

SIMON VAN DER STEL'S JOURNAL

OF HIS

EXPEDITION TO NAMAQUALAND,

1685-6.

EDITED FROM THE MANUSCRIPT IN THE LIBRARY OF
TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, BY

GILBERT WATERHOUSE, LITT.D., F.R.G.S.,

FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
PROFESSOR OF GERMAN IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN.

With forty-four Plates and a Sketch Map.



LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.,
LONDON . NEW YORK . TORONTO.

HODGES, FIGGIS, AND CO..
DUBLIN.

1932.

bevonden ons op de breete van 32 : 58 min
en lengte van 38 : 57 min :

Woonsdagh den 5 : d^o 's morgens vertrocken wy van dese deurdrift lieten een seer hoogen bergh aende linckerhandt van ons leggen $\frac{1}{3}$ myl voor by dese gemarcheert synde, passeerde wy een spruytje met soet water en naer dat wy veele en verscheyde Coursen gehad hadden quamen aen een fonteyn daer schoon gras en water was, waer ontrent wy oock een kraeltje aentroffen behoorende aen voorsz : Sonquas alwaer niemandt in gevonden wierd, alsoo behalven de vyff die noch by ons waeren de resteerende haer op de jacht hadden begeven, onse cours vervolgden wy noorden aen langhs den pieket bergh, komende aen een rustplaets daer wy doende waeren om te sien of de selve van water en gras genoegh voorsien was, 't welck wy alsoo vonden, ondertussen soo vertoonden hem een Rhenoster synde

September

van ongelooffelycke groote die met een groote furie en quaetheyt recht midden op onsen treyn aenquam, daer hy langhs liep tot achter toe alwaer D' E H^r Command^r met syn kales stond op wien hy het aensettede hebbende D' E H^r Command^r qualyck soo veel tydt om uyt de kales te komen, springende daer evenwel uyt met een donderbus inde handt en leyde alsoo op het beest dat geen 6 treden van hem was aen om vuer te geven doch de donderbus weygerde springende de achterste rust op de voorste en het woedende dier 't welck wy anders geen staet maecte ofte soude D' E Heer Command^r in ons presentie verslonden hebben liep hem tot groot geluck raekende aen het lyff voorby geloovende dat 't selve schrikte vande schoot die een vande wildschutten hem gaff loopende 't selve voorts met een groote snelheyt van ons af, verscheyde and're die te paerd waeren geseten wisten het

wy genootsaecht waeren stil te blyven
leggen, in dese rivier gelyck mede inde

September

Bergh Rivier werd vis gevonden gelyckende seer wel in gedaente den Berm in Holland hier leggende soo bevonden wy dat de Eliphants rivier noch vermeerdert werd, met een Riviertje 't welck sigh landwaerts in streckte ZZO en NNW en soo wy vande Gregricquas konde vernemen syn oorspronck nam uyt Hesiquas gebergte ende word langhs heen bewoont door sonquas door ondersoek en na richtinge bevinden wy dat de voorsz: sonquas syn soo veel als d'armen in Europa, waer van jede natie van hottentots de syne heeft die van haer gebruyckt werden om kondeschap te geven wanneer sy eenige vrende natie gewaer worden, sy rooven van haer eygen kralen in wiens dienst dat sy syn niets, maer wel van andere het sy oorlogh ofte vrede dewyl sy gelyck voorn vande Obiquas verhaelt mede niets hebben als het geene sy op den roof haelen.

Maandagh den 17: d^o 's morgens met het aenbreecken vanden dageraet namen de vryluyden die ons tot dus verre met haer wagens geconvoyeert hadden haer afscheyt, en op haer verzoek gaf D' E H^r Command^r haer een ordonnantie om te mogen schieten Zee-koeyen, Elanden, en Rhenosters, vermits de gedcurige regen die tot den middagh continueerde konde wy onse bagacie maer ten deele overbrengen, hadden 's avondts de breete van 31: 40 min: ende lengte van 38: 38 min: verbeterde cours en veerheyte NO ten N 6 gra: Oost! 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ myl.

September

Dingsdagh den 18: d^o 's morgens met moyweer brachten wy onse bagacie aende overkant vande Eliphants rivier, en vertrocken van daer des naermiddags ten 2 uyren en

whole day we took our altitude in the evening and discovered our latitude to be $32^{\circ} 58'$ and our longitude $38^{\circ} 57'$.

Wednesday the 5th. We left this drift in the morning, and after passing a very high mountain on our left at a distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ mile we crossed a fresh-water stream and then, after many changes of direction, reached a spring where there was good grass and water. We came upon a small kraal in this neighbourhood belonging to the aforesaid Sonquas, but found nobody within. With the exception of the five Sonquas who were still with us, the rest had gone hunting. We followed a northerly course along the Piquetberg, and reached a camping ground where we were at some pains to discover whether it was sufficiently supplied with grass and water. This we found to be the case. In the meantime a rhinoceros of incredible size appeared and charged the middle of our column with great rage and fury, running along it to the rear, where the Honourable Commander was with his carriage. It attacked the Honourable Commander, who had barely time to leave his carriage. He jumped out, however, with a blunderbuss in his hand and aimed at the beast, which was barely six paces from him. But the blunderbuss missed fire, the rear catch striking the front one, and the infuriated beast, which we firmly believed would have devoured the Honourable Commander in our presence, fortunately ran past him, just grazing his body. We believe that it was frightened by a shot from one of our hunters. It ran away from us with great speed. Several of our party who were on horseback were unable to avoid it and dismounted in great commotion, receiving various injuries.

This day we had crossed many hills, all with sandy or shingly soil. The above-mentioned Piquetberg, along which we had marched and under which we still stood, is so called because when the Honourable Company was at war with the Goenjemans in Governor Goske's time some of the Company's servants enjoyed themselves playing picquet there. For this reason they gave it the name of Piquetberg. Estimated course and distance $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ west of N by W, 3 miles; estimated latitude $32^{\circ} 48'$; no altitude obtained.

Thursday the 6th. We stayed here owing to a heavy fall of rain, which prevented us from moving. We gave this place the name of Rhenoster Kraal on account of the accident which befell us there. We also found here a kind of European flax.

Friday the 7th. In the morning at 7 o'clock we left this camp and set our course to the west, still following the aforesaid Piquetberg. We found good clay and gravel soil, plentifully covered with grass and wild oats and watered by various brooks, which rise in the aforesaid mountain. There was everywhere a good supply of wood for fuel and timber. One of the burghers, having gone ahead of our column, had shot an eland weighing, so we estimated, at least a thousand pounds. The result was that after marching only two hours we had to camp in order to cut up this beast and take the meat with us for our requirements. We camped on a very wide plain,

after various changes of course, reached Elephants' River at a point where it had two branches. Marching along it for a short distance we came to the drift and camped there, as this was the place where we had to be ferried across. This river has its source in the mountains which lay east of us and it runs, with many bends, towards the west, finally discharging its waters in the sea. It takes its name from the Elephants which are often found in large numbers along its course. On its banks grow willows, also thorn trees, which bear a fruit like Turkish beans, but altogether wild, and disagreeable to the taste. This camp was abundantly supplied with grass. Estimated course and distance 2° east of NE by E, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles; estimated latitude $31^{\circ} 40'$ and longitude $38^{\circ} 38'$.

Sunday the 16th. We made preparations to transport our baggage across Elephants River but rain made this impossible, and we were therefore forced to stay in camp. In this river, as in the Berg River, a fish is found which closely resembles the barbel in Holland in appearance. Whilst we were here we found that the Elephants' River is further augmented by a stream running SSE and NNW, which rises, as we learnt from the Gregriquas, in the mountains of the Hesiquas. Its banks are inhabited by Sonquas. By inquiry and information received we find that these Sonquas are just the same as the poor in Europe, each tribe of Hottentots having some of them and employing them to bring news of the approach of a strange tribe. They steal nothing from the kraals of their employers, but regularly from other kraals, whether it be war or peace, possessing nothing, as previously related of the Obiquas, except what they acquire by theft.

Monday the 17th. In the morning at dawn the burghers who had convoyed us thus far with their waggons took leave of us, and at their request the Honourable Commander gave them an authorisation to shoot hippopotamus, eland, and rhinoceros. Owing to the continued rain, which persisted until mid-day, we could move only part of our baggage across. In the evening our latitude was $31^{\circ} 40'$ and longitude $38^{\circ} 38'$; corrected course and distance 6° east of NE by N, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Tuesday the 18th. In the morning, in fair weather, we moved our baggage to the other side of Elephants' River and commenced our march at two in the afternoon, directing our course uphill towards the mountains. As far as the mountains we had good gravel soil. Thence we reached low land by the river and camped there. The ground on which we stood was knee-deep in grass and wild oats. This day one of our men shot a hare, very like the European hare, except for the ears, which were uncommonly large—almost as large as a donkey's ears. Estimated distance $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

Wednesday the 19th. In the morning, in misty weather, we left our camp and set our course up a hill. Crossing this we made a detour past two watercourses, which discharge their water into the aforesaid river. Then we came to a plain stretching for $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the north. It was so abundantly and so thickly overgrown with wild oats that one would have