

# Waar President Kruger in 1895 en 1900 in Lourenco Marques tuis was

**Dr. W. Punt skryf :**

Verskeie kere is my deur persone in Lourenco Marques vertel dat Pres. P. Kruger in Oktober 1900 in die huis van Gerard Pott in die Vasco da Gamatuin gewoon het. Verder word verhaal dat die Z.A.R. die huis vir die president as strandhuis laat bou het. Hierdie twee bewerings word nou as geskiedkundige feite deur vele Afrikaners en Portugese aanvaar. Ondersoek het aan die lig gebring dat die bewerings foutief is. Dokumentêre bewyse vir die bewerings kon niemand voorlê nie.

By geleentheid van my onlangse besoek aan Lourenco Marques het ek van Dr. Karel Pott die ware toedrag van sake verneem. Hy het nog die oorspronklike brief van sy vader in sy besit en hier volg die afskrif daarvan.

Lourenco Marques, 16th July, 1922.

To the Editor,

The Lourenco Marques Guardian.

Sir,

In your yesterday's issue reporting a visit of the delegates of the Congress to the local Museum, you state in the English section that "this was formerly President Kruger's seaside residence" and in the Portuguese section that the Museum is installed in the "house which belonged to President Kruger." As hundreds of local residents and no doubt a great number of people in the Union and Europe know, this is not in accordance with facts and the office of the registrar of deeds can give proof that President Kruger never appropriated my residence. The history is that I bought the ground in 1886 and till 1898 prepared it to receive a dwelling house.

I then got plans drawn up by an architect from Holland and in 1899 and 1900 I built my residence according to my taste, living in the meantime in the house in the Avenida da Republica next to Avenida Buildings.

It was in that humble house that President Kruger was twice my guest and very much pleased he was with it as it had not a single step or staircase.

I occupied my new residence, now the Museum, in September 1900 and President Kruger never resided there, not even for an hour. The fact that while I owned that property I was Consul for the Netherlands, Consul General for the Orange Free State, Consul General for the South African Republic, agent for the Castle Mail Packets Co., etc., does not include that the Queen of the Netherlands, President Steyn, President Kruger or Sir Donald Currie, etc., could appropriate my private property and I am positive that none had the slightest wish to own a residence in this Town. Though, after being the owner of the Museum for 25 years and after a bad attack of eye disease, the large house did not suit me, and it was taken over by a financial company in Amsterdam which sold it to the Portuguese Government in 1914. It was first used as office of the Secretary General and later as a museum.

I shall be obliged if you will publish this letter in both sections of your paper and rectify your wrong statement also in both sections, as above all delegates to a Congress of science and school children should know the **true history** and not believe an invented yarn, and even less leave with the impression that President Kruger had stolen my property.

I do not know the necessity there was to refer yesterday to the late President Kruger in this manner. If you had such a strong wish to print his name, you might have referred to the fact that the day before yesterday on the 14th July, the day of the visit, it was 18 years ago that President Kruger, an exile, died at Clarens in Switzerland.

This might have interested some of the delegates and also local residents who remember the late President **who certainly has done no harm to this port.**

Also the fact that a local resident and foreigner had enough confidence in the future of this town and in their climate to build such a residence in 1899, might have impressed the delegates to the Congress.

We had no wharf yet, few hardened streets and none near my residence, now the Museum, I then built, no tramways, neither taxis, the public gardens were a swamp, but we had the port and that was evidently enough for me.

Thanking you, I am

Yours truly,

(G. Pott).

G. Pott  
Avenida Joao de Deus.