

DOES VOORTREKKER MONUMENT CONTAIN A SECRET?

DOES some secret lie within the massive walls of the Voortrekker Monument just outside Pretoria? So closely is it guarded, and such strict precautions are being taken to prevent anybody from entering or photographing it, that the public is beginning to weave a mystery round the huge edifice, the construction of which is likely to cost the Government £350,000.

Like the Great Pyramid in ancient Egypt, to which only the high priests had access, the Voortrekker Monument can be looked upon by the ordinary public only from a distance. The "high priests" of Pretoria's vast shrine appear to be the members of the Central National Monuments Committee

and its architect, Mr. Moerdyk, whose daughter was married there a few months ago.

The photographs of this wedding are, in fact, the only pictures of the interior of the monument which have been made available to the public for a considerable time.

Not only is the monument out of bounds to the public at the express command of Dr. E. G. Jansen, chairman of the Central National Monuments Committee, but a native guard is on duty day and night to prevent members of the public from entering the padlocked gates.

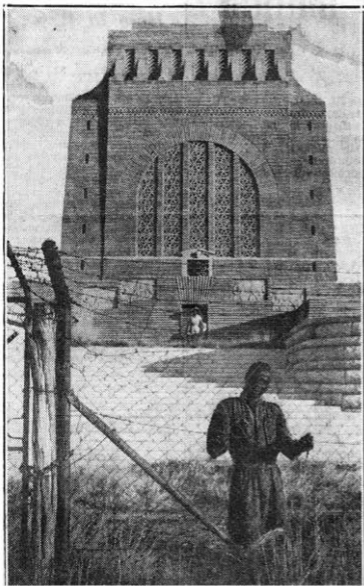
PERMISSION REFUSED

Dr. Jansen refused a "Rand Daily Mail" reporter and photographer permission to visit the monument on Saturday in order to photograph the interior. They were prevented from approaching by a high fence topped by barbed-wire, and the photographer had to be content with taking pictures through a telescopic lens.

The foundation stone of the monument was laid nine years ago—in 1938—but it is expected that the unveiling will not take place until towards the end of 1949.

Dr. Jansen will shortly make a statement on the matter.

The monument is already an imposing structure from the outside, but very little has been done to the inside. Grass is growing all around, and wood-pigeons have made their home in the unfinished interior.



GUARDING A MYSTERY?: A native guard stands behind a wire fence surrounding the Voortrekker Monument near Pretoria. He is on duty night and day, and the public is prohibited from entering.