¹⁵² Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees minutes, meetings 22 August 1935, 9 April 1948 and 7 May 1948.

collaborate on this project,¹⁵³ the Museum promising to provide accommodation (both exhibition and storage space) for the material.¹⁵⁴ Although the Museum did not hold itself responsible for theft or fire, it promised take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of the collection.¹⁵⁵

Exchanges

Although exchanges were not often undertaken at the Transvaal Museum, the practice was not unknown. In 1937 Beukes acquired an ornament from a private person in exchange for a marala.¹⁵⁶ In 1941 a collection of Australian native implements was received from the Australian Museum, Sydney in exchange for a collection of South African stone implements.¹⁵⁷ A third example is the exchange, in 1949, of duplicate music items, in response to a request by [F.Z.?] van der Merwe.¹⁵⁸ Duplicate coins were also exchanged for coins that would fill gaps in the numismatics collection. This appears to have been an accepted practice in museums, as they “advertised” their wares for exchange in *SAMAB*. The Africana Museum, for example, wanted to exchange duplicate coins and medals for Africana material of an approximately equivalent value.¹⁵⁹

Marking

The value of the acquisition number is that it links the acquisition, i.e. either one object or a group or collection of objects, to the information in the acquisitions entry register. At the Staatsmuseum and the Transvaal Museum this was not a permanent number and has in many cases been lost. The way in which acquisition numbers were marked on the objects is not clear, but it was probably done by means of an acquisition stamp, if that was possible, or otherwise a label, on which the accession number was sometimes noted (figure 35).

¹⁵³ Ibid., 20 October 1933.

¹⁵⁴ Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1935 - 1936, p. 5.

¹⁵⁵ Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees minutes, meeting 28 Augustus 1933.

¹⁵⁶ Accession no. 37/196.

¹⁵⁷ Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1941 - 1942, departmental report for archaeology, ethnology, numismatics and philately, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees minutes, meeting dd 11 November 1949.

¹⁵⁹ See for example, notice, Material for disposal, *SAMAB*, 2(5), September 1940, p. 130.



Figure 35a

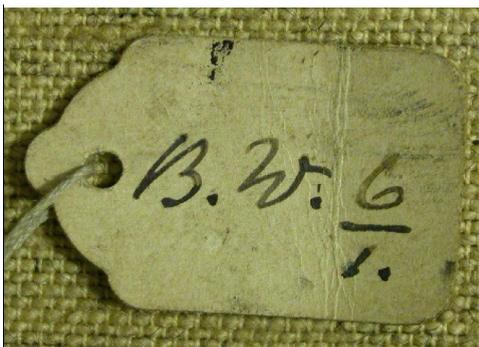


Figure 35b

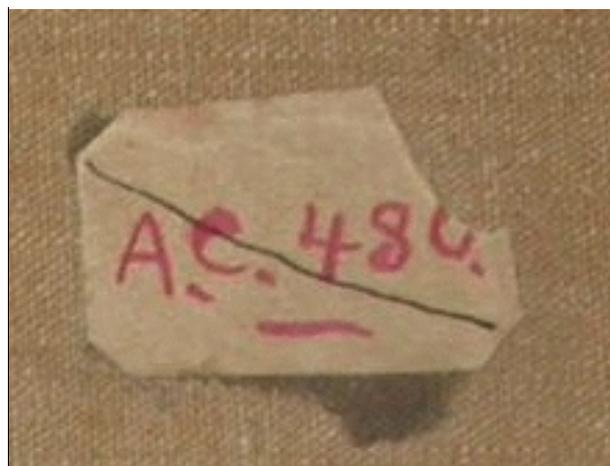


Figure 35c