

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

LAURELS, LIONS AND LIMBO 1932-1936

1 THEILER DID NOT boggle the question of his return to South Africa. 'As yet', he wrote du Toit, 'I have no intention to come back and some day I will tell you the reason.' Du Toit had no need to be told. While 'Kemp still ruled', he would not return.

2 Theiler was one of the best-informed men in all fields inside and outside the Union. Du Toit's
3 own staff wrote him constantly. Those implicated in the Theiler/Green programme such as Avril Malan, Gilles de Kock, A. O. D. Thomas, Murray and others, showed their letters to him before despatch. So did Bisschop who, in his clear miniscule hand, wrote a 34-page letter report on his five-year experiments at Armoedsvlakte with their interesting conclusions on the best methods of cattle rearing and his own heretical ideas. Breeding from the best imported stock resulted only in degeneration, he said; it were best to breed up from acclimatised indigenous animals. Theiler also received du Toit's version of his own famous 'Reports'. They now appeared in two massive volumes at a time, despite financial stringency, and described in great detail the work being done. Old hands at O.P. wrote him on their own account and many called at Lucerne to give him their unrecorded impressions, particularly of the fierce domestic politics which, as elsewhere in the world, were endemic in a large institution. Extra-mural friends - his scientific cronies in the Biological Society and free lances, contributed further details. They
4 spoke well of du Toit - 'You have made a fine choice of that man', one wrote him, 'he commands respect and seems to get things done by Kemp.'

5 Kemp exemplified the aggressive surge towards Afrikaner dominance. Pretoria was reft
6 by controversy over the proposal to make its University exclusively Afrikaans-speaking. Theiler was glad he had refused the rectorship in 1921 and was no longer in the country. Paradoxically the Imperial connection remained live and generously beneficent. The stately Library contributed by the Empire Marketing Board to Onderstepoort was opened in October 1932 by the Earl of Clarendon in the presence of Cabinet Ministers and dignitaries and remained a striking feature ever after. Du Toit spoke wittily and well at the ceremony, fittingly remembering Theiler. He had much cause to be grateful to the Board. Its Fellows were doing good work at O.P., particularly Claude Rimington, 'a really first-class chemist'. He and his staff were stunned some months later when Britain's new National Government under Ramsay Macdonald showed no
7 enthusiasm for continuing inspired development and, in Amery's words, after the Ottawa Commonwealth Conference in July/August-1932, 'Neville Chamberlain and J. H. Thomas decided to wind up the Empire Marketing Board'. Its wholesome presence departed from
8 Onderstepoort and the Union, also deeply afflicted by the Great Depression, could not afford to maintain all its valuable Fellows.

To Theiler, South Africa was uncongenial in every way. While his friends and earliest proponents remained in the political wilderness, watching the promotion of unilateral aims, he had
9 no urge to return - but the old longing remained. Gertrud, holding his power of attorney and his agent in all things (including the determination of South African death duties) was constantly reminded to ensure that his membership of the Pretoria Club did not lapse. 'We hope
10 to come back one day', he wrote, 'and it is even my wish to die in the country in which I have worked so long and for which I have given the best of my life!' Conditions were unpropitious but du Toit, mindful of the old man's continuing contribution to veterinary science, went on
11 with the experiments which he and Green had planned. Green was in direct communication with Malan whom du Toit had appointed in charge and in long letters, du Toit told Theiler

of progress. He told him to how R. A. Alexander had applied Max's discovery to Horse Sickness and had succeeded in transmitting the disease to mice by intro-cerebral injection. As much as Max was working toward refining the process that would produce a vaccine immunising humans against Yellow Fever, Alexander was using mouse-brain tissue in the same manner to produce a vaccine against Horse Sickness. Neither had yet attained their ends; but Theiler, in 12 Paris in February for the ceremonious 25th anniversary of the Societ  de Pathologie Exotique (when he was himself done much honour) was gratified to note how well the French knew and honoured his son.

13 The formation of a Coalition Government in South Africa gave hope that conditions might change and in his manner, Theiler made long-range plans to attend the International Veterinary Conference in New York in 1934 and then visit the Union. They absolved Emma from establishing a permanent home anywhere. She was occupied with typing and re-typing the 75 pages of his three lectures for London University. She would consider London when he gave them in 14 March. They would now get more for their South African money in English pounds than in Swiss francs.

Theiler was never merely a name in the scientific world nor, like some of its luminaries, content to appear on a didactic platform simply to confer the honour of his presence. He (and Emma) agonised over his London lectures on the structure and physiology of the bone and its 15 pathological afflictions through mineral deficiencies. He gave them on the 20th, 21st and 23rd March 1933 and Green, who was in close attendance throughout his visit, 'was very pleased'. They were reported in the scientific journals which also recorded his ad hoc assignments including addressing (with Green) a meeting of the Comparative Pathology Section of the Royal Society of Medicine in the Wigmore Hall and, again with Green, a meeting of the Hunterian Society. They enjoyed great interest and success. It was in fact a tour de force and Theiler's 16 heart was further gladdened to find when visiting his colleagues that Max 'had a very good name among them'. At the Lister Institute, one accosted him with 'So your son has beaten you and has the bigger name!' The lure of New York grew larger.

17 Frederick Hobday who had obtained his doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at Zurich, became the King's Veterinary Surgeon and was now the principal of the Royal Veterinary College at Camden Town, took Theiler under his wing. The old man attended the dinner celebrating his knighthood and in due course, discussed with him the proposal to continue his bone work in London. Hobday, largely occupied with collecting funds to enlarge his College, offered him 18 a room, equipment and assistance. Theiler accepted. All was going remarkably well. He saw much of Green who was happy at the Weybridge Bureau of Animal Health (du Toit was unable 19 to accommodate him at Onderstepoort except as a junior chemist at a low salary) and they would be able to continue their co peration. There was even a calm Channel crossing on their return to Switzerland. They decided to transfer to London.

With the restlessness that increasingly characterised his remaining years, Theiler had booked in London an elaborate four-week Mediterranean tour, somewhat determined by a promise made to Professor S. Adler of Jerusalem University (previously known to Gertrud at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine) whom he had met in Paris and London, to lecture on Nutrition. As usual he took advantage of every stop to call on his colleagues and visit their institutions with intermittent sightseeing - Venice, Brindisi, Athens, Rhodes, Cyprus and then Palestine which they extensively toured before Adler took them in charge in Jerusalem where they were propelled into the attention of Chaim Weizmann, himself a famous scientist, at a reception. Similarly involved in social occasions was the well-known South African writer, Sarah Gertrude 20 Millin with whom they hardly had time to exchange a word. They resented 'losing half a day' on such frivolities and after Theiler had given his 'very well attended lecture', went by train to

21 Egypt. In Cairo, he resumed his friendship with Piot Bey of the Veterinary School and Carpano of the Laboratories before doing a Nile trip. On the 3rd May they were back in Lucerne in good order. 'Sunshine and dry air', said Emma significantly, 'seem to be necessary to our health.' Die ewige Päckerei again loomed – on a drastic scale.

22 The upheaval was fundamental. Living in Switzerland did not agree with them ('I always felt a stranger there', Emma confessed to her children) and they would never return except to visit. Of the accumulated treasures of their lives, only a few were still in South Africa. The mass was at Lucerne and its disposal cost them dearly in feeling and finance. Emma collected all Arnold's publications for presentation to the Swiss State Library at Berne which had long requested them. Arnold collected his runs of scientific journals and other veterinary works and presented them

23 to the Weybridge Bureau of Animal Health where 'The Theiler Collection' (very gratefully acknowledged by the parent Imperial Agricultural Bureaux) remains in honour. Other sections of his library went appropriately to the Berne Botanical Institute, his Cantonschul, Alfred (works on Chemistry), Max and the girls (specifically standard works, subsequently valuable Africana such as Cory, Theal, Wilman, etc). Emma made a mock of Pa clinging to his books and papers but in the 11 cases and 2 trunks she sent to South Africa, there figured among his decorations and their family possessions, her own ancient sewing machine.

24 The sorting and packing went on for weeks and tried them severely. Visitors from O.P. came and went. On the 17th May, a General Election was held in South Africa in deep depression and the Coalition Party was returned. The Theilers doubted whether Smuts and Hertzog could work together. (When the Cabinet was announced, the hated Kemp was still Minister of Agriculture under Hertzog as Prime Minister. Smuts was now Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice.) They were disturbed too by events alongside in Germany – the upstart Adolf Hitler had become Chancellor and assumed dictatorial powers. Jews were being persecuted and their businesses boycotted, Trade Unions were suppressed, the 'Storm Troopers' were viciously active. Some of Arnold's closest scientific colleagues must nolens volens be involved. Much

26 though he wanted to consult them before he resumed his bone work, he now refused to go to Germany. In South Africa, scepticism prevailed about 'alleged atrocities'. Almost alone,

27 Sarah Gertrude Millin warned from public platforms what impended. The brunt of the work and worry fell on Emma. While Arnold resumed his old 'hobby' of pursuing ornithology with new friends and preparing a valedictory address to the Swiss Veterinary Society, Emma, assisted by the mournful Lina, ordered the disposal and packing of all their goods and undertook the tedious task of advising the hundreds of Arnold's connections of change of address. While all went well with Margaret (more hockey honours) and Gertrud in South Africa, her poor pechvogel in Boston sank into further trouble. Eleanor was now bed-ridden and could no longer maintain Hans' household. Both his salary and his strength were inadequate to demand and Max, over-worked and distracted by moving into a new house, went to Boston to help him while his parents did what they could. The problem of Hans oscillated from one crisis to another. It was long before Eleanor got better but domestic help was found.

28 Then Hans was carried off to hospital for an operation on a streptococcal abscess in his neck which could have been fatal. Emma's ordeal ended on the 15th September 1933 when they left the Lucerne flat and a weeping Lina to begin a month of farewell and study visits. Arnold had spoken for two hours at Zurich on 'A Veterinarian travelling round the World' for the benefit of his Swiss confrères and found it too short. Now, based on Berne where he worked from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the University's Pathological Department and travelled constantly to other centres, he 'brought himself up to date' in customary manner. His colleagues in Lausanne, unwarned of his visit, did him honour. At Geneva, Professor Askenazy of the Pathological Institute gave useful in-

29 formation. At Basle, his counterpart Professor G. Senn, an old friend, likewise. In Switzerland itself, his lectures and publications had so far captivated his colleagues that he had no difficulty in persuading Burgi's successor, Burri to collect specimens of supposed cases of Rickets for him to analyse in London.

30 The prospect of having his own place in a properly-equipped laboratory in London stimulated the old man. It was now his life's ambition to complete his part of the grand scheme to identify and classify affections of the bones of domestic animals. His earliest aim to write a textbook on South African Animal Diseases had been realised by his pupil M. W. Henning who had sent a copy to him at Lucerne shortly before he left. Theiler had graciously acknowledged it, offering comment and help for a second edition. Now he was in a highly specialised field whose successful exploration by himself and others would fittingly climax his career and
31 bring further honour to the Institute he had founded. 'I am so anxious', he wrote du Toit, 'that O.P. should contribute to the solution of Dystrophia in horses and take the lead again. I am therefore glad to hear that the experiments with the horses will soon be undertaken. By the time I shall be back in South Africa, the material should be ready for microscopical examination.' He would himself be working on crippled donkey bones and germane specimens to help complete the survey.

The Channel crossing was good and on the 20th October 1933, the Theilers arrived in London and took temporary quarters in the Ivanhoe Hotel in Bloomsbury. After reunion with the Greens at Weybridge, Emma began her search for a service flat. Within three days, she found one. They took it until early August 1934 when they would be leaving for New York and South Africa.

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Arnold entered into the happiest time of his life. London was the absolute antithesis of Lucerne For six guineas a week, Emma and he occupied a capacious flat with large bedroom and sitting room, bathroom and three excellent meals a day at Harrington Gardens near Cromwell Road in South Kensington and close to the Gloucester Road Underground Station. A clutch of world-famous scientific museums was a few minutes walk away and buses ran in all directions. Arnold immediately developed new 'hobbies' – the Underground which took him to Camden Town in three quarters of an hour with a change at Leicester Square, and later the Bus Service with its infinite possibilities. He mastered both but was deterred from frequent visits to Weybridge by the journey talking over an hour. He needed discussions with Green and went once to unpack the library he had donated; but his main interest was the work he would do at the Royal Veterinary College. (There was some speculation on his choice – after all that he had done on Amery's
32 committees and otherwise for the Imperial Bureau of Animal Health, it was assumed he would go to Weybridge but Hobday had invited him and Andrews had not.)

33 Pending the arrival of the cases containing his laboratory material, Emma and he (now married for 40 years – 'What a life!' she exclaimed, 'I wouldn't like to go through it again!') succumbed to the distractions of which they had been starved. In order of precedence, Arnold responded to Science, South Africa, the Swiss and the Humanities. Suddenly they were all at hand and clamant. Official occasion immediately took them to South Africa House, the stately building in Trafalgar Square designed by Sir Herbert Baker which, in the abiding Commonwealth climate, the King himself had opened four months before. Arnold always called on the High Commissioner and now met the courtly Cambridge-educated Charles de Water whose wife had been a school friend of Margaret and Gertrud in Pretoria. In his magnificent new premises, entirely decorated by the work of South African artists and sculptors some of whom were present

(including the painter Pierneef and the sculptor Steynberg) he was host at a reception for delegates to a current International Conference for the Preservation of Flora and Fauna. For Arnold, it was enchanting. He met colleagues of the International Agricultural Bureau in Rome and a host of friends. The Chairman of the Conference was the Earl of Onslow, long a protagonist of the preservation of Empire fauna and a Beit Trustee and shortly after, Arnold and Hobday (constantly rushing round London to raise money for his College) were invited to lunch to meet him by Margot Asquith. This was the high life, continued on the scientific plane with attendance at the formal annual banquets and receptions of the Royal Society of Medicine and the Veterinary Medical Society. Consorting with his peers who paid him the deference due to a distinguished veteran, and feeling at last in the stream of affairs, Theiler wished he had come to London a year earlier.

34 The Swiss soon found him, including two he had long known – Dr Pettavel who had practised in Johannesburg and examined the pain-wracked Max, and Theo Schaerer, a successful Transvaal architect who now lived in Thurloe Square close by. Theiler had met Schaerer in London in 1923 and their acquaintance burgeoned, involving many social occasions and expeditions into the country in the Schaerers' motor car. Leavening the new exciting life was Green who would come up from Weybridge and spend the weekend or join Theiler at technical meetings. Emma received and returned calls, typing furiously in between. Comfortably housed, they had temporarily no urge in the general hubbub and a cold winter to pursue their interest in the Humanities.

35 Within a month, Theiler began his work at the Royal Veterinary College whose principal was mostly absent in pursuit of donations. He was allocated a large laboratory under the aegis of Professor F. C. Minett where, deploying his massive collection of bone specimens, he was dismayed to find that the appropriate equipment was not available. Zealously fulfilling their offers, the Rowett Institute sent its bones of sheep, Steck of Berne the crippled donkey bones and du Toit the heterogeneous collection that Theiler had demanded. There was nobody and nothing to section and stain them. He had to buy a costly Microtome for sectioning (which he proposed selling to Onderstepoort which likewise had none), slides, jars, flasks and other laboratory equipment. Despite the tedious time-wasting tube journeys, hard on an old man in winter, he was happy in his cold laboratory. His bones revealed fascinating facts, were they the effects on horses of *Crotalaria* poisoning or the nature of a dystrophic fibrosa. He stayed all day at the College, enjoying discussions with its staff, and returned in sub-zero temperature to the well-heated flat only to leave almost immediately on many nights to attend scientific meetings. On Sunday afternoons, he and Emma took their recreation in the Natural History Museum where Arnold particularly admired the mounting of the birds. The Greens sometimes took them to the theatre. They expected to do more when the summer came but were for the moment content.

36 Theiler's position had become unique. Wherever he had been on his enormous travels, no one ever forgot him and few failed to remain in communication. He had become the oracle of agricultural and veterinary scientists throughout the world. They consulted him in English, French and German in respectful and affectionate terms about their problems or about his 'Aphosphorosis' monograph which had now percolated throughout. 'Mon cher Maître', wrote Balozet of Tunis and, equally amiably, Rivett of the Australian C.S.I.R., and his colleagues (Legg of Queensland posed problems which Theiler referred to Sergent of Algiers and thus the international camaraderie proceeded). His correspondence was large and widespread. He would scribble a reply on the back of an envelope, correct it voluminously in the hand which only Emma could decipher and then she would type it in any of the three languages.

Using Christmas as an excuse, the senior staff at Onderstepoort wrote him at great length

and variety except that all commented on the ruinous drought (even the jacarandas were dying), the immense losses in stock and impoverishment of survivors, and the increase in poor-whiteism.

37 Gilles de Koch, E. M. Robinson, John Quin, J. R. Scheuber, H. O. Mönning, Douw Steyn, even H. W. R. King remote in Cape Town gave him the O.P. gossip and mourned his absence. Tacitly he knew that Onderstepoort went on but there was a lack of leadership, of fire and drive and inspiration which his men had known and now missed. It was a new South Africa which he
38 would not recognise. 'Everything proceeds in a brotherly way', Scheuber wrote, 'Kemp goes to a South African Party Congress in Cape Town and is greeted with rousing applause. Patrick Duncan speaks mostly in Afrikaans – really too moving to last.' Like the others, Scheuber hoped
39 that Smuts would be allocated Agriculture. De Kock, aghast at developments in Pretoria's University, begged Theiler to intimate his readiness to become its rector – 'the only person capable of commanding the situation'.

A towering personality was much missed; but Theiler, aging and fanatically addicted to completing his self-appointed task, was sufficiently wanted where he was. The Imperial Government asked him to sit on its Agricultural Research Council and Hailey's agent, E. B. Worthington, began to consult him on the article 'Agriculture and Animal Health' for the 'African Survey'.
40 Imperial officers whom he had known in Pretoria invited him to Aldershot where he lectured British Army vets on bone diseases and Horse Sickness. Constantly there were scientific meetings and professional dinners, even lunch with F. B. Smith, now over 70 and still promoting Empire
41 coöperation. His life was full and increasingly content. 'I am trying', he told du Toit in acknowledging the despatch of more bones from O.P., 'to make up for lost time in Lucerne.'

Characteristically he persisted in over-burdening it with more 'playthings' and 'hobbies' to satisfy his eager need to 'equip himself'. A radio and 'Linguaphone' Spanish lessons were the latest with a new plethora of newspapers – Swiss for home news, Italian to keep up his facility, Spanish to acquire another. Later he employed a teacher. Emma, happy to be inside during the winter, was typing all the time – his three London University lectures, now revised and simplified for publication, papers in coöperation with Green, endless letters and drafts for scientific articles.
42 (She suspected Arnold of plotting to keep her busy lest she become bored.) The Schaerers, Pettavels and Greens constantly entertained them and on the 10th January 1934, they went grandly to the Savoy Hotel where the South African Club of which Arnold was an honorary member gave a dinner in honour of Prince George before his departure for a tour of the Union.
43 Among the 270 guests they met many friends 'but what pleased Pa most', Emma told the children, 'was that Princess Alice recognised him and introduced him to Prince George'. Known, honoured and persona grata everywhere, 'he meets a mass of people with whom he can talk about everything possible'. The old aggressive swagger had given way to a quiet air of distinction. In the evening of his days but working as the pathologist he had always wanted to be, it was Heaven to be alive.

In the expanded orbit of their lives, there was now room for the Humanities. They frequently dined out with lay and professional friends – Green (now living at Surbiton) and the Swiss South Africans among them – going to plays, films and concerts. The thousand singers of the Royal Choral Society performing at the Albert Hall in Handel's Messiah, The Dream of Gerontius and other monumental works, thrilled them. 'Grossartig!' Emma exclaimed. Museums, arts galleries, Kew Gardens, the Zoo, motor expeditions to Stonehenge and other historic sites increasingly absorbed them while Arnold's bone work slowly came to an end as he approached the point when he needed to consult his O.P. records and specimens. Du Toit had
44 sent him material that he interveningly needed. 'Horse No. 16024', he would write of a sample he had requested by cable, 'in which you described definitely a swelling of the infra orbital region is a beautiful case of Osteodystrophic Fibrosa' and he would go on to outline the trend

of his investigations and the hypotheses he would pursue when he came to South Africa. He now worked in his lab only in the mornings, sectioning the varied bones submitted which he would take to South Africa, and using the afternoons in the flat to compose a paper with Green's coöperation which the Bureau Internationale des Epizootiques had requested for delivery in Paris in May 1934. It would deal with Osteodystrophic Diseases in Domestic Animals and bring their work into prominence. His three London University lectures, typed countless times

45 by Emma, had at last been published in the *Veterinary Record* in April/May.
46 Du Toit had arranged to come to England and join the Theilers on the voyage to New York
47 for the 12th International Veterinary Congress in August. Arnold had refused an invitation
48 from the American Association for the Advancement of Science to lecture in California in June
owing to his local assignments. Arduous Päckerei impended for both him and Emma. They
longed to see their sons. Hans and Eleanor (still prostrated by asthma) were somehow managing;
but Max was specially favoured. In the Great Depression, the Rockefeller Foundation had cut
the budgets of all its departments except Max's and he and his team were quietly working toward
a vaccine conferring immunity to Yellow Fever. Alexander at O.P., by similarly passing the
virus through countless generations of small animals to attenuate it, had apparently successfully
49 obtained immunity to Horse Sickness. Du Toit even wrote of introducing the new method of
vaccination in 1935 to replace Theiler's imperfect serum procedure. They were exciting develop-
ment for the old man.

50 His life was moving again into the old crescendo of international involvement; but now, having
no permanent base, complicated arrangements had to be made. In a week-long frenzied visit
to Switzerland, much was accomplished, Alfred bearing the burden of personal responsibilities
and accepting Arnold's power of attorney in case of emergency. The Swiss Government appoint-
ed him a delegate (with Dr Fluckiger) at the New York Conference and supplied him with a
visum free of charge. His family claimed him everywhere and his colleagues also, including
Burri and Steck. On Saturday the 26th May, Arnold and Emma arrived in Paris and on Sunday,
promenaded in the Champs Elysées. Monday marked the ritual visits resulting in dinners and
theatres with the Mesnils, Leclainches and others, and Tuesday the meetings of the Bureau
Internationale des Epizootiques when Arnold gave his and Green's paper in French (duly
printed in the official journal). On Thursday they were back in London and joyfully clutched
by their Swiss friends.

Both, preoccupied with planning their travels and packing (Arnold his equipment and collect-
ion of bone sections, Emma miscellaneous material including winter clothing in numerous
cases to be sent to Gertrud in South Africa) now had comparatively more leisure. They saw
much of the Greens and Schaerers who were specially congenial. Shortly after their return from
Paris, Theo Schaerer 'had a chat' with his young South African friend, the sculptor Coert
Steynberg who prototypically had studied and starved since 1928 at the Royal College of Arts
under Henry Moore, qualifying as an Associate and then exploring the Continent. Offhandedly
he had submitted from across the Channel a number of sketches for the decoration of South
Africa House and, greatly to his surprise, Herbert Baker and Charles de Water had awarded
him the first prize in 1932. In the end, he was commissioned to sculpt the figure of the Portuguese
navigator Bartholomew Dias who first rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Remaining in London
at his studio in Chelsea, Steynberg was anxious to extend his hand to contemporary portraiture.
He confided to his architect friend that he would like to model a bust of his distinguished com-
patriot (South Africans always claimed him) Sir Arnold Theiler either to be cast in bronze or
worked in marble. Schaerer said he would support him if he made the request. Steynberg, a
careful man, gave it thought and study for a few days and then wrote to Theiler, c/o Schaerer
in Thurloe Square. Never averse to being photographed or otherwise represented, Theiler agreed.

His time was no longer tightly scheduled and all his life, he had helped and encouraged young men.

51 The sittings began in the middle of June 1934 and the lifesize head-and-shoulders in clay was ready for inspection a month later. Steynberg had studied the career and achievements of his sitter and brought to his work an attitude of admiration and respect. He talked freely to Theiler who, he said, was an extremely congenial sitter, quiet and effortlessly in repose (doubtless glad
52 of enforced rest). Impressed by his distinction – at that moment, Theiler had been elevated to Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Society of Medicine – Steynberg wrought an excellent likeness which Theiler himself admired – ‘even my dewlap is there!’ he commented, according to the sculptor. Then he was swept away in the final frenzies that always characterised his departures. The clay model was taken to South Africa House for the High Commissioner’s safe-keeping and soon after, Steynberg returned to South Africa to make his way as one of its foremost sculptors.

53 Theiler and Green met the boat-train when P. J. du Toit and his wife arrived from Southampton. Spirited colloquies among all the South Africans in London (including A. J. Orenstein who had been to an international conference in Geneva) took place at the Royal Empire Society where the Imperial Institute gave a reception, the Imperial School of Tropical Medicine and other official venues as well as at private parties. Theiler intended fulfilling a lifelong ambition by visiting South America on his forthcoming tour. He had often been invited. The various
54 consulates proved uncoöperative. ‘They treat people as if they were undesirables and criminals’, Emma complained in the face of demands for guarantees of return tickets and finger prints. In a rage, Pa stamped out and revised his plans. Prevented previously, he would go to New Zealand – and Australia – instead. Their representatives immediately cabled their headquarters and in a
55 trice, the Theilers were made welcome and later became the guests of the Governor-General of New Zealand, Lord Bledisloe who well remembered Arnold and intended seeking his advice, privately and officially. There was joy also in Australia.

The prodigies of packing resulted in the unfortunate Gertrud at Wellington, Cape being charged with maintaining in bond 11 cases of Theiler’s pathological material and equipment and 10 of the miscellanea they had accumulated from heavy coats, books and records to Emma’s trusty typewriter and a spare artificial arm for Arnold. They would be visiting South Africa, not en passant as before but for some considerable time. They left Liverpool on *S.S. Scythia* in the company of Dr and Mrs P. J. du Toit, Professor and Mrs F. C. Minett and other delegates to the Veterinary Conference. The English interlude had reinvigorated Theiler and he had happy expectations for his transcontinental journeys. Unbeknown to him, England had conferred upon him one of its newest and rarest honours.

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International conferences had become commonplace but there were certain variations in New York. While Emma drearily saw the sights with other delegates’ wives, twelve lady veterinarians graced the convocation within the Waldorf Astoria. Both Hans and Max were delegates but returned to their homes in the evening, postponing family discussions. Arnold had refused to
56 speak on Horse Sickness, feeling himself out of date; but, with du Toit, disapproved of the appointed speaker as even less qualified. When the time came, du Toit entered the discussion, paying tribute to Max’s discovery of the mouse-brain culture enabling development of a vaccine and describing its successful application to Horse Sickness in South Africa. Arnold
57 glowed. Max had already been accorded recognition in die alte Heimat and here he was being publicly lauded internationally. Max had other views. When the highly prestigious New York



The Granite Boulder chosen by Coert Steynberg (right) which was blasted, forming a huge rock from which he hewed the statue.



The site for the statue outside the Main Building entrance at Onderstepoort where a palm had been planted.

The model in clay prepared by Steynberg in 1937 for the commemorative statue.



58 Schweizerverein entertained the Swiss delegates to lunch, its secretary besought Arnold to arrange for Max to address them on his discovery. When Pa conveyed the proposal, Max reacted violently. He wanted 'no cheap popularity' and would in no circumstances speak to a lay audience on the subject. Pa would have liked it but Max remained adamant. He had always
59 known his own mind and subscribed to no accepted shibboleths. Finding him in his office at the Rockefeller Foundation with his feet on his desk idly blowing smoke rings (he was a chain-smoker), a visitor from Onderstepoort expostulated. 'Mr Rockefeller', Max snapped, 'pays me to think.'

60 During the weeklong Congress, Theiler was again 'in his element' – a patriarchal figure among acolytes. The delegates from the Argentine, Chile, Peru and Brazil bitterly regretted his abandoning his plan to visit South America and promised him a warm welcome if he came later. 'Qui vivra, verra!' he replied as he always did when in good spirits. The Conference had awarded him the Budapest Gold Medal (conferred only once before on Hutyra) for the best scientific work in Veterinary Science during the previous ten years. His opening of the research field of the effects of mineral deficiencies was now saluted worldwide. Du Toit would help him get on with it when he reached South Africa.

61 Much intervened, including distressing family affairs. Already saddened by the strained and aged Hans, Arnold and Emma were unprepared for the shock of meeting Eleanor at their house in Boston – a whitehaired senile woman, constantly weeping and virtually helpless, surviving only on regular adrenalin injection. The anguish of contemplating this human wreck affected them both emotionally and physically and they were glad their visit was short. Hans' situation (despite the kindness of Tyzzer whom Theiler met, and the congeniality of his co-workers) was pitiable and even worse than it appeared. In his artless way, he had failed to legalise his presence in the United States and could at any time be imprisoned or put over the border as an unregistered alien. Arnold counselled him to cut the Gordian knot and seek employment at Onderstepoort. Du Toit was still in the States and Hans duly addressed his plea. Du Toit loyally set wheels in motion and some months later, his deputy Gilles de Kock told Theiler that a vacancy was in contemplation that Hans might fill. His father hoped that South Africa might restore the ruined Eleanor. The problems of his ill-starred first-born continued to cloud their lives.

62 With Max, it was quite other. He had an excellent appointment with a great future and was completely happy. He introduced his parents to his chief, Wilbur A. Sawyer and conducted them on a tour of the Rockefeller Foundation. They spent a weekend in his new house at Hastings-on-Hudson where Lillian contained herself and Noldi stole Emma's heart anew –
63 'a nice little boy and very intelligent', she told the girls. She regarded the immediate future with foreboding – 'Pa will undoubtedly try to do too much in the short time before we go to Vancouver', she had written even before the Conference had ended. There were other bodeful features. On the day after its conclusion, the German people by plebiscite approved the vesting of sole executive power in Adolf Hitler as 'Führer'. The world at large regarded it with uninterested dispassion. The Theilers moved further into the New World and away from the scene of impending trouble.

It was not Arnold who was uncontrollable (he insisted on paying a courtesy call on the Bureau of Animal Husbandry in Washington and on other institutes and personalities) but the men who had assessed the stature of an eminent figure in veterinary science. Nothing was too much trouble nor any distance too great to show him what he wanted to see. Rushing about the United States on his own and other occasion, he met Cowdry at St Louis, the American family Theiler at Joliet, a real Berne bear at the Swiss Village restaurant at the Chicago World Fair, the veterinarians working on deficiency diseases in Montana and St Paul (whom he asked to send bone specimens to him at Onderstepoort) and at Bozeman, Dr Welchman who offered

to show his visitors Yellowstone Park. In a 400-mile drive in one day, they got out of his car only once for lunch and, Emma ruefully recorded, saw only one bear and one reindeer. Hurling on, Arnold's colleagues contrived to drive the weary couple over dusty roads and frightening passes for 2,000 miles in three days; but they could then claim to have seen numerous notable sites including the Yosemite Valley with its giant sequoias and bone-dry waterfalls under drought. They arrived at Vancouver on the 10th September 1934 totmüde and anxious to sail. A letter from New Zealand House in London awaited them, advising that they would be the Government's guests. Fearing another exhausting and inescapable official tour, Emma exclaimed 'I would rather not!' Her time was spent in writing grateful letters to their numerous U.S.A. hosts and arranging the despatch to them of South African gifts.

The voyage, with professional distractions at Honolulu and tourist pleasures at Fiji's Suva, restored them. Even at sea, laurels continued to decorate Arnold's brow. Gertrud sent a radiogram which, weeks later, unravelled itself into one of Theiler's proudest honours. In 1933, the ancient Royal Agricultural Society of England proposed striking a gold medal for award for distinguished services in Agriculture, either in Practice or Science, at intervals of one year or longer. It would carry Honorary Membership of the Society. In November 1933, the Council awarded it for the first time to Sir Thomas Hudson Middleton for his work in India. On the 1st August 1934, as the Theilers prepared to leave their London flat for Liverpool and the U.S.A., the Council met again and, on the motion of Lord Hastings, chairman of the Botanical and Zoological Committee in a careful and emotive speech (see Appendix C), resolved to make the second award to Sir Arnold Theiler - 'an outstanding figure in veterinary pathology whose research work over a period of more than thirty years has been of tremendous benefit to mankind in the Union of South Africa and the Empire as a whole'. The Society's secretary, T. B. Turner ascertained that Theiler was abroad and wrote his London bank for forwarding. It was hoped he would some time return to London to receive the medal and contribute a portrait photograph for the Society's special album. In due course, Gertrud got the letter, radioed Pa and wrote Turner that he was not expected in South Africa until December. Turner consulted Charles te Water at South Africa House as to a suitable occasion and personage in the Union to make the presentation and, on his advice, consigned the medal to the care of P. J. du Toit returning to the Union in November. While taking delivery of it, du Toit saw Steynberg's bust of the old man in South Africa House.

Bedecked though he were, Theiler took exceptional pleasure in his new honour. Like the Budapesth medal of the International Veterinary Conference a few weeks previously, it was only the second time that the Royal Agricultural Society had made the award. (Later the medal was not awarded annually but at intervals of several years to some of Theiler's friends - Viscount Bledisloe 1947, Sir John Russell 1954 and Sir Ian Clunies Ross of Melbourne 1956). Refreshed and eager to tour New Zealand, Emma and he landed at Auckland on the North Island only to learn that Lord Bledisloe wished immediately to see them owing to having to leave shortly for Centenary Celebrations in Melbourne, and their itinerary had therefore been altered. Their train journey via Hamilton was punctuated by sundry professional visits and on the 3rd October, they arrived in Wellington.

Bledisloe, an extensive farmer in England and recognised agricultural authority soon to be elevated to Viscount, had conceived a high esteem for Theiler's work which now developed into a warm regard. Its debut was unfortunate. With only two days in hand, Bledisloe invited the Theilers to a reception and investiture at Government House where, after initial cordiality, they were excruciatingly bored through knowing no one. Luncheon on the morrow was different and Emma was taken on a tour of Wellington while Arnold remained all afternoon in conclave with the Governor-General. He left the following day for Australia while they made the crossing

73 to the South Island in the care of the Principal Veterinary Officer Barry and two of his staff. Every detail of their 10-day tour had been arranged and paid. They could travel anywhere free by rail but accomplished an exacting survey of everything veterinary, agricultural and scenic by motor car, often driven by District Veterinary Officers and Stock Inspectors over unmetalled country roads and flooded rivers in torrential rain which once marooned them in a mountain hotel. Emma endured one of her most arduous excursions (one of the speeding cars had no brakes and another no speedometer) and Arnold examined and commented on almost as many veterinary institutes, agricultural colleges, sheep stations and sick animals as he had on his famous Australian tour. On the 16th October, they made the night crossing to Wellington for further fêteing, conferences and touring.

74 With the attention devoted to minor royalty, Arnold was taken hither and yon – to a meeting of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, to another of Veterinary Officers, to Parliament to hear a veterinary debate, to laboratories, dinners and receptions. While Mrs Barry conducted Emma over the sights, her husband's henchman C. S. M. Hobkirk, also secretary of the New Zealand Veterinary Association, formally advised Theiler of the award of Honorary Membership at the meeting he had attended. Bledisloe, whose knowledge of agriculture Theiler admired, beamed upon the scene he had contrived and bided his time to seek personal advice. Theiler himself, as in America, had begged bone material wherever he went.

75 At last they were free to make their tourist visit to the New Zealand Alps, the geysers and hot springs, the caves and lakes, the Maoris and local sights of which they had read and heard. Then they returned to Auckland for more hectic entertaining. On the 9th November they sailed for 77 Sydney after '40 exciting days'. Bledisloe, believing them still on tour, wrote in his own hand to 78 Theiler for advice on contagious abortion and concurrent mastitis in his herds in England. Theiler remained in communication with him and Bledisloe never forgot his friend.

79 It was a measure of the old man's engaging qualities that during the 18 days it took to move across coastal Australia, his disappointed associates of six years previously emerged in force to fête him, closely rivalled by the local Swiss. At Sydney, Gilruth, Seddon, Stewart and others met the ship with plans for entertainment at the University and Rotary Club. He met again Sir George Julius and dined with the New South Wales Veterinary Association. He resumed acquaintanceships only to say farewell, answering eager questions, recounting the wide work on which he and others were engaged, asking always for specimens of malformed bones and the full circumstances of each case. Taking ship for home, he was similarly saluted at Melbourne and again at Adelaide where A. E. V. Richardson who had known him longest, fetched the travel-worn couple for dinner and the cinema. At Freemantle more veterinary colleagues entertained them ashore. On the 30th November, their ship finally left the coast for the two week voyage across the Indian Ocean to Durban and ultimately Cape Town where Gertrud would meet them. They had travelled incessantly for four months and restlessness was now inalienably in Arnold's blood. He had to see and do everything he possibly could.

* * *

80 Their return to South Africa after seven years was not unknown. Arnold, mindful of the bitter atmosphere of his short visit in 1928, had strictly enjoined Gertrud who had liaison with the Press, to ensure that his arrival in Cape Town should not be publicised nor should King make it known. 'Pa does *not* want it published in the papers and he does not want to see reporters', Emma warned. But there was no suppressing the news among his friends. When *Anchises* came

81 alongside at Durban, Arnold's colleague of nearly 40 years, the veteran S. T. A. Amos came aboard to take the Theilers ashore for tea and tell them all the gossip. Margaret too had produced a surprise by arriving the next day by train from Johannesburg to join the ship on its voyage to Cape Town where Gertrud awaited them on the wharf. Superlatively competent, she whisked them in her car to Wellington and the solid comfort of her College bungalow. The voyage from Durban had been very rough and they were glad to have firm ground underfoot as well as the company of their lively 'girls', now mature women of 38 and 39. Telephone calls to Cape Town abounded. Three days later, they were in the Mother City for Arnold 'to bring himself up to date'.

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83 His informants were the garrulous King, always with his ear to the ground in the Civil Service, and Pole Evans, now Director of the Division of Plant Industry and still walking with the great, notably Smuts whose farm Doornkloof was near Pole Evans' house at Irene (they continued a close relationship in personal and botanical matters). A subject of congenial interest had been debated in the House of Assembly and Pole Evans was in Cape Town to develop his programme for the conservation of natural vegetation which he had been asked to submit. Over lunch, he conveyed to Theiler a direct message from the Deputy Prime Minister. Smuts bade Theiler welcome on his return and wanted to know whether his services would be available, particularly in reorganising the Department of Agriculture. Behind this totally unexpected démarche lay a long story with which Theiler was familiar.

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85 During the dreadful days of the Boer War, his last civil connection had been with F. W. Reitz, previously president of the Orange Free State and then State Secretary of the South African Republic. Reitz had five sons and the third and most dashing, Denys, had with Kruger's personal consent, joined the burghers at the age of 17. 'The Boer boy' as Smuts called him in his introduction to Reitz' famous book 'Commando' published in 1929 (followed by 'Trekking On' in 1933) endured exceptional hardships and deep disillusion which drove him to set his face against the new South Africa under British control. He skulked as a farmer in Madagascar until Mrs Smuts in a sympathetic and persuasive letter induced him to come home. He was always Smuts' man and fought with him in the Rebellion, the German West and East African campaigns and as commander of the 1st Royal Scots Fusiliers in France where he was badly wounded. In 1921 he was elected to Parliament and Smuts saw to it that he was made Minister of Lands and later a leading speaker in opposition when Hertzog came to power. Now, in the Coalition Government, he was again Minister of Lands and renowned throughout the world as a best-selling author. His third book 'No Outspan' had just been published.

Pole Evans told Theiler that Smuts had arranged for Denys Reitz to exchange portfolios with Kemp. In a stroke, Theiler's animus and difficulties disappeared. The new Minister was a man of action, not a bureaucrat, more at home in the field than sitting in his office. By securing the appointment of his protégé, Smuts had virtually himself assumed responsibility for the Department of Agriculture. Not only was Kemp removed but Theiler would deal directly with Smuts in all matters, including the reorganisation of the Veterinary Division. The way to Onderstepoort was now open. Theiler was elated. It behoved him however to move circumspectly. He would stick to his plan to begin in Johannesburg where Margaret had rented two rooms near to her school as lodgings.

86 Two days later, Pole Evans returned the visit and came to Wellington with his wife and King. Their 'briefing' continued and, together with the girls' constant conversation, Theiler began to accommodate himself to a very changed political and economic scene. 'Coalition' had brought an ostensible but fragile bonhomie and departure from the Gold Standard had instigated spectacular economic revival, particularly in the north where the booming mines at last released capital for exploitation. Much occupied the old man's mind, including a mass of corres-

87 ponde forwarded to Gertrud's care. Pole Evans' message from Smuts had deeply stirred him. The day after his visit (Christmas Eve), Theiler wrote to the Royal Agricultural Society to thank for the award of 'the Gold Medal for distinguished service to Agriculture and Allied Sciences' in its new connection of benefit to the Empire. Te Water had made no proposal for its presentation and Theiler continued: 'Permit me to suggest that the Medal be handed on by my friend General Smuts who has, since the early days of my career in South Africa, taken a great interest in my researches and whose friendship has always been a great encouragement 88 for my work.' Turner duly replied approvingly, stating that P. J. du Toit must by now have delivered the medal to the 'authorities' in South Africa.

Gertrud, emphatically her father's daughter, had planned to drive him most deviously to the Transvaal so as to cover the maximum places he had known. It was her own manner. On every vacation, she would undertake a new expedition, camping in the veld, 'botanising', 'zoologising' and generally casting a scientist's eye on unwonted surroundings – Namaqualand for the flowers, the Kruger Park for wild animals, Basutoland for the mountains and so on. There was little of Southern Africa that she did not know. Always a naturmensch and disdainful of convention, she withstood family teasing about her Eton crop, her notion of sartorial sufficiency as a cotton dress, brogues and a Panama hat, and her absorption in her work. Competent in all she undertook, Gertrud had already driven the family everywhere of note in the neighbourhood of Wellington and now conducted them in her trusty old car on a safari which came near to levelling her parents and Margaret.

Roads were not yet tarred (many still had innumerable cattle gates) nor many rivers bridged but Gertrud boldly set out in mid-summer heat over the baking Bain's Kloof for Hermanus, Caledon, Swellendam, Heidelberg, Riversdale – Mossel Bay, the Wilderness, George – Knysna (where a plant long previously discovered by Theiler had been given his name and where the family called on E. M. Robinson and his wife on holiday and met one of Pa's students, René 89 du Toit, later to impersonate Theiler in a film for schools describing the great man's life) – Avontuur, Uniondale, Willowmore and into the sweltering Karroo at Aberdeen – Graaff Reinet, Middelburg, Colesberg – Phillipolis and (the Gods be praised, the Theilers thought) the Fauresmith Veld Reserve in the Free State where Dr Marguerite Henrici was based. There 90 they stayed in Swiss comfort for four days and recovered a little from the heat and the dust which Arnold had found hard to bear. His protégé who had accomplished useful investigation of the phosphorus content of pasture grasses under his aegis, was now the queen of her own 91 domain. Transferred to the Division of Plant Industry in 1929, she ruled an estate of nearly 100 morgen from her own house with a technical staff, laboratory, library and other adjuncts of pasture research, doing valuable work and engaging the respect and esteem of previously incredulous farmers. Arnold could well be proud.

92 Rested, they drove on to Jagersfontein, Bloemfontein (where Theiler met Williams and Strydom, two of his past students), Thaba Nchu and Ladybrand, entering Basutoland the next day and passing through Maseru (with memories of the 1903 Rinderpest) to a Swiss trader beyond, known to the girls. Heavily eroded roads in the undeveloped Protectorate jolted and jarred the aging parents who were glad to arrive at Harrismith after bumping through Ficksburg, Butha Buthe, Clarens and Kestell. Gertrud was not yet done. Turning north east, she drove through Standerton to Ermelo where Theiler had done much of his work on sheep. In less than three weeks, she had taken him through a vast section of his previous terrain. Now they turned for Johannesburg and the blissful repose of the two rooms in Kensington which Margaret had rented.

Theiler intended moving warily and keeping his distance. Johannesburg with its new population of skyscrapers and frenetic activity ('tickey-snatching' on the Stock Exchange and million-

aires in Cadillacs and Rolls Royces) was fascinating enough. He had friends aplenty including Theo Schaerer who had returned from London to resume practice as an architect in the booming Golden City. But within two days, he was in Pretoria, ostensibly to see the Commissioner of Pensions but lunching with P. J. du Toit, Dr A. Pijper, E. M. Robinson and others, and of course going on the newly-tarred road to Onderstepoort. He found it much the same except for the new buildings, especially the Library which now graced it.

It was moving to greet his old friends. 'The old man is back!' – 'Die Oubaas is terug!' coursed through the property and affected even the newcomers. Gone were the old acrimonies of his having put his name to the work other men did, of his being brutally domineering and regardless of the comfort and convenience of his staff, of his being intransigent and undisciplined vis-à-vis Civil Service procedure and intolerant of Treasury. The living figure of Onderstepoort's glory was back in its context and men who had gossiped and intrigued and reviled him behind his back were happy to see it. Before long Theiler became the pet of the place. Du Toit offered him all facilities for his work – even his old office and laboratory, an assistant A. O. D. Thomas, and technical help. He also promised to do what he could for Hans. All signs were propitious. Arnold and Emma forthwith went to the Union Hotel in Pretoria where many O.P. staff members lived and booked a suite with a spare bedroom. When Gertrud and her car went back to the Cape, they would move to Pretoria.

In the meantime, there was much distraction in Johannesburg. The Schweizerverein Helvetia which Arnold had revitalised in 1895, fêted him expansively. Their friends entertained them constantly and their daughters drove them about. Gertrud, freer than the heavily-committed Margaret, took them often to Pretoria, sometimes for days at a time while Arnold unpacked his material and set his work in motion 'as of old'. He felt, he said, as if he had merely been away on a long holiday and was resuming his usual activity. Much that he had instigated had been accomplished. During the years of his absence, he had read du Toit's Reports but it was different now with Robinson telling him how, after years of tedious technical processes, he had finally isolated the various forms of Botulinus causing Lamziekte and its variants. Du Toit's experimental workers had long been conducting the lengthy tests on cattle fed with various diets to determine the effect of mineral deficiencies. Theiler considered that his actual presence would soon be necessary.

Other wheels had also been turning. Through South Africa House, Turner had told Smuts of Theiler's wish. Felicitous opportunity offered on the 17th April 1935 when Smuts would open the Witwatersrand Agricultural Show in Johannesburg. He agreed at Theiler's request to present the Royal Agricultural Society medal then in the presence of Colonel Denys Reitz. Theiler wrote joyously to Turner – it meant much to him. Almost his whole life in South Africa had been intertwined with the Oubaas. Honours kept coming – 'a sure sign of advancing senility', he told Alfred. The American Society of Tropical Medicine made him an Honorary Member and the University of the Witwatersrand suddenly remembered the honorary D.Sc. of 1927 which he had had to refuse owing to departure. It would now be conferred in March.

With Gertrud gone, Emma would have preferred to remain in Johannesburg to be near her other daughter but Margaret, busily occupied with teaching physical culture, playing hockey and coaching, was seldom to be seen. She would come to Pretoria for weekends in a large car which Pa had helped her buy (hoping for more tours after which his restless nature hankered). On the day before their departure from the Golden City, they attended a University garden party for the Empire Press Association led by Lord Astor, then touring the Union. Arnold was delighted to meet dozens of his overseas friends who proceeded to Pretoria and, on the 1st March when he formally began work at Onderstepoort, visited the famous Institute. It was a unique opportunity for them to be conducted over it by its founder. Theiler grandly signed the

Visitors Book in line with Lord Astor and notable newspapermen from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India and other parts of the Empire of which he could now consider himself a pillar. (A huge Empire Exhibition was planned for Johannesburg in 1936 – 50th anniversary of the City – and its emissaries came to Onderstepoort to arrange its representation.)

103 The experience dissolved his antipathy to Press publicity. He had already given an interview to the *Rand Daily Mail* about his forthcoming work to which P. J. du Toit added a corollary about his being warmly welcomed; but now, in response to a visiting Empire journalist met at Onderstepoort, he himself wrote an admirable resumé of it for publication. The rehabilitation of Sir Arnold's image continued apace with du Toit describing 'the beautiful medal' that he would receive and the Press saluting his honoris causa. In the evening of his days, the old man could enjoy a glow of glory.

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107 Life had become almost idyllic. At 7.50 every morning, Gilles de Kock drove him to Onderstepoort and in the evening, another hotel resident, usually R. A. Alexander, drove him back. The hotel was comfortable (Emma found it disturbing and joined the Pretoria Women's Club as a quiet rendezvous) and became even more so when they exchanged their suite for a bigger one. The greatly-enlarged O.P. staff entertained them continuously and they never lacked for distraction even if they missed the cultural advantages of London and Europe. Theiler with his wide knowledge and immense travelling was very good company and remembered by all his friends, particularly Pole Evans. They went frequently on a Sunday to his house at Irene and on the 17th March, were taken by him to visit Smuts. Arnold used the opportunity to discuss the future of Hans – 'the stone on the hearts' of his parents. Du Toit was doing his best but Arnold hoped for Smuts' intervention if the only possible post available were of inadequate salary. Smuts, distant and careless of people qua people, nonetheless liked talking to him and hoped for a future, less hurried occasion. Officially, he had committed Theiler to confidential talks with the chairman of the Public Service Commission with a view to reorganising the Veterinary Division. The chances of his intervening on Hans' behalf in raising the possible salary of £400 per annum were therefore good.

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110 With the award of his fifth honoris causa degree on the 23rd March, Theiler's aura of glory expanded. The Press, particularly the Agricultural Journals, took him up and published his photograph and accounts of his career. It was a happy occasion for him. Co-graduands were Dr Bernard Price whom he had known on the Research Grants Board and Colonel J. Stevenson Hamilton who pressed him to visit the Kruger National Park in September. The distinguished convocation included P. J. du Toit and Gilles de Kock from Onderstepoort and a contingent led by Pole Evans from the Plant Division. The Witwatersrand University conducted the affair very amiably and gave great pleasure to the old man – 'it had been a nice day', Emma observed.

111 It unleashed a spate of celebration in dinners and receptions given by the Schweizerverein Alpina in Pretoria (which Arnold had founded in 1898) and its colleague Helvetia in Johannesburg, the staff of Onderstepoort at the Pretoria Club, the Witwatersrand Agricultural Society, and others. In all the glory, the actual presentation of the Royal Agricultural Society's Gold Medal by Smuts on the 17th April went comparatively unremarked.

112 Theiler's gratification at his widespread recognition and the erasure of the unfortunate impression created under the Kemp regime had been increased by an episode in Parliament in Cape Town. Senator G. G. Munnik moved a resolution in the Senate on the 25th March expressing appreciation of Onderstepoort's discovery of a cure for Horse Sickness. The new Minister of Agriculture, Colonel Denys Reitz spoke enthusiastically to the resolution, applauding Sir Arnold, P. J. du Toit and 'a young South African scientist, Dr R. A. Alexander'. The resolution was passed unanimously – very different from the early days when Theiler's name was bandied about both Houses in ignorance and contumely. In June, Reitz visited Onderste-

poort shortly after Theiler, in common with many eminent South Africans, had received the King's Silver Jubilee Medal.

114 It was all very exciting and pleasing but the sense of fulfilment that the old man could have enjoyed would continue to elude him until he finished his bone work, interrupted now by an
115 ominous sign. He had begun to suffer severe headaches, particularly when he got up in the morning. They dwindled, only to return – too often, he thought. Inevitably he remembered his father who had shown the same symptom before dying at the age of 68. He had himself just turned 68. The headaches continued for many weeks but became less frequent. He tried to dismiss them as signs of senescence while conscious that his powers were diminishing. He had often discussed his condition with Emma and made appropriate arrangements. Alfred now had
116 his will. When the time came, he wished to be cremated.

The work went on in his laboratory under the constant strain of microscopic examination. Occasionally he would plod across the complex to one of the camps where a sweating experimental assistant labouring in a byre, weighing buckets of urine, measuring the rations of mineralised fodder, noting every aspect of a group of heifers, would regard him tremulously. Theiler, quite kindly, would ask him searching questions sometimes in terms he could not understand.
117 (One young Afrikaner, J. S. Otto with two degrees in Science, was confounded by Theiler's enquiry about the 'metatarsal effect' and, appalled by his obvious ignorance of Anatomy, decided he must study Medicine. Leaving Onderstepoort, he became a physician and in 1978, the first Nationalist Mayor of Johannesburg. Theiler, he told the Press, had always been his hero.) Du Toit had kept his promise and the ancillary work on the Theiler/Green programme was proceeding. Immaculate in white laboratory coat emphasising his black-gloved artificial hand, the old man would discuss developments with his friend or chat with old and new colleagues or consult the latest literature in the splendid new library. Idleness was irksome to his nature and when banished from Onderstepoort by public holiday, restlessness supervened.
118 Over Easter, Margaret indulged her father's sudden wish to inspect the environs of Pretoria and drove him and the uncomplaining Emma to Hammanskraal, Bavianspoort, the Premier Mine, Warmbaths, Roberts Heights, Hennops River and Quagga-poort, visiting friends en route. As he aged, Arnold could less and less suffer vacant time and travel became obsessional.

119 His personal troubles were diminishing. He had written Hans in March of the Onderstepoort offer and his elder son, in customary manner, had failed to reply. Now in May, he cabled an offer, substantially improved by the efforts of du Toit and de Kock, and including a house. Hans cabled acceptance, proposing to arrive in September. The heavy stone had fallen from their hearts. Arnold wrote him by the new miraculous airmail of the details and how he would be helped on all sides at O.P., There was no need to worry about Margaret or Max. Gertrud
120 was about to bring great honour on the family. She had been appointed president of the Zoological Section of the forthcoming meeting of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science at Paarl in the Cape. Her father was determined to hear her deliver her presidential address as well as resume acquaintance with his scientific confrères and, with his habitual long-range planning, to hear Max present a paper to the Second International Microbiological Conference in London in July 1936.

His plans were fixed, his headaches were diminishing, his work was interesting and he and Emma were constantly entertained by friends, scientists, the Swiss and consistently, the Pole Evans. His situation at O.P. was in no way strained and the veneration of the staff, old and new,
121 was gratifying. Similarly satisfying was the fruition of many of his works. In May, he made a two-day visit to Armoedsvlakte and was astonished to see how his trees had grown and his investigations proliferated with important results. There were things that Smuts should know
122 about the Veterinary Division and its organisation. One Sunday in June (16th), Emma and he,

P. J. du Toit and his wife spent the day at Irene with the Pole Evans and were taken to see Smuts at Doornkloof. In the coterie of trusted friends, they could talk freely of the future of the Division.

123 Even in his incidental works, Theiler found pleasure. The Biological Society, sometimes tottering uncertainly during his absence, still maintained and Emma and he loyally attended its meetings. Before they left for the Cape, they heard Douw Steyn exploring further the field of Poisonous Plants which Theiler had pioneered. Other enterprises that he had tended before Union and later – the Transvaal Museum, Zoological Gardens, University College, the Association for the Advancement of Science, the conservation of wild life and the National Parks, the exploration of local plant life and the National Botanical Survey, and a dozen others – had grown and developed.

* * *

Theiler was his own master and could come and go as he pleased at Onderstepoort. Much as he relished his investigation, it was exacting work and he welcomed the interruption of Gertrud's public debut and joining her on expeditions during the College leave that followed. His aim of clarifying the nature of bone afflictions was within sight of completion. It would not be long before he could start colligating his results into a 'Dissertation'. A break would refresh him for the final stages.

124 Henrici came from Fauresmith to join their train at Springfontein and they all put up in the hotel at Paarl a few miles from Wellington. The meeting followed the usual Association formula and Arnold enjoyed seeing old associates and newcomers, many contributed by the nearby University of Stellenbosch. His friend on Pole Evans' staff, E. P. Phillips (then awarded the South Africa Medal of which Theiler had been the first recipient in 1908) presided over the Botany Section. In the Chemistry Section was a tall smiling newcomer, Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd from Stellenbosch.

125 On the 5th July 1935, Gertrud gave her presidential address to the Zoology Section on 'Some Recent Developments in the Study of Parasitic Worms' in the presence of her parents. In construction and explication, it had the classic historico-logical form of Theiler himself and all his lucidity except that Gertrud allowed herself literary flourishes and historic allusions that he might have eschewed. It was a tour de force on a subject in which she could be considered expert and a clear augury of the high scientific distinction which she would later achieve. 'Gertie very good', Emma noted; but Arnold, coldly connoisseur with difficulty, could not
126 forbear from writing Alfred that 'it was a firstclass address that was generally applauded. Some friends assured me that it was the best address.' He could have died happy that day – but there was still Max. For the International Microbiological Conference in London at which Max
127 would present his latest results, Professor Minett of the Royal Veterinary College, Camden Town had proposed Theiler as a Vice-President. Already they were making plans to travel by one of the new Italian liners, *Guilio Cesare* or *Duilio*, to Europe early in 1936.

In the week succeeding the S.A.A.A.S. meeting, they engaged in the frenetic activity which had come to characterise Theiler's absence from work and to throw the lie at those who suspected his physical powers were waning. Gertrud's new Chevrolet took them along the rutted dusty, often precipitous roads that led through Malmesbury, Piquetberg, Citrusdal and Clanwilliam to Lamberts Bay with its guano island populated by myriads of sea birds and penguins. Arnold
128 was entranced and wrote ecstatically to Alfred about the experience. Then a three-day interlude in Cape Town with the Swiss consul Bothner, much motoring around the Peninsula in heavy rain and lunch with the faithful King. Gertrud arranged lastly a visit to the protégé of Cecil

129 Rhodes, H. E. V. Pickstone at Groot Drakenstein who had revolutionised the fruit-growing industry and was of particular interest to Arnold, before putting her exhausted parents on the train to Pretoria.

130 Paradoxically their two-week frenzy had much benefitted both of them. Arnold's headaches had disappeared and he returned reinvigorated to his work. Constantly now he was writing Alfred – 'I go every day to Onderstepoort except Sundays and am now again really in my element and feel happier than I have for ages' – 'I have much work. It is interesting and gives me much joy' – 'I love my work and when public holidays intervene, am glad when they are over.' Despite the international crisis precipitated by Italy's bellicose intentions toward Abyssinia which could complicate his future plans, Theiler enjoyed a real exhilaration. He met all the distinguished figures who visited O.P. and himself moved in high circles. Emma and he lunched at Government House with the Earl and Countess of Clarendon (whom they found 'very nice people and exceptionally obliging') and enjoyed a rare local esteem, frequently recorded in the Press. The Pole Evans had left for Italy to attend a Botanical Conference in Rome, visiting 131 Alfred on the way. Arnold feared that they would never reach their objective. On the 2nd 132 October, Mussolini's forces invaded Abyssinia and Hans, landing in Cape Town where Gertrud had solved all his difficulties, set out for Pretoria in the car which he had brought from Boston. During the dusty 1,000-mile journey, he telegraphed his parents that he would arrive on the afternoon of the 3rd October.

133 Theiler was at Armoedsvlakte, watching related experiments, when the war news was announced. He missed the visit to Onderstepoort on the 3rd October of Sir Malcolm Hailey (later Lord) who had come to see the world-famous Institute for himself and to make final arrangements for the publication of his 'African Survey', the relevant material having been contributed by Theiler and incorporated by E. B. Worthington. The Scientific Sub-Committee chaired by the Marquis of Lothian (known to Theiler as Phillip Kerr of Milner's Kindergarten) and consisting of Sir John Boyd Orr, W. Ormsby-Gore, Julian Huxley and Sir Richard Gregory, then asked for final comments and correction of submitted material. Theiler and du Toit duly laboured over the chapter 'Agriculture and Animal Health' and reaped a whirlwind. Thanking them most appreciatively for their comments 'coming as they do from the originators of so much research 134 in Africa', Worthington asked for more information on animal diseases and on the original breeds of domestic animals of the Natives. Theiler left it to du Toit. By then, his days at Onderstepoort were numbered against his departure for Europe. He had similarly had to reject a 135 persistent invitation from the National Veterinary Medical Association of Great Britain and Ireland to lead discussion on 'Diseases of the Horse' at their annual Congress at Scarborough in September 1936. He planned either to be back in South Africa or still visiting in Europe by then.

Hans' return was typical of the contrariness that characterised his entire life. Having specified the afternoon, he arrived in the morning at the Union Hotel which Emma had left to make last purchases in town for his house. He then drove to Onderstepoort to find Arnold absent on his way back from Armoedsvlakte. Finally they were reunited, surprised to find that the asthmatic Eleanor had well withstood the journey and needed adrenalin only twice a day. Hans began work at Onderstepoort among many old friends and Eleanor, assisted by an African maid, took up house-keeping with manifold advisory and material aid from Emma. The stone seemed finally to have been lifted from the Theilers' hearts. Fired by Henrici's lyrical description of the Kruger National Park, now South Africa's greatest tourist attraction ('she saw nine lions in one group!' 136 Arnold exclaimed), they impatiently awaited Margaret's arrival on the 8th October to take them there. It was the hottest season of the year but as they might still be in Europe in September 1936, it were better to accept Stevenson Hamilton's invitation while they could.

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138 They entered the Park from the north and saw every conceivable animal including lions three times. Emma wrote the family as enthusiastically as Arnold. By the time they reached Skukuza to spend a day with Stevenson Hamilton, it was 105° in the shade but neither minded. Pa asked their host for a crocodile skeleton for Gertrud but none was available. 'Skukuza' as he was known, showed them his wonderful films of animals beyond the scope of tourists and Africa re-asserted its hold upon them. They began to consider renting a house in Johannesburg and sharing it with Margaret when they returned. In their advancing age, they would be happier with one of their daughters. Hans was no longer a problem and Eleanor so far recovered as to maintain their home and even cook the German dishes which Arnold loved. He lunched with them once a week and Emma watched helpfully over the household. In such free time as she had, she mounted Arnold's holiday photographs in an album and compiled a massive list of his scientific publications from 1893 onward. Mindful of heavy overseas travel during the European summer, she had already booked their passage for April 1936. They had intended voyaging to Italy and visiting Veglia in Turin but converted now to the Deutsch Ost-Afrika Linie as far as Hamburg. Before undertaking their long-postponed Scandinavian tour, Arnold could visit his scientific friends.

139
140 The laurels kept coming. The University of Cape Town advised the conferment of an honorary D.Sc. on the 12th December 1935 and Theiler, possessed by the mania for travelling, immediately booked train tickets with the intention of Gertrud's undertaking another motor tour during her College vacation. He loved his work but clutched at any opportunity to leave 'the monotony of the sitzleben' and move about the country. He confessed now to feeling his age and revolting against the regular daily routine. He felt well and enjoyed his investigations but no longer went to Onderstepoort on Saturdays. The relaxation of a full weekend restored him. A daily dosage of glucose also helped.

141
142 More disconcerting was a letter from King of Arms of the Chancery of the Order of St Michael and St George advising him that a seat had become available in the Chapel of the Order in St Paul's Cathedral to which, by virtue of his seniority, he was entitled as K.C.M.G.. King of Arms wanted to know whether he wished a plate affixed to his seat with his armorial bearings, or an enamelled representation of his crest, or a gilt plate on copper recording his name and date of birth. The choice was not difficult and Theiler sent his cheque for £14.14s.6d. covering the cost of the latter.

143
144 Alfred in due course received a copy of the *Cape Times* with a picture of the five honorary graduands upon whom the University of Cape Town had conferred doctorates (following in Theiler's case of 1911, the precedent of the University of the Cape of Good Hope, then incorporating Stellenbosch and Cape Town). Arnold, beaming urbanely, was the most portly (Emma had had to let out the necks of his shirts). Always stocky, he had thickened and become slightly bowed but, clean-shaven except for a neat moustache, his animated expression belied his greying hair. He was in fact 'resting' in Cape Town until Margaret and Gertrud were released on their respective school and college vacations and could join in a family safari. The Theiler concept of repose involved staying at an hotel, being extensively entertained by the Swiss, their friends and colleagues, going for drives and, in one awesome excursion which Emma wisely refused, visiting Dassen Island by tug from the Cape Town Docks to see penguins, Pa, Margaret, Gertrud, King and his son were horribly seasick and, stoutly professing pleasure at the experience, confessed they would not like to repeat it.

The motor tour which started on Boxing Day included every mountain pass and scenic drive on corrugated dusty roads in blazing summer heat from Wellington in the Cape to East Griqualand and back by a different route. It lasted nearly three weeks and Theiler sought out many of his old associates - Verney at Kokstad who had come to help him and Watkins-

145 Pitchford in the Rinderpest experiments in 1897, Professor Selmar Schonland and his son Basil (later knighted) at Graham's Town, Professor Dyer of the Plant Division and E. M. Robinson holidaying at Knysna, and others along the way. Parents and daughters took to the car every day with Arnold persisting that change did them good. Emma had feelings about the abominable roads and frequent burst tyres. Finally they left Wellington by train for further travellings in the Free State at Henrici's hands.

Theiler had less than three months in which to finish his work and they were bound to be disrupted by packing and farewells. There were also many disturbing features in the international and local scenes. H.M. King George V died, the radio being used for the first time to broadcast his funeral. The Italo-Abyssinian situation confused the whole world and in a brave display of moral rectitude, the League of Nations imposed sanctions against Italy. Hitler had made his animus more overt and legally outlawed the Jews. The Swastika was now the official flag of Germany whose Nazi regime was endorsed by 99% of the electorate after reoccupation of the Rhineland in violation of the Treaty of Versailles. From a position of power, Hitler meddled purposefully in the affairs of neighbouring peoples while extending an iron grip on every facet of the lives of his own. Many of Theiler's friends and colleagues were involved. He discussed with Emma the desirability of their European tour which would begin with passage on a Nazi ship. The general attitude in South Africa continued incredulous. The European scene, England included with its infamous Hoare-Laval agreement, wore an air of unreality – such a situation had never before been confronted and the ordinary citizen was at a loss to know how to approach it. No leadership came from local politicians and with customary 'alles sal regkom', the general public took refuge in indifference.

146 A deep compulsion lay upon Theiler to return to his spiritual home after nearly two years' absence. He struggled to complete his work but distractions, a touch of lumbago, concern over Eleanor whose condition deteriorated in the summer rains, and new obligations impeded him. The University of Pretoria made him an 'honorary professor' and during his last days at Onderstepoort, he pursued his dearest love and gave a few lectures to final-year students in the Veterinary Faculty which they deeply valued. One, M. de Lange who in his time became Deputy-Director of Veterinary Research, kept his verbatim notes of one of Theiler's last lectures – 'Rickets and Other Deficiency Diseases of the Osseous System'. The old man had lost none of his command of the particular principles of pathology which he had investigated nor of his phenomenal clarity in expounding them.

147 He had been remembered in Europe (the Societ  de Biologie in Paris elevated him from Corresponding Member to Associate) and Onderstepoort, now sadly taking its leave, would never forget him. He celebrated his 69th birthday among its staff, rejoicing in the news that Gertrud had been promoted to full Professor of Zoology at the Huguenot University College (though she had long fulfilled the function and been heavily over-worked, even representing the recently-deceased principal Miss Stafford on the Senate of the University of South Africa). Emma and he continued to worry about conditions in Germany but in the current mood, decided to leave their plans unaltered. They had spent their last weeks discharging their obligations to all who had entertained them and on Arnold's birthday gave a memorable dinner at the Pretoria Country Club to the senior staff and wives including P. J. du Toit, Gilles de Kock, P. J. J. Fourie, E. M. Robinson, Avril Malan, R. A. Alexander (later to become Director at O.P.) and, recently the recipient of the Scott Medal to Arnold's great gratification, Marguerite Henrici who was temporarily working in Pretoria. (Theiler was very proud of 'the best known Swiss woman in South Africa' and wrote an article about her for the home Press.) On the 14th April, P. J. du Toit gave a farewell dinner and on the 20th, the day of departure, Arnold received a letter from the University of Utrecht awarding him an honorary doctorate in Veterinary Medicine as part of the

celebration of its 300th anniversary on the 21st June. Similar awards had been made to the Prime Minister General Hertzog and his deputy General Smuts. Arnold would be in Europe at the time and wished personally to receive the honour.

151 On that day of tension and emotion, almost the whole of Onderstepoort's staff and wives and its students came to the station in an extraordinary demonstration of affection and regret. 'The students', Arnold wrote, 'pushed everyone aside'. An hour later, the faces of the Schaerers and other friends appeared at their carriage window as the train stopped at Johannesburg. At Wellington, there was Gertrud to take delivery of Emma's cherished sewing machine, bought in difficult days on the Rand in 1894, and then at last, Cape Town and a few days rest at an hotel – as far as their friends allowed.

152 With the Utrecht invitation still warm in his pocket and Parliament in session, Theiler called on Smuts with the assurance that he had altered his itinerary to represent South Africa at the ceremonies on the 21st June. Smuts himself had heard only a day or two before and nothing was yet officially arranged though it was certain that in the current state of international tension, neither he nor Hertzog would be able to accept. They talked of other things and Theiler unburdened himself on Hans and the lowly position he occupied at Onderstepoort. The clear blue eyes were fixed on the old man pleading for his son and striking an unusual chord in a potentate impatient of human frailties. Smuts wrote to du Toit asking for full information on Hans and within a few weeks, the Public Service Commission 'improved his position' by a higher notch in salary – 'more than he got at Boston', his mother observed.

153 The Schweizerverein staged a farewell dinner in the Cape Town Opera House and made Theiler its Honorary President. Consul Bothner and a host of friends added their farewells and flowers while *Ubena* prepared to leave. As Emma watched Gertrud's figure grow smaller on the wharf, emotion smote her and she wished she had stayed in South Africa. Always the sight of Table Mountain disappearing under the horizon proved irresistibly moving. The voyage would take 20 days and they soon made a regimen. Arnold spent every morning in the cabin working on an outline of the protocols of his experiments which he posted to Avril Malan at Southampton as part of the great coördinated work on which they had been engaged. Du Toit read it appreciatively and wrote him in Lucerne, detailing further developments and adding – 'I need hardly assure you that the sooner you come back, the more pleased we all shall be.'

* * *

154 Though the ship was packed, passengers even occupying the officers' quarters, the voyage was not unpleasant. Emma sat all day on deck, knitting industriously and methodically foreseeing the future. In the saloon, she listened attentively to their table companions – millionaire German industrialists and bankers who despised Hitler and were confident of their personal safety as heavy tax-payers. They had nothing against the French but everything against England to which they ascribed the ills of the world. Pa prospered by the good food and enjoyed the opportunity of visiting the Veterinary Department and Institut Pasteur at Dakar where *Ubena* unexpectedly took oil owing to a strike at Las Palmas.

After sundry excursions ashore at Southampton and Rotterdam, they finally disembarked at Hamburg and began a rushed three-week tour of Germany for Arnold 'to bring himself up to date' and renew his acquaintance with life-time associates. It was as if he were reliving his past in the horrifying context of the future. Dr Berg of Bayers who had spent two years testing 205 on Nagana in Zululand, met them in Berlin and took Arnold to his factories while Emma saw the sights of Leverkusen on Elberfeld. Professor Rössle and his staff entertained them. They saw the Olympic Village where later the arrival of Hitler at the Stadium would inspire Nazi athletes

to unpredictable feats. Friends met them again in Köln and Koblenz before they took Rhine ship to Wiesbaden. By then Alfred had forwarded to Theiler a resolution of the Senate of the Pretoria University that he should represent it at Utrecht and deliver a message.

155 At Wiesbaden, Dr Lichtenheld of German East Africa days took them in hand and Emma first began noting the slogans displayed widespread – ‘Wir können bauen durch dem Führer’ – ‘Die Juden sind unser Unglück’ – ‘Die Juden sind hier nicht geduldet’. They drove to Nuremberg, Dinkelsbühl and Rothenburg and on the 1st June, arrived in München where Arnold visited the Veterinary College and its previously coöperative professors who continued to do him honour. Then Kollmann of Boer War days fetched them by car for three days at Weitnau and, himself a member of the Nazi Party, told them of Hitler’s devices to combat the prevailing depression – the Youth Labour Camps, the building of autobahns, the abolition of class spirit and personal freedom, the strict control of production and retailing. Emma, meeting pro- and anti-Hitlerites, was impressed by what had been achieved, noting on a factory under construction a huge placard – ‘Dass wir hier bauen, verdanken wir dem Führer’. ‘In Germany’, she wrote, ‘we had very interesting days’; but when Kollmann drove them to Lindau, it was good to cross the lake by ship and set foot again in Switzerland. Alfred awaited them at Lucerne, accompanied by his son, Alfred 2 and Elsie Zurcher, his intended but not yet affianced bride. He was still making his way as an engineer.

157 In their headlong course through Europe, family affairs were quickly discussed and the Scandinavian tour arranged. Arnold was bent on seeing his scientific friends and in ten rain-sodden days, dragged a coughing Emma between Zurich, Berne and Basle to meet Kupfer and Welti, Walter Zschokke, the venerable botanist Carl Schröter now 81 who outlived him, Professor Burri and others who had been associated with his lifelong work. At Berne, the new 158 Museum of Natural History was specially unlocked and lit so that they might see the Hall of African Animals contributed by the Swiss naturalist Bernard de Watville who had been killed by a lion in Uganda, and by Arnold himself from his earliest bushveld days. The groups of lions, antelopes and other animals were mounted naturally and earned their commendation. To add to countless rendezvous, Henrici arrived in Basle after a trying voyage from the Cape.

159 Emma recovered in time to reach Utrecht by train on the 21st June and immediate immersion in crowds and festivities. Holland, as elsewhere in Europe, was still sunk in depression and the University’s august occasion, dignified by the presence of Queen Wilhemina and Princess Juliana, was conducted on economical lines. Arnold fretted at having to deliver Pretoria’s message in Afrikaans, now unfamiliar to him (the Dutch would have resented English), among a plethora of similar messages from other Universities. He was inconspicuous among the general throng. Of the thirty honorary degrees conferred, three were for Veterinary Science, Theiler of South Africa being joined by recipients from Sweden and Holland. There were various entertainments and some sight-seeing in hot summer weather; but he managed to spend one day at the Utrecht Veterinary School and made the acquaintance of Dutch colleagues. Then, taking the train to Hamburg, they continued their hectic travels in ever-increasing heat.

160 In his 70th year and apparently maniacally possessed with the desire to close the gaps in his knowledge of Europe because he was incapable of relaxation or repose, Theiler wittingly stretched his endurance to the limit. By train and ferry, Emma and he reached Copenhagen in withering heat which sapped their energy. The routine tour of the town and of the harbour by boat was all that they could manage and both confessed to being too tired to do anything but go to bed. Denmark, deeply depressed, was discouraging but they did the usual tours to Elsinore and the museums and Arnold visited the Veterinary College. Neither summer storms nor moving to Stockholm and Oslo improved conditions. In Oslo, it was so hot and humid even at night that neither slept. When Arnold went to the Veterinary Schools at both capitals, the damp heat was

almost insupportable. Surcease appeared in the persons of Claude Rimington and his wife (a Norwegian) who came in a small boat to take the weary Theilers to their island home at Askerøy. Then it rained and, having exhausted discussion of Rimington's work at Onderstepoort and forthcoming attendance at the Microbiological Conference, there was nothing to do except wait to be taken back to the mainland – with further train journeys to Oslo and Bergen and Voss and Stahlheim and back to Bergen. They were very tired.

161
162 When he failed to see his future clearly, restlessness always afflicted Theiler and taxed his tough constitution. Without committing himself, he had planned to return to South Africa. Now he wavered. The 13th International Veterinary Conference would take place in Zurich in 1938. He wanted to attend and the girls could arrange their leave to join them in Europe then. For the moment, he saw no further than the London Conference opening in a few days time. Neither he nor Emma had any idea what they would do when it ended. Max was already on the water, officially the delegate of the Rockefeller Foundation with all expenses paid and thereby obliged to use his time by visiting laboratories in London. He was jubilant about his progress in devising a vaccine against Yellow Fever and hoped soon to achieve it.

163
164 His parents crossed from Oslo to Newcastle on the 16th July and took train to London, putting up again at the Ivanhoe Hotel in Bloomsbury. Arnold went immediately to call on the High Commissioner at South Africa House and chatted expansively to te Water about his work and his then-current plans for the future. The following day (Sunday), Emma and he went to Waterloo Station to meet Max, Lillian and Noldi, now a lively 7-year old, after the transatlantic voyage and installed them in the Ivanhoe where Harry and Mrs Green joined them in the evening. They arranged to spend the next Sunday with the Greens at Surbiton. Arnold could hardly wait to tell Harry about his work at Onderstepoort and the direction it was now taking in his and du Toit's hands.

165 Being 'on duty', Max set out the next day on his visits to various scientific institutions while Lillian tactfully withdrew to show Noldi the sights of London. Emma and Arnold called at South Africa House and Arnold went on to have lunch with a friend Hans Visscher. Emma was always grateful when he was 'beschäftigt' and occupied. Otherwise, she said, he got bored and ran around too much. He came back to the hotel in deep distress, suffering frightfully from pains around his heart. Emma sent at once for Dr Pettavel. He diagnosed pressure from an inflated stomach, the heart being sound, and advised a Kur at some Bad. By evening, the pains had indeed gone and Arnold was up and about the following morning.

166
167 The experience had shaken him and he felt insecure. The Microbiological Conference would open a week hence and as a vice-president, he would attend the morning sessions and hear Max deliver his paper to which he greatly looked forward; but he would omit the afternoon excursions and evening entertainments. He remained in the hotel and Pettavel came daily, pronouncing him better and confiding to Emma that 'the attack had done him good in that it has at last convinced him that a man of his age should no longer undertake so much'. Local Swiss and other visitors came to see him which he enjoyed though feeling weak. He contemplated occupying himself with the 'Dissertation' on his work which pleased Emma lest he otherwise try to be too active.

168 Emma watched him carefully and with diminishing concern. His attack had occurred on Monday but by Wednesday, he was much better and even more improved on Thursday when he came down to lunch. After Stähelin's examination in 1932, they had discussed his condition and all that it implied. No one was less likely to have illusions than Arnold himself, whatever Pettavel said.

169 On Friday the 24th July, he came down to breakfast but found it tiring and after reading a letter from Gertrud, went to sleep in an armchair. No one disturbed them. Max was somewhere in London on his tour of visits and Lillian had taken Noldi to Surbiton to spend the day with

the Greens. Later a friend Widmer came to see him and when he had gone, they went in to lunch. As they waited for the second course, Arnold suddenly clutched the room-key and stood up. 'I am again getting an attack', he said and walked uncertainly toward the door. Before Emma could move, he grasped the back of a chair, turned toward her with a helpless look and collapsed. The waiters surged forward and Emma ran to the telephone to summon Pettavel. When she returned, they had put a cushion under his head, loosened his collar and placed ice over his heart. She took his hand, still warm. There was no pulse. Sir Arnold Theiler K.C.M.G. was dead.



The Unweiling by General Smuts (left) in teeming rain on the 15th November 1939 in the presence of some of Theiler's longstanding African staff (right).



Steynberg with his work on a fine day.



Viscount Bledisloe lays a wreath in January 1948.