

MÉMORIAL IN STYLE OF ZIMBABWE

BROAD OUTLINE OF VOORTREKKER MONUMENT

SUB-COMMITTEE TO FIND SITE

It is learned in Pretoria that the Voortrekker Memorial will be an imposing structure designed by the Pretoria architect, Mr. Gerard Moerdyk.

Scenes representing outstanding Voortrekker episodes will be carried out round the walls in relief, executed by Mr. Anton van Wouw.

The exact form of the structure has not yet been settled, as the details will depend to a large extent on the site selected.

SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE

Mr. Van Wouw has already started work on the bas reliefs, and many South African artists will be given an opportunity of doing work on the monument. Workers in marble, murals, bronze, Mosaic and other media are likely to be represented.

A sub-committee of the Voortrekker Monument Committee, representative of the four provinces, was appointed in January to consider the plans and designs which had been submitted. The Department of External Affairs was asked to get into touch with the South African representatives in European and American capitals to obtain as much information as possible relative to national monuments. Several designs were obtained, and eventually the design submitted by Mr. Moerdyk was unanimously selected, and it was decided to adopt it, with certain alterations. It is understood that between 50 and 60 designs were submitted when the project was thrown open to competition.

SURROUNDED BY LAAGER WALL.

The monument will be a massive stone structure, showing some trace of the Zimbabwe style, as small white granite stones will be used, and the Chevron motif will be introduced, as well as other indigenous art motifs. It will probably be rectangular in shape, and provision has been made for stained glass windows.

The inside of the monument will be in the nature of a shrine of remembrance, and will contain panels and bas reliefs depicting the history of the Great Trek. This work will be carried out by Mr. Van Wouw, who will also carve a piece of statuary.

The whole of the monument will be surrounded by a wall resembling a laager, on which Voortrekker wagons will be depicted in relief and silhouette. Within this wall there will be a meeting place capable of accommodating many thousands of people, and adjacent to the monument suitable camping grounds will be provided.

The sub-committee will next Monday begin a tour of the sites advocated. It is understood that 42 towns and districts in the Transvaal, Natal and Free State have submitted claims for the erection of the memorial. Pretoria has been pressing its claims for some time past, and a memorandum has been prepared by the city clerk and by Professor Bosman, of the University of Pretoria, who has concentrated on the historical aspect of Pretoria's claim.

Among the places to be visited are Maritzburg, on Tuesday morning; Ladysmith, Harrismith, Kroonstad and Bloemfontein. The committee may also visit the site of the battle of Blood River. The sub-committee will return to Pretoria and there prepare its report for the central committee, which will in turn probably submit its recommendations to the Government. After the site has been selected the final design will be prepared. "The idea is there, and that idea will remain, but the actual shape may have to be modified," said a member of the committee.

It is not likely that finality will be reached until near the end of the year.

SENTIMENT AND PRACTICABILITY

The following are the members of the sub-committee: Mr. E. G. Jansen, of Natal, Speaker of the Assembly (chairman), Senator F. S. Malan (Capetown), Dr. N. J. van der Merwe (Free State), Mr. van Rensburg (Free State), Mr. I. Lombard, of Johannesburg (treasurer), Mr. J. J. Scheepers (secretary), and Mr. G. Moerdyk (Pretoria).

It has been pointed out that the choice of a site will depend on several factors—general practicability and suitability, accessibility, the historical claim, and sentiment. Natal's claims have been most insistent backed by powerful historical and sentimental factors, and there are other places, centres of populous districts, which may be said to have strong claims on the grounds of accessibility.