

## George Jesse Heys (1852-1939) in Pretoria

*Bridget Theron*\*

The name George Jesse Heys is inextricably linked with that of Pretoria. It was in his imposing home, Melrose House, in Jacob Maré Street overlooking a leafy-green Burgers Park, that the Treaty of Vereeniging was signed, bringing the Anglo-Boer War to an end on 31 May 1902. This was however by no means George Heys's only claim to fame. Of British descent, as indeed were most of Pretoria's business elite at the time,<sup>1</sup> he was one of the then Transvaal Republic's most successful entrepreneurs. In the late nineteenth century, initially as a shopkeeper and then as co-owner of Geo Heys & Co Express Saloon Coach Service, which linked Pretoria to other developing regions countrywide,<sup>2</sup> Heys made a great deal of money which he invested shrewdly. When railway development overtook coach transport, he branched out into extensive property ownership and innumerable other lucrative business enterprises.<sup>3</sup> He was also quick to take advantage of the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, and his books of account in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century show evidence of extensive trading in stocks and shares, as well as investment in many mining ventures. He was, for example the major shareholder in Slaaihoek Mines Ltd, a highly profitable gold-mine near Machadodorp, which mined nearly three quarters of a million pounds worth of gold between 1921 and 1936, and which reputedly was the largest privately-owned gold-mine in South Africa.<sup>4</sup>

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1. B. Theron, *Pretoria at War 1899-1900* (Protea, Pretoria, 2000), p 39.
2. V. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria: Buildings and Personalities of the City in the 19th Century* (Balkema, Cape Town, 1971), pp 69-70. Vivien Allen is a great-granddaughter of George Heys.
3. An invaluable source on Heys's financial affairs is I.R. Cowie, "A Brief Analysis of the Financial Affairs of G.J. Heys", unpublished article, 2002. Ian Cowie's wife, Prudence, is Vivien Allen's daughter, and thus George Heys's great-great-granddaughter. Ian Cowie is also one of the trustees of Tudor Estates (Pty) Ltd, the company formed by Heys in 1925.
4. Geo J. Heys Collection, Tudor Chambers, Church Square, Pretoria (hereafter GJH): Selected Contemporary Documents (hereafter SD) 27, Correspondence re prospecting/gold-mining at Slaaihoek and Weltevreden, T. Angus –

This study not only makes an assessment of George Heys the coaching proprietor and businessman. It also probes his role as a loyal, naturalized Transvaler, and analyses his strong identification with and commitment to his British background. There was a great deal about Heys, his elegant British-born Victorian wife, Emma Jane, and his three daughters, that was decidedly British. In certain important respects, then, this study ties in with current research on the emergence of a shared sense of British identity among settlers in the colonial empire, which linked these communities to the mother country – a sense, in this case, of British South Africanness. Melrose House, despite its setting in an isolated little republican town of the 1880s and 1890s, was tastefully furnished from upmarket British stores, and could well have passed as a fashionable home in the wealthy outskirts of Victorian London. Then too, immediately after Pretoria had come under British control, and eminent personae like Sir Richard Solomon and Lord Selborne had taken office in the pre-union Transvaal Colony, George Heys and his family eased effortlessly into the new social routine of imperial functions, dinner parties, and “at homes”<sup>5</sup> – they were exemplary British South Africans with impeccable British credentials and connections. Not a political animal himself, George Heys shunned the public eye<sup>6</sup>, but after 1910 he and his family were certainly on friendly terms with leading figures in the Union government, including the Union’s first two prime ministers, Louis Botha<sup>7</sup> and Jan Smuts.<sup>8</sup>

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Messrs Slaaihoek Mines Ltd, 23 October 1936. See also C.J. Beyers (ed), *Dictionary of South African Biography* IV (HSRC, Pretoria, 1981), p 234.

5. GJH: Box 8, Contents of Melrose dining room desk (hereafter Box 8), envelope of visiting cards/invitations to social and official functions. Among them is one from Lady Solomon to an “at home” at Government House on 2 August 1905; another is to a formal banquet on 23 May 1905 for Lord Selborne, the High Commissioner and Governor of the Transvaal.
6. These British links were also retained after Union. See GJH: Box 9, Melrose, lists of furniture, family notes, “Coaching file” (hereafter Box 9), Invitation from Governor-General & Viscountess Gladstone to an “at home” in Pretoria on 2 December 1911.
7. GJH: Box 9, Annie Botha – Mrs Heys, 26 May 1910, thanking her for the congratulations on the appointment of Louis Botha as Prime Minister. She refers informally to “all the nice things you said about him,” and sends the Heys family “kindest wishes”.
8. The youngest Heys daughter, Jessie Maud, was married in 1911 to Ernest Frederick Cambridge Lane, a government official, at one stage private secretary to Smuts. *Who’s Who, 1933* (A&C Black, London, 1933), p 1868. See also GJH: Box 8, J.C. Smuts – Jessie Lane, signed but undated note thanking her for her gift to him of a cigarette box, which he would “always treasure”.

This study of George Jesse Heys, unlike passing references to him in a number of publications on Pretoria,<sup>9</sup> and the many obituaries which appeared after his death in 1939, is based almost exclusively on primary documentary material. With the kind permission of Heys's Pretoria-based descendants, a large collection of important historical papers, unresearched until now, was sorted laboriously in 2004 from the jumble of business letter books, correspondence and family memorabilia accumulated during Heys's lifetime. Most of this material has been kept in boxes and trunks in a storeroom in Tudor Chambers, while some came to light in George Heys's original study, an impressive, leathery office adorned with original portraits of George and his wife, photographs of the farms they owned – and which the family still owns – in the eastern Transvaal, alongside a magnificent oil-painting of a Heys coach rumbling through the rugged Transvaal countryside. Tudor Chambers, still standing proudly on Pretoria's Church Square, is by way of a monument to George Heys. Designed by a British architect employed specially for the project, it was built in 1904 and was one of the most modern and structurally-advanced office blocks of the day. Today, more than a century later, it still houses Tudor Estates, the family-run company Heys formed in 1925 to ensure that the empire he had formed and the assets he had accumulated during his lifetime, would not be eroded on his death. He played a unique role which spanned not only the early history of Pretoria and the republican Transvaal, but also that of the British Transvaal Colony and the Union of South Africa. He was indeed a remarkable man.

### **The young George Heys**

George Jesse Heys was born in Durban in 1852. He was the son of Thomas Heys, who emigrated to southern Africa from Lancashire, northern England, in the 1840s. Natal was a British Crown Colony at the time, annexed by Britain in 1842. The family home was on the Berea; Thomas Heys ran a men's outfitting shop in West Street. The young George was educated at the newly-established Durban High School, where he was apparently at the top of his class on a regular basis.<sup>10</sup>

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9. Notably Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*; City Council of Pretoria, *Pretoria 1855-1955* (Van Schaik, Pretoria, 1955); L. Dunston, *Young Pretoria, 1899-1913* (Heer, Pretoria, 1975); C. Jeppe, *The Kaleidoscopic Transvaal* (Chapman & Hall, London, 1906).
  10. C.J. Beyers (ed), *Dictionary of South African Biography* IV, p 233; Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 171.

Although there is evidence that he was a fine horseman, it is unlikely that he excelled in any contact sports while at school – his passport shows that as an adult he was a meagre five feet tall.<sup>11</sup> Small he certainly was, but beneath his twinkling personality and keen sense of humour, lay a razor-sharp business brain and a steely sense of purpose when it came to matters financial. He was undoubtedly a man to be reckoned with.

Thomas Heys would have liked the bright young George to train as a lawyer, but instead he chose to join a commercial company in Alice, a position he abandoned in the early 1870s when the promise of good business opportunities at the Kimberley diamond fields beckoned. In the bustling new mining town, Heys set up a general trading store and established himself to the extent that in 1873, still only twenty-one years of age, he married Emma Jane Harris of Durban.<sup>12</sup> He and Janie – as Mrs Heys was fondly known – were still living in Kimberley when their first two daughters, Florence Pearl (always, it seems, known as Pearl) and Mabel Ethel (who was promptly nicknamed Mabs)<sup>13</sup> were respectively born in 1874 and 1879.<sup>14</sup>

In 1879 the family moved to Pretoria. The Transvaal had been annexed by Britain in 1877 and Pretoria was the seat of a rather tenuous British administration. George Heys had no argument with this and soon put down roots that were to remain in the Transvaal for the rest of his life, despite his regular trips overseas. The first Pretoria home which he built for his growing family, was called Natal Villa and was a modest dwelling on the corner of Minnaar and Andries Streets. It was here that Jessie Maud, nicknamed Birdie, the couple's third daughter, was born a

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11. See, for example, the evidence of another of Heys's granddaughters, K.J.H. Jeffreys, "Life with Oupa" (Unpublished reminiscences, Johannesburg, 1980), pp 1-2. GJH: Box 10, Passport, Union of South Africa, issued 30 March 1925, George Jesse Heys.
  12. C.J. Beyers (ed), *Dictionary of South African Biography* IV, pp 233-234; Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 175. GJH: Box 10, According to her 1925 British passport, Emma Jane Heys was born in Chichester, England in 1854.
  13. GJH: In all family correspondence between the sisters and their parents they are addressed as Pearl and Mabs. They also sign themselves in like manner. Because, from their high school years in the 1890s, the Heys girls were educated at a private school in London, there was a great deal of family letter-writing during their teenage years. This was continued in later years when two of the daughters, Pearl and Jessie, settled in England after their marriages.
  14. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, pp 171, 175. For dates of births, deaths, marriages, etcetera in the Heys family, see also GJH: Box 6, K's Notes on Weltevreden and Melrose (hereafter Box 6), Folder marked "Cemetery"; and P. Freer, *Charles Christie and a Few of his Friends: A Commemorative Tribute* (Potchefstroom University Library, Potchefstroom, 1972), p 6.

few years later in 1884. Meanwhile, by the time the war between the Boers and the British broke out in 1880, Heys was already the proprietor of a successful trading store in rented premises in Church Street East. According to his great-granddaughter, during this brief war he served in No 3 Company, Pretoria Rifles, a volunteer detachment which defended the British-held town under Boer siege until it was lifted in March 1881.<sup>15</sup>

Settled comfortably in a Pretoria of the 1880s that had been restored to the Boers, this dapper little businessman became a well-liked and familiar figure walking to Turkstra's in Market Street to drink coffee and discuss current affairs each morning with his friends before embarking on his day's work.<sup>16</sup> Janie, at five feet eight, was a full eight inches taller than her husband, and with the inevitable elaborate Victorian hat, she must have towered above him;<sup>17</sup> but family photographs are all carefully posed and no one, it seems, gave the matter a second thought. Janie Heys was a dedicated mother, homemaker and gracious hostess in the best traditions of Victorian womanhood,<sup>18</sup> and the couple had a very wide circle of friends, most of them from business circles in town. As was fast becoming the vogue for the wealthy, they also became inveterate international travellers, visiting well-nigh every accessible corner of the globe.<sup>19</sup> Over the years, again in line with their English background, the Heys couple became leading members of the many British-oriented social clubs and charity organisations that blossomed in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Pretoria.<sup>20</sup> It was clear that by the early 1880s, George Heys was growing increasingly affluent. He bought more property in Pretoria to supplement the family income, opened a larger

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15. GJH: Box 6, Folder marked "Cemetery"; Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 175.

16. Jeffreys, "Life with Oupa", p 6.

17. GJH: Box 10, Brown File, British passport, 1925, Emma Jane Heys.

18. Victorian women were seen as "angels in the house" and their "proper place" was one of domesticity rather than having any significant role in the public domain. B.M. Theron, "Gender and Identity: Victorian Women and Empire in South Africa During the Anglo-Boer War", unpublished paper presented at the British World Conference III, Melbourne University, 3 July 2004.

19. There are many travel itineraries, photographs and curios in the collection at Tudor Chambers. The bookshelves in Melrose House were "full of guide books to every country in Europe and several outside it" including India and Egypt, "and they were all visited". Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 177.

20. GJH: Box 8, Contents of Melrose dining room desk. Also Box 5, Postcards, pamphlets etc (hereafter Box 5), Bundle marked: "From EJH's Inlaid writing desk". Janie was on the committee of the Pretoria Croquet Club, and the couple were members of a many Pretoria social and cultural societies including The Pretoria Music Union, Park Lawn Tennis Club, The Transvaal Home Industries Union and The Pretoria Art Association. They were also on the Church Committee of Pretoria's Wesleyan Church.

store in Van der Walt Street and began to think of building a more spacious home on two erven he had acquired in Jacob Mare Street.<sup>21</sup> He also hit on the idea of starting a line of “express coaches” to link Pretoria with other developing regions, and it was this venture that really put him securely on the Pretoria business map.

### The coaching line proprietor

The earliest of George Heys’s business correspondence that has survived, is dated from 1889, but advertisements and timetables for his Express Saloon Coach Service show that his coaching business was probably set up in about 1882, soon after the reinstatement of republican status in the Transvaal. Geo Heys & Company, under which name the coaching concern operated, was jointly owned by Heys and Edmund Francis Bourke. Bourke was another ex-Natal, Pretoria-based pioneer with an impressive record as an entrepreneur. He and Heys became close friends, as well as business partners, and over the years they stood in for one another in the management of their joint ventures when either one was visiting family “back home” in England, or holidaying overseas.<sup>22</sup>

Geo Heys & Co can certainly claim to be one of the earliest and most extensive coaching companies operating in the southern African interior in the pre-rail era. Radiating from Pretoria, Heys’s coaches took to the road – often mere tracks in the veld – in four main lines.<sup>23</sup> One of the most lucrative was the coach route to and from Kimberley, which by this time was already connected to the south by rail to Cape Town; the lure of the diamond fields ensured that Heys’s coaches were filled with eager travellers to and from the interior. The second route, the Barberton line, ran via Machadodorp to the gold diggings of the eastern Transvaal, with one branch to Lydenburg and another to Pilgrim’s Rest. A third route linked Pretoria with the head of the Natal railway line at

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21. Allen, *Kruger’s Pretoria*, p 177.

22. Cowie, “A Brief Analysis”, p 2. Eddie Bourke’s major company was The Bourke Trust and Estate Company in which Heys was an equal partner in terms of an agreement signed in 1892. See GJH: SD 9, Agreement with The Bourke Trust & Estate Co Ltd, 16 May 1892.

23. Before establishing a new route, Heys made a careful investigation of prevalent conditions. Family legend has it that he went on a solo horseback ride to assess the feasibility of opening the Natal route. He was also responsible for constructing the first road (also for his coaches), running from Waterval Boven to Waterval Onder and to Lydenburg. The nature of the terrain meant that this project was both difficult and expensive. Allen, *Kruger’s Pretoria*, p 69; Jeffreys, “Life with Oupa”, Section 2, pp 1-2.

Charlestown. The trading town of Pietersburg in the north was the terminus for Geo Heys & Co's fourth route, and here, certainly by the 1890s, passengers could transfer to coaches run by H.J. & C.H. Zeederberg, whose Northern Coach & Mail Service ran a bi-weekly service from Pietersburg to Bulawayo and on to Salisbury.<sup>24</sup> Of course, taking advantage of the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, Heys lost no time in establishing a daily service from Pretoria to Johannesburg<sup>25</sup> and also altered the Kimberley route to run via the Rand.<sup>26</sup> Years later, reminiscing about his coaching days, Heys claimed that at its height, the business had "2 000 animals working".<sup>27</sup>

This impressive coaching network involved a considerable outlay of capital. Over the years Heys imported 59 hand-made coaches from Abbot-Downing, an American manufacturing company in New Hampshire. Each coach was drawn by a team of ten horses or mules and fully loaded could seat twelve passengers inside and six to eight more on the roof. Heys's running costs did not only involve buying coaches. The Natal Line, for example, only one of Heys's four lines, and by no means the busiest, utilised no less than 480 horses and mules. They had to be changed every ten to fifteen miles and required stables and fodder at strategic points along the way. One large coach, eight smaller coaches, three carts, a wagon, and an assortment of harnesses and other small equipment were also part of the total evaluation of just under £17 000 – a very sizeable sum at the time – for the Natal Line<sup>28</sup> when Heys decided, with railway development moving ever closer, to put it up for sale.<sup>29</sup>

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24. As the railway advanced to Pretoria and Johannesburg, Heys shortened his Natal route to the rail-head; *Natal Advertiser*, 20 April 1939. At no time did he run a coach route through to Durban. At the end of 1895, he phased the line out completely; GJH: Letter Book 1, Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896. GJH: Box 9, *The Press*, July, 1895, Illustrated souvenir, official opening of the Delagoa Bay – Pretoria Railway Line. Advertisement, Northern Coach & Mail Service, H.J. & C.H. Zeederberg.
  25. This particular trip took about five hours in good weather ... if there were no delays. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 73.
  26. C.J. Beyers (ed), *Dictionary of South African Biography* IV, p 233; Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 70.
  27. GJH: Box 10, *South Africa*, 17 September 1938.
  28. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, pp 72-73; GJH: Box 1, Geo Heys, Private Papers, 1889-1898, (hereafter Box 1), Natal Coach Service, W.D.'s Valuation of Line, 1895.
  29. GJH: Letter Book 1, E.F. Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896. The railway was due to reach the Rand on 15 November 1895, but the date for Heys to stop his coaches was later extended "for a month" when there were delays in completion of the railway.

Running a coach service with a reputation such as Heys had earned for his “express coaches”, called for some degree of managerial skill.<sup>30</sup> He had to coordinate bookings and ticket sales at the head office in Pretoria, as well as his four agencies in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pietermaritzburg. He also employed a manager at each outward terminus to run the particular coaching route, order fodder for the animals, control the drivers’ timetable and supervise the work of the stable-hands. Then too, long journeys often necessitated making bookings for overnight accommodation.<sup>31</sup> Heys realised that while transporting passengers was the mainstay of the company, he could also accrue profit from government contracts for the delivery of mail. One of the earliest he was able to secure, was for mail delivery to Kimberley in 1888 and subsequently he undertook this service on most of his routes, only losing out to one or two of his competitors in the occasional year.<sup>32</sup> In 1896 Heys also hit upon the idea of offering to transport “grain and food supplies in up-country districts” for the republican authorities.<sup>33</sup> There is no indication of whether his suggestion to Kruger’s government was received favourably or not; perhaps with war looming, the government was more concerned with armament and the defence of Pretoria, than the expansion of transportation into rural Transvaal.

The coaching business was not without its hazards. There are colourful, unsubstantiated tales of ragamuffins in the veld (nothing as romantic as highwaymen on a moonlit moor) accosting the coaches and demanding money from the passengers,<sup>34</sup> but there are also documented

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30. GJH: Box 9, *The Press*, July, 1895, Illustrated souvenir, opening of the Delagoa Bay – Pretoria Railway line, advertisement: “Geo Heys & Co, Transvaal Mail and Passenger Service ... bi-weekly services from Pretoria to Pietersburg ... Machadodorp to Lydenburg and Pilgrim’s Rest ... Daily service between Johannesburg and railway terminus at Standerton. ... cheapest and most comfortable ... Good accommodation along the route. No night travelling. Comfort, safety, civility.
  31. This was not without its problems. One irate customer complained angrily of the “disgraceful, half-cooked dinner” and “dirty” sleeping accommodation provided on the Johannesburg to Standerton route. GJH: Box 1, F. Braut – Heys, 15 June 1895.
  32. Allen, *Kruger’s Pretoria*, p 71. A Kimberley-based company, Gibson’s Red Star Line, also delivered mail in the 1880s, and the Zeederbergs billed themselves as “Government Mail Contractors”, but this was generally on routes not operated by Heys & Co. When The Lydenburg Coaching Company was sold to Zeederberg, the mail contract was included in the sale.
  33. GJH: Box 1, Heys – State Secretary, 1 October 1896.
  34. See for example, GJH: Box 6, Newspaper cutting, Vivien Allen, “The Road to Pretoria”, *The Star*, 27 September 1969.



accounts of the theft of gold from Heys & Co coaches. One such incident took place near Middelburg in 1889, and the main suspect, a man called Hepburn, was eventually gaoled after a protracted trial.<sup>35</sup> The gold was never recovered, despite the persistent rumour, still doing the rounds six years later, that it lay buried just outside the town.<sup>36</sup> In another theft late in 1895, £12 000 worth of gold coin “disappeared in a most mysterious way during the night” from Pietersburg. Neither the thieves – nor the gold – were ever seen again. In a letter to Heys, who was on his travels at the time, Bourke initially reported that the insurers would cover the loss, but it was subsequently discovered that because of a technicality, Heys & Co were to be held responsible. Legal assistance was sought from a Pretoria attorney, Edward Rooth, and the onus must have been shifted, because Heys & Co does not appear to have paid the amount after all.<sup>37</sup> Thereafter the management made very sure that the required “separate receipts” were issued when receiving any gold for transit, and it was stipulated that it would only be transported if accompanied by a bank official, who was to be allowed a free seat on the coach but was held fully accountable for the safe passage of the gold.<sup>38</sup>

Although Bourke reported to Heys in early 1896 that there was still “very good traffic” on both the Pietersburg and Lydenburg lines, the extension of the major railways to the Rand and Pretoria eventually broke the back of the coaching companies. Within a matter of a few years thereafter, with the onset of the Anglo-Boer War, Geo Heys & Co coach service ground to a halt. Some of the horses and mules were commandeered by the Boer forces, as was at least one of Heys’s coaches.<sup>39</sup> By 1902 when peace was finally declared, George Heys was

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35. GJH: Box 1, M. Kearns – Heys, 3 February 1889 and 14 July 1889.

36. GJH: Box 1, J.W. Kirsten – Heys, 28 February 1895. Clearly, Kirsten, a painter, was a man of no education. He was convicted of perjury in the case and sent to gaol along with Hepburn. In this letter, written on his release, he offered to “get the gold back for you, ... if you (if I succied [sic]) will give me some reward”. He insisted that the gold was “still buried in Middelburg”.

37. GJH: Letter Book 1, Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896. See also Cowie, “A Brief Analysis”, p 4.

38. GJH: Letter Book 1, Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896; Letter Book 4, Fred T. Heys – F. Butcher & Sons, 23 February 1904; SD 18, Agreement with Standard Bank for Carriage of Specie, Gold and Coins, 15 June 1903.

39. There are many receipts for small numbers of horses commandeered from Heys. See for example GJH: SD 10, Receipt for £29.10.0. for two horses to be made available for burghers on commando, signed Melt Marais, Veldcornet, 22 February 1900. It is probable, however, that a larger deal was arranged, a naturalized coaching proprietor being an obvious source of draught animals and mounts. On commandeering of a Heys coach, see Box 3, W.S. Frames – Secretary Bourke Trust, 18 November 1901.

overseas in Europe. He had spent the early part of the war, until the end of June 1901 in Pretoria,<sup>40</sup> managing his and Bourke's financial interests under extremely difficult circumstances.<sup>41</sup> His plans to return to Pretoria in August 1902 – by which time peace had been restored – had to be postponed because of a recurrence of the ill-health that dogged him periodically over the years. Meanwhile his business interests in the Transvaal were managed by Bourke<sup>42</sup>, and later Fred Heys, George's half-brother. Bourke, astute as always, wrote to Heys in 1901 suggesting that with the war apparently dragging to a close, the coaching route to the eastern Transvaal and Pietersburg might be profitably revived.<sup>43</sup> Heys was in agreement and until he returned to South Africa, he asked Fred to act on his behalf, giving his brother every encouragement and his full power of attorney.<sup>44</sup> The new enterprise was to be known as The Lydenburg Coaching Company, and as Bourke and Heys had by this time agreed to dissolve their business partnership, it was operated for Heys's sole benefit.<sup>45</sup> Fred promptly embarked upon a frenzy of activity to get the company up and running. Sparing no effort, he filled page upon page of the company letter books. He traced most of the Geo Heys & Co equipment that had been abandoned three years before; bought mules and fodder, hired staff and did the necessary repairs to coaches and stables.<sup>46</sup> When Heys arrived back in Pretoria in early April 1903, the Lydenburg Coaching Company, considerably smaller than its predecessor, was operational.<sup>47</sup> Sadly the heyday of coaching was however over. With Heys back at the helm in direct control, the company gained a temporary lease of life when the government postal contract was secured in

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40. GJH: Letter Book 2, Permission for G.J. Heys to proceed to Durban en route for Europe leaving on 28 June 1901. Signed J.G. Maxwell, Military Governor, Pretoria, 24 June 1901.
  41. Wartime was difficult for property-owners; the payment of interest and rentals was suspended by Kruger's government.
  42. This procedure was followed until Heys and Bourke dissolved their partnership, and signed an agreement to this effect on 22 June 1902. Thereafter they ran their companies separately. See also below under *The successful Pretoria businessman*.
  43. GJH: Box 2, Correspondence, Geo Heys 1899-1901 (hereafter Box 2), Bourke – Heys, 15 March 1901.
  44. GJH: SD 5, Power of Attorney, G.J. Heys in favour of Fred T. Heys, signed at Berne, Switzerland, 10 September 1902.
  45. GJH: Letter Book 3, Fred Heys – C.A. Frieslich, 15 July 1902, p 21. Fred Heys wrote similar letters to the other agents.
  46. GJH: Letter Book 3, pp 27, 37, 38, 48, 52, 78, 84, 100-110, 135. See also Box 3, weekly correspondence to Heys re progress of his business interests while he was overseas in the latter part of 1902, particularly Smith – Heys, 20 June 1902.
  47. See GJH: SD 3, Balance Sheets, Lydenburg Coaching Company, 1902-1904.

November 1903. Worth £1 885, it involved delivering the mail three times per week between Machadodorp and Pilgrim's Rest via Lydenburg and back.<sup>48</sup> He was also able to give the dwindling profits a boost by brokering an agreement with the South African Constabulary to convey officers between the various coach stations in the eastern Transvaal,<sup>49</sup> but the writing was on the wall, and George Heys was far too astute to flog a dying horse. In 1904 he sold The Lydenburg Coaching Company to C.H. Zeederberg,<sup>50</sup> recouped his capital outlay, and moved on.

It is a measure of Heys's business acumen that he not only made a great deal of money from coaching<sup>51</sup> and then extricated himself timeously, but that he also put his years of experience in the transport business to good use in another innovative way. In examining the century-old financial papers and ledgers kept by Heys, Ian Cowie, one of the trustees of Tudor Estates, recently unearthed the startling information that George Heys made a veritable fortune in a very short time by taking a gap that the British colonial government apparently needed filling after the war. A yellowing document found in Heys's study is headed "Return of Amounts Charged for Hire of Transport to Other Government Departments". There is no indication of the type of goods – or passengers, for that matter – that were transported, but 23 departments are shown as having made use of the service, with the Education Department (£4 127), Public Works (£1 662), Post & Telegraphs (£752) and Department of Lands (£720) heading the list. There is also an inventory of "depots" to which the service operated, including towns in virtually every corner of the Transvaal Colony. Perhaps in those early months after the war, with limited infrastructure at their disposal and an administration to get off the ground, the new government was glad to

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48. GJH: SD 16, Mail Contract, Lydenburg Coaching Company, 10 November 1903. See also Letter Book 4, Fred T. Heys – Chairman of the Tender Board, 15 November 1902, p 2.
  49. GJH: SD 17, Agreement with South African Constabulary re Conveyance of Officers to any of the Stations on the Coach Route between Machadodorp and Pilgrim's Rest, and Lydenburg and Pilgrim's Rest, 16 April, 1903. See also Letter Book 4, Fred T. Heys – The Controller, SA Constabulary, 14 April 1903, p 105.
  50. GJH: SD 23, Agreement with C.H. Zeederberg re sale of Lydenburg Coaching Company, 18 June 1904. Zeederberg began operating the line from 1 July 1904. Letter Book 4, Fred T. Heys – Masur, 25 June 1904, p 379.
  51. See Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", pp 1-4, for the substantial amounts accrued from coaching as entered in the books of account: £29 150 in 1893, £8 100 in 1894, £6 850 in 1895, £9 000 in 1896. See also Letter Book 1, Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896: "We have paid into your credit since you left, £7 000 from the coaching business."

accept Heys's offer to hire them coaches, carts and other useful paraphernalia for which, with his coaching enterprise closing down, he had limited use. What is clear, however, is that in a mere six month period, Heys was paid no less than £22 726 for providing transport to the colonial authorities.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, for whatever reason, this substantial sum of money is not reflected in any of his business accounts, nor was it paid directly into one of his personal accounts. The chances are good that Heys channelled it into other business ventures in the depressed financial climate in the immediate aftermath of the war. Before examining Heys's successful business career, which reached its zenith in the first quarter of the twentieth century, it is pertinent first to assess his role as a committed burgher in Kruger's Transvaal Republic.

### **The committed Transvaler**

Despite his strong British affiliations, George Heys was not one to dismiss his South African birth or his settler upbringing. As far as can be ascertained, he did not at any stage entertain thoughts of leaving South Africa – or Pretoria, for that matter – on a permanent basis, presumably recognising that the Transvaal was a land of opportunity for a hardworking citizen. His extensive travels in the 1890s and then in the early twentieth century while his wife was alive,<sup>53</sup> gave way to regular annual trips to visit his two daughters who had married and settled in England; but his town house, business interests and country estates were all Transvaal-based. As a naturalized Transvaler, he left the country on his travels by permission of the republican government, and after 1910 held successive South African passports in which he was recorded as a South African citizen by birth. Janie Heys, his wife, was born in Chichester, England, and retained her British passport. It is clear that the couple's three daughters identified closely with this South African Britishness.<sup>54</sup>

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52. GJH: SD 26, Return of Amounts Charged for Hire of Transport to Other Government Departments from 1 April 1903 to 30 September 1903.

53. Emma Jane Heys died unexpectedly on 2 April 1929 at Melrose House. GJH: Box 10, Charles Christie – Pearl, 3 April 1929.

54. GJH: Box 10, Passports, George Jesse Heys, Union of South Africa, issued 30 March 1925, renewed to 30 March 1935, and another issued 19 February 1935; British Passport, Emma Jane Heys, issued 9 September 1925. All three Heys daughters were educated at an exclusive school for girls, Doreck College, Kensington Gardens Square, Bayswater, London. See Box 1, A/c for tuition, Mabel (£37.16.0) and Jessie (£31.10.0), and violin lessons for Mabel (£5.5.0), 1 February 1897.

In 1891, some ten years after his arrival in the Transvaal, George Heys was firmly established as a successful businessman. He and his young family were comfortably settled in Melrose House and were fast becoming part of Pretoria's fashionable society of the day. Heys then applied for, and was granted full citizenship of the Transvaal.<sup>55</sup> He was on cordial terms with President Paul Kruger and in 1884, some seven years before his naturalization, is reputed to have made a substantial loan, variously reported as £10 000 and £5 000, to help the republican authorities pay the officials' salaries at a time when the state coffers were at a particularly low ebb.<sup>56</sup> One of Heys's grandchildren writes in her reminiscences that Janie Heys "often called on Gezina Kruger to tell her of their travels".<sup>57</sup> There is also documentation to the effect that W.J. Leyds, the State Secretary at the time, received free travel on Heys coaches between Pretoria and Charlestown.<sup>58</sup> In 1893, Heys was again in a position to show his commitment to the republican government. When the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch, and his retinue were in Pretoria on an official visit, Heys placed Melrose House at Loch's disposal because there was no other suitable accommodation for the distinguished British guests. A handsome silver rose bowl, inscribed with the date and the message: "with the thanks of the government of the ZAR", was later presented to Heys, and is still in the possession of his Pretoria-based descendants.<sup>59</sup>

The entrepreneur in George Heys was not above using his good connections with senior members of the Kruger administration to his financial advantage. In an effort to secure a government contract for the construction of a rail link from Volksrust to Johannesburg in 1890, he formed what he called the Volksrust Syndicate. He was, however, well-

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55. GJH: SD 7, *Brieven van Naturalisatie*, George Jesse Heys, signed W.J. Leyds, *Staatsekretaris*, Pretoria, 5 March 1891.
56. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 169, makes this claim but does not give her source. Apparently Eddie Bourke made a similar loan to the ZAR in the years before the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, giving a much-needed boost to state revenue. See also Vivien Allen, "Melrose House linked to important date in S. African history", *The Pretoria News*, 20 November 1970.
57. GJH: Box 6, K.J.H. Jeffreys, handwritten reminiscences and family notes, undated.
58. GJH: Box 1, W.J. Leyds – Heys, 22 November 1894.
59. GJH: Box 1, W.J. Leyds – Heys, 20 July 1893. The rose bowl is in the possession of Prudence Cowie. According to family legend, Leyds was given the task of selecting a suitable gift, but his first choice, a small nude statuette was vetoed by Kruger on the grounds that Heys was a staunch Methodist and would find the figurine unacceptable. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 177.

aware of the obstacles and wrote: “I do not think that it suits the present policy of the President to permit any other railway scheme being passed at present, and more especially one in the direction of Natal, [and] the matter rests very largely in his hands.” He therefore suggested that the application be held back “until the return of General Joubert [who] is a large landowner in the Wakkerstroom district and we are led to understand is favourable to a line connecting with Natal ... with his persuasive powers, we might have a chance”. Despite Joubert’s intercession, objections of a financial nature must have been raised because in a reply to the State Secretary, Heys countered that the line would be constructed “without cost to the state” and that the syndicate would “take all risks”. Even a final suggestion that he be permitted to run a tram from Charlestown to Johannesburg “drawn by a cable or any other motive power except steam”, proved fruitless, and the syndicate was eventually dissolved.<sup>60</sup>

An offer to sell Melrose House to the government also came to nothing,<sup>61</sup> but cordial correspondence was conducted – in carefully-worded Dutch on Heys’s part, presumably translated for him by one of his many Dutch-speaking associates.<sup>62</sup> Heys no doubt felt that he could make a good profit by selling his fully-furnished home and then building and fitting out another in Pretoria – he owned numerous other residential and business properties in the town. He had made extensive alterations and additions to Melrose House in 1896,<sup>63</sup> and pointed out in his letter that it was an eminently suitable home for an important statesman such as the President, but Kruger, who lived in an unpretentious single-story home in Church Street West, was not one to be impressed by anything elaborate, and probably rejected Heys’s offer out of hand.

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60. GJH: Letter Book 1, Heys – J.E. Mc Ness, 26 August 1890, 2 September 1890, 23 September 1890; Heys – State Secretary, 31 March 1891; Heys-Mc Ness, 30 March 1892, 25 April 1892, 19 May 1892.
  61. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – J.M.A. Wolmarans, Member of the ZAR Executive Council, 18 March 1898. No selling price was mentioned but this was subsequently rumoured to be £25 000. Letter Book 2, S. Blumlein – Heys, 25 July 1898.
  62. Heys’s correspondence shows that he had business links with many prominent Dutch-speaking officials such as I.N. (Isaac) van Alphen, who was the ZAR’s Postmaster-General in Pretoria. See for example GJH: SD 13, Agreement re Mrs Van Alphen.
  63. In 1896, the dining room was enlarged and a billiard room and conservatory added. Bourke offered his congratulations “on the alterations all round – the general effect is very good and imposing”. GJH: Letter Book 1, Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896. See also Box 1, Tender dated 6 February 1895 from J. Parsloe, builder, to undertake the construction at a total cost of £1 835.

There are several oblique references, all with the exception of one very vague, to the fact that Heys supplied horses to Leander Starr Jameson's force that marched on Johannesburg late in December 1895. The insinuation is that Heys might have betrayed his Transvaal citizenship and have been implicated in the plot.<sup>64</sup> There is documentary evidence that this allegation is unfounded. In December 1895, Heys was out of the country.<sup>65</sup> His routine business affairs were being handled (as was usual when he was away) by his partner Eddie Bourke, who kept Heys informed on a regular weekly basis. In one particularly long, detailed letter, Bourke relates to Heys the events leading up to the Jameson Raid and the dramatic aftermath in early January 1896. He also reports on developments in the coaching business, explaining that the Johannesburg to Heidelberg route was due to be closed on 15 November 1895, and that "previous to that date, John Frieslich sold 262 of our horses at £18 per head for delivery on 16 November to a man named Wolff".<sup>66</sup> Delays in the opening of the railway meant that in fact the coach route was continued for another month. "We were in a bit of a fix", explains Bourke, having already sold the horses. Luckily, however, "the purchaser was rather dilatory in taking delivery and we were able to continue until 15 December when the railway opened, although every day we expected to have to deliver up the horses." It is only towards the end of the letter that Bourke refers to rumours about the two companies owned jointly by himself and Heys: "I believe Bourke & Co have been under a good deal of suspicion for selling our mealies to an unnamed buyer just before the raid began," also "that our horses were bought for the Chartered Company's Officers, but we knew nothing about it, any more than B & Co knew about the mealies". Furthermore, "we never saw the purchaser who did the business through Frieslich." If the mealies and the 262 horses sold to the otherwise unidentified Wolff were indeed used in the Jameson Raid, it seems unlikely that in mid-November 1895, six weeks before the insurrection, John Frieslich or Eddie Bourke, and certainly not the absent George Heys, had any inkling of the motives behind Wolff's purchases.<sup>67</sup>

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64. Allen claims that Heys was friendly with "many of the Reformers" who supported the Raid. She gives no evidence to substantiate this, nor did I find any such evidence in the Heys Collection. She does, however, go on to say (correctly) that Heys was at no stage accused of being implicated. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, p 178.

65. Bourke's letter to Heys, dated 18 January 1896, thanks Heys for his letter just received from Cairo. GJH: Letter Book 1.

66. Frieslich was Geo Heys & Co's agent in Middelburg. When the coaching company closed, he became manager of Weltevreden, Heys's estate near Machadodorp.

67. GJH: Letter Book 1, Bourke – Heys, 18 January 1896.

George Heys did not serve in the republican forces during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, but he remained in Pretoria for the first eight months of hostilities. He made sure, however, that his wife and Mabel, his second daughter, were not in any danger, sending them by train to the safety of Natal before the outbreak of war, where they stayed with the senior Heys relatives in Durban.<sup>68</sup> During the war, apart from running his own business affairs under extremely trying financial constraints, and standing in for Bourke who was in Britain, Heys undertook civil responsibilities, serving on the *Rust en Orde* committee,<sup>69</sup> a special civilian force formed to uphold the law in Pretoria. Like Sammy Marks and Thomas Beckett, Heys demonstrated his wartime commitment to the republican cause as well as his strong sense of humanitarianism. He served on the Pretoria Medical Commission and the board of the Irish Hospital that had been established in the Palace of Justice to treat the war wounded. He also equipped and subsidised the five-bedded Heys Ward.<sup>70</sup> Until the British occupation of Pretoria in June 1900, Heys continued to live in Melrose House, but he then offered his home for the use of the British authorities, and until his departure for England a year later, moved into a rented home which was the property of I.E. Stegmann, a Pretoria solicitor.<sup>71</sup>

Eddie Bourke, meanwhile experienced a great deal of difficulty in getting back into the Transvaal to relieve Heys. The latter's health was far from good. He was keen to go to England to see his family and enjoy a break from the stresses and strains of wartime Pretoria. In December 1900, Bourke arrived back on South African shores, but the British authorities refused to give him a permit to travel from Cape Town to Pretoria, which was still held by the Boers. To his intense irritation Bourke had to return to England.<sup>72</sup> He finally managed to get back to the

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68. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – Mrs Heys, 15 August 1899. The eldest Heys daughter, Pearl, had married in 1899 and was living in Surbiton, outside London. The youngest, Jessie, was still at Doreck College in Bayswater, London W.
69. GJH: Box 8, Card dated 13 October 1899, Geo J Heys, member of Rust en Orde Commissie, Special Police Ward V.
70. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – Hospital Board, 20 July 1900. See also Box 2, Agenda, meeting of Commission, 20 August 1900.
71. GJH: Box 2, Roos – Heys, 5 June 1901. Stegmann was a partner in the law firm Stegmann & Roos. He owned a house at 295 Kotze Street, but it is not clear whether this was his private residence or the house Heys occupied from June 1900 to June 1901.
72. GJH: Box 2, Envelope marked "Private Letters Bourke", Bourke – Heys, Cape Town, 27 November 1900 and 3 December 1900.



Transvaal in mid-June 1901 and Heys, who had been kicking his heels, waiting for Bourke's return, promptly left for England. Bourke's wife was ill and she and the Bourke children were still in Britain, so four months later, in October 1901, Eddie also returned to the United Kingdom, this time leaving Bourke & Co's secretary, a Mister Smith, and Fred Heys to cope as best they could in Pretoria while the war dragged on.<sup>73</sup>

On 28 June 1901, Heys left Pretoria for London, where he joined his wife and daughters. Janie and Mabel had gone ahead some months before, leaving by steamer for Southampton on 22 April 1901.<sup>74</sup> A full year later, after Mrs Heys and the girls had spent a great deal of George's money at fashionable London stores and the family had enjoyed extensive sightseeing in Europe, bookings were eventually made for the family's return to South Africa in August 1902.<sup>75</sup> Once again fate intervened and these arrangements had to be put on hold because of George's recurring bouts of ill health, which meant returning to his favoured spa in Carlsbad for treatment and recuperation.<sup>76</sup> It was only in the first week of April 1903, some twenty months after leaving Pretoria, and ten months after peace had been signed in Melrose House, that Heys eventually arrived back home in Pretoria; a Pretoria that had now taken on a distinctly British face, one to which the Heys family could relate with ease and aplomb.<sup>77</sup>

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73. The secretary of Bourke Trust & Estate Co, E.R. Smith, wrote regular weekly reports to Bourke and flimsy tissue copies (a researcher's nightmare) of these letters were sent on to Heys in Europe.
  74. GJH: Letter Book 2, Permission for G.J. Heys to proceed to Durban en route for Europe, 24 June 1901, signed J.G. Maxwell, Military Governor, Pretoria. See also Letter Book 2, Heys – Murdoch, 10 April 1901.
  75. Places visited include Carlsbad, St Moritz, Zurich, Vienna, Paris, Venice, Florence, Milan and frequent returns to England. The family was due to leave for home on 9 August 1902, but this was cancelled. GJH: Box 3, Murdoch – Heys, 30 May 1902.
  76. There are many references to Heys's "poor health", but no details on the nature of the complaint. When I made enquiries from the family, Ian Cowie was unsure but ventured that he thought it "might have been diabetes".
  77. GJH: Letter Book 3, Fred Heys – Clarke & Thistleton, 13 March 1903, arranging that the Heys family be assisted when the *S.S. Saxon* docked "at the end of the month". See also Fred Heys – Murdoch, 6 April 1903.

### The successful Pretoria businessman

Heys's profitable coaching service, one of the early schemes that set him on the path to success, has already received some attention. The wide scope of his subsequent business interests spanned almost fifty years until his death in 1939, by which time he was a very wealthy man indeed. His financial empire was based to a large extent on extensive property ownership in Pretoria, on which he collected a very substantial amount of rent.<sup>78</sup> He also formed a number of investment syndicates, and owned shares in numerous speculative mining ventures, of which Slaaihoek Mines Ltd. appears to have been one of the most profitable.<sup>79</sup> Heys also invested heavily in farm properties in the eastern Transvaal, and engaged in a number of lucrative agricultural projects, including cattle-breeding, on this land.<sup>80</sup> Another profitable sideline was extending interest-bearing loans to various companies and individuals. He also had a very large, actively traded share portfolio. Ian Cowie's unpublished analysis of George Heys's financial affairs gives a comprehensive assessment of the books of account, and reflects Heys's principle sources of income (as well as some of his losses) in the years from 1891 to 1925. The analysis makes very impressive reading.

Building a financial empire with virtually no initial backing was not without its problems over the years. Heys realised only too well that the Anglo-Boer War would set the South African economy back on its heels, and when the outbreak of war appeared imminent, he made contingency plans, increasing his overseas bank balances and overdraft facilities substantially, and then buying heavily into shares on the London Stock Exchange. John Murdoch, his agent in London, was instructed to

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78. GJH: Letter Book 2, Fred Heys – Heys, 9 November 1902. See also Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", pp 13-17.
79. GJH: SD 27, Correspondence re prospecting/gold-mining at Slaaihoek and Weltevreden, T. Angus – Messrs Slaaihoek Mines Ltd, 23 October 1936. Angus, who was the manager of the mine, claims that from 1921 to 1936, the value of gold won at Slaaihoek was £774 616. Expenses totalled £374 327, putting the mine's profit at £400 289.
80. Heys started investing in farms in the 1890s. Weltevreden was bought in 1904. Sheep-farming was started and an orchard planted. Pheasants were imported, but no other hunting was allowed; guests were invited for the excellent fishing. A large cowherd and later a number of prize bulls were bought. Soon the farm was producing a profitable wool clip, beef, butter, mutton and poultry. Other estates included Schoonspruit, Airlie, Vrede and Ramkraal. Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", pp 18-20. See also "A Brief History of the Farm Weltevreden", unpublished article prepared by Tudor Estates for their guests and visitors, 2003.

buy and sell on Heys's behalf when instructed by coded telegrams to do so.<sup>81</sup> When war broke out, with well-nigh all financial dealings suspended in the republics and all local transactions with Britain closed to local residents, Heys had something of a cushion against the heavy losses that many other Transvaal businessmen incurred. Nevertheless the war dealt both George Heys and Eddie Bourke a hard knock; in the regular letters they exchanged they grumbled incessantly about the regulation issued by the ZAR government that no rents on properties occupied, or interest on loans made in the Transvaal, were payable while the war was in progress.<sup>82</sup> After the British occupation of Pretoria there was a strenuous move made to lift this measure at least in part, or to enable property owners either to claim half the rent due, or to back-date the rents payable, but it appears that it was only after the war that anything like normality was reached on this highly contentious issue.<sup>83</sup>

Heys's partnership with Bourke, a noteworthy feature of the early careers of these two Pretoria entrepreneurs, was established on 16 May 1892. It was decided that each should have equal shares in Geo Heys & Co and the Bourke Trust & Estate Company, their flagship companies.<sup>84</sup> This arrangement worked smoothly for ten years, but the disruption of the war – both were away from Pretoria for extended periods – added to their anxiety about the declining economy and an uncertain future for the Transvaal. By early 1902, Heys's health had broken down and this delayed his return to Pretoria. A hint of dissent is evident in some of Bourke's letters to Heys in this period and it seems that the two men disagreed on certain financial issues.<sup>85</sup> Although there was never any acrimony between them, in mid-1902 it was mutually decided to dissolve the partnership.<sup>86</sup> Heys and Bourke appear to have

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81. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – Murdoch, 26 June 1899, 10 July 1899, 23 September 1899, 6 October 1899. See for example the large number of shares purchased in this manner on Heys's behalf on 21 September 1899 and 2 October 1899.
  82. GJH: Box 2, Bourke – Heys, 5 February 1901, 7 March 1901, 2 August 1901. See also *The Natal Mercury*, "Banking during the War", 27 February 1901. Box 3, Bourke – Heys, 13 and 27 September 1901, 18 October 1901.
  83. GJH: Box 3, Bourke – Heys, "Proposal re Interest on Bonds", 11 September 1901. See also Bourke – Heys, 27 September 1901, 11 and 18 October 1901. Proclamation no 32 of 1902 brought some clarification. See enclosure in Smith – Heys, 6 June 1902.
  84. GJH: SD 9, Agreement with the Bourke Trust & Estate Co Ltd, 16 May 1892.
  85. See for example GJH: Box 2, Bourke – Heys 28 February 1901 and 15 March 1901.
  86. The agreement was signed by Heys and Bourke on 22 June 1902. GJH: Letter Book 3, Smith – Heys, 25 June 1902 and Bourke – Heys, 5 August 1902. This

remained good friends and the families continued to meet socially. In 1917 the two men again collaborated as the two main partners in the Slaaihoek Syndicate.<sup>87</sup> Bourke clearly retained his respect for Heys's judgement and ability, because he was named as one of the trustees of Bourke's will, drawn up in 1924.<sup>88</sup>

No doubt there were a fair number of Heys's ventures that went sour, but one which features rather prominently in the correspondence, is the loss incurred on the Crown Hotel in Barberton. Once a bustling coach stop-over, the wood and iron structure gradually fell into disrepair when the coach service stopped running. The rent received for the premises plummeted and Barberton became something of a ghost town. Attempts to sell the hotel, first for £1 000 and then for £600, came to nothing. When troops used some of the hotel rooms for stables during the war, the estimated cost of repairs escalated alarmingly. Heys took the decision to hold out for a buyer and try to cover his costs, rather than spend money on repairs. On a stormy night in March 1902, the Crown Hotel blew down. He collected the paltry sum of £20 for the few bits of scrap that could be salvaged.<sup>89</sup>

In contrast, one of George Heys's major successes would have to be Tudor Chambers, his building on Church Square. He purchased erf 367, "The Corner" in 1893 for £22 068, but plans to build a modern office block there were only made in earnest after the war.<sup>90</sup> While Heys was in England in 1902, he met a British architect, John Ellis, who was promptly pressed into service to design and oversee the ambitious new project. He was sent out to Pretoria early in 1903 and apparently remained in Heys's employ on a permanent basis once Tudor Chambers and Norman Buildings (another of Heys's properties, constructed at the same time) were completed. Over the ensuing years he was involved in ongoing renovations to Melrose House, the building of the family homestead on Weltevreden Estate and other building projects. The construction of Tudor Chambers was a long and expensive exercise

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letter ends in the usual friendly manner: "All join me in kind regards to you and yours."

87. Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", p 15.

88. GJH: SD 8, Copy of Will, E.F. Bourke, dated 13 May 1924.

89. GJH: Letter Book 2, Secretary – Heys, 15 October 1898; Box 3, Smith – Heys, 13 December 1901 with attached copy of Smith to J. Dyce, 23 November 1901; Rose Innes – Smith, 3 December 1901. See also Smith – Heys, 24 January 1902, 14 March 1902.

90. Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", p 2.

which began in 1904.<sup>91</sup> Heys wanted the most modern and best equipped office block in town and imported virtually everything from overseas, including the massive stanchions and the large, yet fragile plates of curved glass for the shop fronts on the ground floor.<sup>92</sup> He also installed a lift – an elaborate affair with a fancy metal gate – which is still in working order. A century ago it was considered an ambitious innovation.<sup>93</sup> The large stained-glass window behind the main stairwell, with its glowing colours that catch the warm Pretoria sunshine, is also still intact today.<sup>94</sup>

Heys not only made a great deal of money but he and his family enjoyed spending it. Although he himself preferred to keep out of the limelight, the Heys family were certainly part of Pretoria's high society. A descendant argues that their lifestyle was not excessively extravagant; but it was certainly a lavishly comfortable and eminently fashionable Victorian lifestyle. Both his town house, Melrose House, and the home on his Weltevreden Estate, were equipped to entertain guests, be they family friends for a fishing holiday on the farm, the regular Saturday afternoon tennis parties in the Melrose House garden, or the more formal "at homes" Janie Heys held in the large dining room for members of Pretoria's elite society, often including British military and civil dignitaries.<sup>95</sup> The wedding receptions for the two Heys daughters, Mabel and Jessie, who married in Pretoria in 1912 and 1911 respectively, were also held in the well-tended Melrose House garden.<sup>96</sup> The contents of Janie's writing desk attest to numerous charity functions held in her gracious home.<sup>97</sup> Melrose House was not only tastefully furnished, it was also equipped with every modern convenience – most of it imported – including the best British china and monogrammed silverware.<sup>98</sup> Heys

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91. Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", p 9. Turner was paid £22 200 for the main contract. The completion date was 1 August 1904.
  92. GJH: Letter Book 3, Heys – Murdoch, 17 August 1903 and 7 September 1903. See also Box 3, Murdoch – Heys, 20 January 1903.
  93. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – Murdoch, 11 April 1903; Letter Book 3, Heys – Fred Heys, 19 May 1904.
  94. The window was by an esteemed craftsman, Douglas Strachan. Article and photograph, *The Pretoria News*, 7 June 1949.
  95. Allen, *Kruger's Pretoria*, pp 176-177; Jeffreys, "Life with Oupa", p 2; Vivien Allen, "Melrose House linked to important date in S. African history", *The Pretoria News*, 20 November 1970.
  96. "Wedding Bells", *Transvaal Chronicle*, 17 May 1911; Box 5, Programme, Marriage of Charles Christie to Mabel Ethel Heys, Tuesday 23 April 1912.
  97. Melrose House was sold to the Pretoria City Council in 1968; it was opened to the public on 17 May 1971.
  98. Silverware engraved with an "H", Royal Doulton and Worcester Royal

employed a “small army of servants”, made up of fourteen white staff under the direction of a housekeeper and a team of thirty Africans, who were responsible for the upkeep of the garden and stables.<sup>99</sup>

Heys must have spent a good deal on his passion for travelling and in his two homes there were many exotic mementos collected on extensive sightseeing trips to all corners of the globe.<sup>100</sup> He also toyed with the idea of buying Ewell Castle, an estate near London, but this fell through when John Murdoch investigated the property and advised Heys against the purchase.<sup>101</sup> Among Heys’s papers there are a great many invoices for expensive jewellery he bought for his wife and daughters as gifts. Most of the pieces, minutely described in the invoices, were bought from the prestigious Vine & Thompson of London,<sup>102</sup> and to this lover of antique jewellery, sound absolutely breathtaking. In 1913 Heys decided to buy two motor cars (something of a luxury at the time) – a Ford and a Wolseley. Four years later, in 1917, he indulged in what became a particularly prized possession, a Minerva, the very latest and most exclusive vehicle of the time, imported from Belgium at a cost of £1 244.<sup>103</sup>

Like all good entrepreneurs, Heys drove a hard bargain when it came to his business deals, but he was a devoted family man, and as far as the well-being of his family was concerned, no expense was spared.

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- Porcelain were ordered for Melrose House through Murdoch in London. Also a new kitchen stove, kitchen implements, glassware and wall-paper. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – Murdoch, 4 May 1903 and Box 3, Murdoch – Heys, 22 January 1903.
99. Vivien Allen, “Melrose House – a visit to yesterday”, *The Star*, 28 October 1969. The claim is made that African staff were well-treated and grew devoted to the family. Many remained on until old age. GJH: Box 6, K.J.H. Jeffreys, reminiscences, family notes, undated. See also *The Pretoria News*, 23 November 1976, reporting on Mister A. Letsoalo’s 66 years of service at Melrose.
100. Allen, “Melrose House – a visit to yesterday”, *The Star*, 28 October 1969.
101. GJH: Box 3, Murdoch – Heys, 23 May 1902 and 27 May 1902. Murdoch wrote that an “absurd reserve price” had been put on the property and that it had many disadvantages. It was “too near London, had no frontage and overlooked a graveyard”.
102. GJH: See for example Box 1, invoices dated 26 March 1896, 10 April 1897. Box 2, invoice dated 2 March 1901. Box 3, invoices dated 11 March 1902, 22 September 1902. At the end of 1902 and early 1903, a number of expensive purchases were made, including rings, brooches and bracelets that were set with precious gems such as diamonds, emeralds, rubies and sapphires.
103. Cowie, “A Brief Analysis”, pp 14, 17.

He purchased a home for each of his three daughters when they married, paid them annual allowances and in December every year sent them substantial money drafts as a Christmas gift. There is also evidence that his first grandson, Gordon Heys Hallett, received money and other expensive gifts over the years.<sup>104</sup> Certainly, when Gordon was in South Africa after Pearl, the eldest daughter's marriage broke down, George Heys took responsibility for the lad's schooling.<sup>105</sup> Pearl's marriage to Charles Turner Hallett in Hampstead in 1899, appears to have been a disaster from the first. Hallett gave up his lowly-paid job as a bank clerk after the wedding and was happy to rely on the fact that his father-in-law would pay all bills. He also ran up large gambling debts, and on at least two occasions Heys paid these in the mistaken belief that Hallett would mend his ways, find a job and take responsibility for his wife and child.<sup>106</sup> Both Heys and Eddie Bourke (as a favour to Heys) tried their level best to find "a situation" for Hallett in London, and when nothing suitable could be arranged, Heys eventually bought a share in a newly established shop-fitting concern, Drew & Co, in order to secure Hallett's employment as a traveller.<sup>107</sup> Heys apparently had no scruples at all in taking a domineering attitude towards Hallett and blatantly interfering in his life. By late 1910, the marriage had gone from bad to worse. Pearl developed a serious eye complaint and appeared to be headed for a nervous breakdown. Heys felt that money was no object when Pearl's happiness was at stake. He hired the best legal help that money could buy, and insisted that the marriage be ended and Pearl be granted full custody of the child. The divorce proceedings in 1911 were very high profile and acrimonious, with insults and accusations of infidelity made by both partners.<sup>108</sup> The court hearings were splashed

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104. See for example GJH: Letter Book 9, Money drafts Heys – Pearl (Eggesford Walks, Devon) and Jessie (Poxwell House, Dorset), 10 December 1936, 4 December 1937. Mabel lived in Pretoria. Each daughter received £1 000 every Christmas. On generosity to Gordon see Box 7, Gordon Hallett – Heys, 5 October 1932; Box 8, Gordon Hallett – Heys, 5 March 1927.
  105. GJH: Letter Book 7, Heys – A. Henwood, 30 March 1911; Heys – Mullins, 9 October 1911. See also Heys – Jerome, 18 August 1913. Gordon went to St Andrews School in Grahamstown from 1911 to 1912 at his grandfather's expense.
  106. GJH: Box 2, Bourke – Heys, 8 February 1901. At Heys's request Bourke paid "over £600" to Hallett from Heys's account. See also Letter Book 7, Heys – Murdoch, 19 November 1906.
  107. GJH: Box 2, Bourke – Heys, 12 April 1901. Box 3, Pullen – Hallett, 22 March 1902; Murdoch – Heys, 30 May 1902. Heys later withdrew his investment from Drew & Co because he was not happy with the balance sheet; Heys – Pullen, 18 January 1904. Heys instructed Hallett to resign immediately.
  108. GJH: Box 6, Cuttings, *Rand Daily Mail*, 27 February 1911, 3 March 1911,

loudly in both the local and London papers, which must have been mortifying for Heys, who set so much store on stable family life and liked to keep such a low profile. The books of account show that when at last the marriage was finally dissolved in 1913, it was at great personal cost to Heys.<sup>109</sup>

Over the years Heys gave generously to many charities and other good causes. His correspondence shows that he donated money to the Lakeside Home project for needy children, the local hospitals and orphanage, and many other worthy societies and clubs, particularly those connected to the Wesleyan Church, of which he and his family were staunch and active members.<sup>110</sup> He also provided trophies for the local football club, of which he was president, and the Transvaal rugby football club.<sup>111</sup> When his wife Janie died in 1929, he funded the building of a church hall in her memory,<sup>112</sup> and in the 1930s he spent £4 000 on the installation of a carillon of bells in the tower of the Pretoria City Hall.<sup>113</sup> The many charities and societies which Heys supported so generously can be seen as something of a barometer of the winds of change that were sweeping through Pretoria. As the twentieth century dawned and the dust settled after the debilitating war, the new Transvaal Colony with its British-based government gradually gave a new nuance to the face of the city. It was those people with British roots who tended to move to the foreground of society, while many of the republican-minded families

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4 March 1911; *Lloyd's Weekly News*, 26 February 1911 and others undated; *People*, 5 March 1911.

109. Cowie, "A Brief Analysis", p 13. Jerome's fees for the divorce appear to have totalled about £5 000.
110. See GJH: Letter Book 7, Heys – Rev A. Burnet re donation for the Children's Dinner Fund, 13 November 1903 and Letter Book 9, Fred Heys – Secretary, Lakeside Health Resort for Children, 6 November 1936. Heys also financed the equipment for the Emma Jane Heys Nursery in the African block of the local hospital and X-ray equipment in the George Heys Theatre in the Dental Clinic: Letter Book 9, Heys – Dr H.J. Hugo, 2 November 1936; Heys – L. Horrell, 2 November 1937. In the period 1936-1937, donations are also recorded to the Salvation Army, the Leper Institute, the Boy Scouts and the Milk Fund in the location.
111. GJH: Letter Book 2, Heys – G.E. Vosper, 4 March 1898; Rev Canon Fisher – Heys, 15 April 1898.
112. *Rand Daily Mail*, 22 March 1930; Pamphlet, Sunnyside Wesleyan Methodist Church, Order of Service, Opening of the Heys Memorial Hall, 4 October 1930.
113. GJH: Letter Book 8, Heys – Mayor of Pretoria, 30 October 1935. Box 6, *The Pretoria News*, 29 October 1935; *The Star*, 29 October 1935. *The Pretoria News*, 30 April 1948, "A Tune from the City Hall Carillon" – trouble with the bells was reported.



retired to their farms in the outlying districts to lick their wounds, stabilise their lives, and gather their resources. Progress towards Union in 1910 and the development of South Africa's political and economic climate of the period until 1939, when Heys died, were the ideal vehicles for George Heys and his family to identify closely with an emerging orientation, that of British South Africanness.

### **The British loyalist**

The arrangements Heys made with the British authorities for the use of Melrose House is perhaps the most obvious point at which to begin an investigation of Heys's identity with Britishness. These details have until now been only partly disclosed. Late in May 1900, the British army under Lord Roberts was marching towards the Transvaal. Bloemfontein and Johannesburg had both been occupied and Pretoria was clearly to be next. It was widely expected that the British occupation of the Boer capital would signal the end of the war, but the Boer leaders decided to continue; they would not to defend the city, but left Pretoria and moved to the east to regroup. Heys meanwhile had handed over his personal firearms – a revolver and a Martini rifle, to signify his allegiance to the occupying force.<sup>114</sup> It must have been at about this time that he contacted Sir J.G. Maxwell, who had come into Pretoria slightly ahead of Roberts. Heys knew that as the Military Governor elect of Pretoria, Maxwell, was the very man to whom a leading British-oriented Pretorian such as himself should extend a welcome, so he moved into a rented house and offered Maxwell the use of Melrose House.<sup>115</sup> It is unclear how long Maxwell was in the house – probably no more than three weeks – before he wrote to Heys on 23 June 1900, thanking him most profusely for the use of Heys's "exceedingly comfortable and well-appointed house" which he was reluctantly having to vacate. Maxwell went on: "I strongly advise you to call on Lord Roberts and place your house at his disposal and say how glad you are to think that Lady Roberts and he should occupy it."<sup>116</sup> Presumably Heys was happy to comply, and Melrose House accordingly became the military headquarters of Roberts and his successor as Commander-in-Chief of the British army, Lord Kitchener. Heys left for England the following week and only returned to Pretoria in April 1903, by which time the war was over and the peace treaty had been signed on his dining room table.

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114. GJH: Box 2, G.J. Heys, receipt for weapons, bandolier and cartridges, signed G. Halford Smith, Pretoria, 7 June 1900.

115. GJH; Box 2, Roos – Heys, 5 June 1901. Heys lived in I.E. Stegmann's house until leaving for England on 28 June 1901.

116. GJH: Box 5, J.G. Maxwell – Heys, 23 June 1900.

In September 1901, on the absent Heys's instructions, Bourke made a concerted effort to sell or lease Melrose House to the imperial government as a residence for Milner, the High Commissioner, buying in to Bourke's ongoing concern that the British authorities were favouring Johannesburg rather than Pretoria as the seat of the administration. Other than a promise that the matter would be laid before Milner, nothing ever came of it – perhaps because Kitchener was still comfortably ensconced, rent-free, and the urbane Milner appeared to favour living in the more cosmopolitan Johannesburg.<sup>117</sup> Once the war was over, Heys cabled home to suggest that Melrose House be offered again to the new government, preferably for sale, or failing that, on a three to five year lease, but the authorities dragged their heels. It appears that faced with the irritation of delays and red tape, Heys abandoned the idea of selling and decided that he and his family would move back into Melrose House after all. He agreed to allow Sir Neville Lyttelton, Kitchener's successor, to take a short lease at a rent of £100 per month. The Lyttelton's, who were troublesome tenants to say the least,<sup>118</sup> eventually moved out at the end of February 1903, giving Ellis and Fred Heys enough time to spruce up the house, ready for the Heys family's return in the first week of April 1903.<sup>119</sup>

If the use of his Pretoria residence for British officers was not a particularly strong sign of Britishness, signing the post-war oath of allegiance certainly was. Immediately after stepping back on South African shores at Durban on 31 March 1903, Heys swore that he acknowledged himself "to be a subject of a British dominion".<sup>120</sup> Once back in Pretoria, as a leading citizen of British background, it was not long before the city fathers prevailed upon him to make himself available for election to Pretoria's first post-war City Council. He agreed, with some reluctance, and was duly elected unopposed, despite the fact that when the elections took place on 25 October 1904, he was once more

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117. GJH: Letter Book 2, Fred Heys – Heys, 17 August 1902; Box 3, Bourke – Heys, 3, 13 and 27 September 1901. Also attachment Bourke – Transvaal Administration, 3 September 1901 in which the virtues of Melrose House were extolled.
  118. Katherine Lyttelton grumbled about the state of the Melrose House drains; she also wanted the lease extended at her convenience.
  119. GJH: Box 3, Smith – Heys, 14 June 1902 and 20 June 1902. Letter Book 2, Fred Heys – Heys, 21 September 1902. Repeated requests to extend the lease were refused. See also Heys – Fred Heys, 15 January 1903 and Fred Heys – Heys, 22 February 1903.
  120. GJH: SD 7, Oath of Allegiance, George Jesse Heys of Pretoria, sworn at Durban, 31 March 1903.

overseas, this time on a brief trip to England to see his eldest daughter before going on to Carlsbad for medical treatment. As he explained to a friend who wrote to congratulate him on his election: “Although it takes up two or three days weekly of my time, I feel it is my duty to do what I can for the welfare of Pretoria”.<sup>121</sup> A few years later he was also appointed as Justice of the Peace. His daughters made a family occasion of this, presenting Heys with an elaborate home-made “certificate” complete with a flowery citation of respect to the “colonel” from his “women’s brigade”. He was promptly nicknamed “Colonel”, a name by which some of his closest friends and family fondly called him over the years.<sup>122</sup>

George, Janie and their daughters slotted very comfortably into the social whirl of post-war Pretoria with its distinctly British emphasis. Their British roots were strong – all three girls had been educated in London and Pearl (and later Jessie too) settled in England. George and Janie’s attendance at the coronation of King Edward VII in London in June 1902 probably reinforced their commitment to King and country.<sup>123</sup> Among the papers from Melrose House, there is also a commemorative programme for the visit of the Prince of Wales to Pretoria in 1928, to which they were invited.<sup>124</sup> In early twentieth century Pretoria there were apparently also military parades, official dinners and luncheons to attend, foundation stones to be laid and monuments to unveil – all invariably accompanied by traditional British pomp and ceremony.<sup>125</sup> The family were also members of many cultural, sporting and humanitarian societies,

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121. GJH, Letter Book 7, Fred Heys – Heys, 22 August 1904, 18 September 1904, 17 October 1904; Heys – Dr J. Scoble, 19 December 1904.
  122. GJH: SD 6, G.J. Heys, appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the District of Pretoria, 2 April, 1909. See also Box 6, family “certificate” with the citation “We ... salute you on your recent elevation to the noble rank of JP which in this country corresponds, we are glad to believe, with the English peerage ... from his ‘regiment of women’.”
  123. GJH: Box 3, Murdoch – Heys, 30 May 1902, confirming bookings for Mr & Mrs Heys for the coronation, 26 June 1902.
  124. GJH: Box 9, Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Union Buildings, Pretoria, 19 June 1925.
  125. See for example GJH: Box 5, *The Transvaal Leader*, 11 April 1904, “Mayoral Banquet, a Brilliant Function”, with speeches by Milner and Lawley; Invitation, farewell banquet given to Milner on the occasion of his departure for home, 22 March 1905. In Boxes 8 and 9 there are numerous invitations to military functions, also to dinners, etcetera, including some “at homes” given by Acting Governor Sir Richard Solomon, Governor and High Commissioner Lord Selborne, Lord Methuen, HRH the Duke of Connaught and the first Governor General of South Africa, Viscount H.J. Gladstone.

and served on the Wesleyan Church Ladies Committee.<sup>126</sup> During World War I, Janie, Mabel and Jessie all became closely involved in women's support groups such as the Guild of Loyal Women, which undertook projects to help the imperial war effort and foster South African links with Britain.<sup>127</sup> Heys himself took no part in formal politics, but identified with the outlook of leaders such as Smuts, who laid great emphasis on the British connection. He had cordial links with businessmen and emerging political figures countrywide.<sup>128</sup> In a word, he and his family were seen as pillars of colonial society, leading Pretorians who identified closely with Britishness, and more particularly with British South Africanness.

George Jesse Heys died at Pearl's home in Devon on 23 September 1939, while on his customary annual visit to England. He was 87 years of age. A few short months before, his two daughters and their families had greeted him with much joy and anticipation of a happy reunion together. It was Pearl who called him "my Rock", the loving father who had seen her through hard times; for the whole family he had indeed been a rock, a stabilizing and ever-reliable presence. Obituaries hailed him as a pioneer and one of Pretoria's foremost financiers.<sup>129</sup> The body was sent home to Pretoria where, fittingly, Heys was buried in the family plot in the old cemetery in Church Street West alongside his wife Janie; at rest among others who, like him, had played a significant role in the early history of Pretoria.

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126. See for example GJH: Box 5, Life membership card Mrs G. Heys, Transvaal Home Industries Union; *Rand Daily Mail*, 25 September 1903, "English Church Mission to Promote the Great Work of Reconciliation in this Country". See also footnote 21.
127. See for example certificate: Mrs E.J. Heys, S.A. Gifts & Comforts Organization Committee, Transvaal Branch, 1914-1918; also card re first prize award, Miss Jessie Heys, Exhibition of Women's Work 1906, Guild of Loyal Women, Pretoria Branch.
128. A signed photograph of Smuts hung in the Melrose billiard room; Allen, "Melrose House", *Pretoria News*, 28 October 1969.
129. See for example *Pretoria News*, 25 and 27 September 1939; *Rand Daily Mail*, 26 September 1939; *The Star*, 25 September 1939.

### **Abstract**

George Heys was a pioneer of Kruger's Pretoria and in many ways his life and work are inseparably linked with Pretoria's changing fortunes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An eminently successful entrepreneur, he was one of a group of South Africans of British background who played a key role in the early commercial development of the town. This article looks at his years as coaching-line proprietor in the 1880s, the foundation of what later became a considerable financial empire, and studies his close identification in these years, despite his British upbringing, with republicanism. He was a loyal burgher, a volunteer in 1880-1881 and a close friend of Kruger – to whom he lent money on occasion to pay officials. When the Anglo-Boer War broke out, he was already a wealthy man living in Victorian-style comfort in Melrose House, and during the war, his business career surprisingly (but perhaps predictably) appears to have suffered very little. In the post-war years, he and his family – he was a devoted family man – eased effortlessly into the changed circumstances. He made his gracious home available to Roberts and then Kitchener, happily signed the oath of allegiance and became what he had always clearly been at heart – a British loyalist. All these aspects of the life and times of George Jesse Heys in Pretoria are explored, making use of his private papers that are still in the possession of his descendants.

### **Opsomming**

#### **George Jesse Heys (1852-1939) in Pretoria**

George Heys was 'n pionier van Kruger se Pretoria en op baie maniere is sy lewe en werk onlosmaakbaar vervleg met Pretoria se veranderende lot in die laat negentiende en vroeg twintigste eeu. As vooraanstaande suksesvolle entrepreneur, was hy een van 'n groep Suid-Afrikaners van Britse afkoms wat 'n sleutelrol gespeel het in die vroeë kommersiële ontwikkeling van die dorp. In hierdie artikel word gelet op sy jare as eienaar van 'n koetsbedryf in die 1880s, 'n onderneming wat later tot 'n aansienlike finansiële ryk uitgebou is. 'n Ontleding word gemaak van sy sterk identifisering met republikaanse gedurende hierdie tydperk, ten spyte van sy Britse agtergrond. Hy was 'n lojale burger, 'n vrywilliger in 1880-1881 en 'n goeie vriend van Kruger – aan wie hy per geleentheid geld geleen het om amptenare te betaal. Met die uitbreek van die Anglo-Boereoorlog was hy reeds 'n welgestelde man, wat in Victoriaanse gemak in Melrosehuis gewoon het. Sy loopbaan het tydens die oorlog

oënskynlik verrassend (maar miskien voorspelbaar) min gely. In die na-oorlogse tydperk het hy en sy familie – hy was ’n toegewyde gesinsman – met gemak by die veranderde omstandighede aangepas. Hy het sy goedingerigte huis eers aan Roberts en daarna aan Kitchener beskikbaar gestel, die eed van getrouheid sonder probleem onderteken en die getroue Britse onderdaan geword wat hy altyd ten diepste was. Al hierdie aspekte van die lewe en tyd van George Jesse Heys in Pretoria word ondersoek deur gebruik te maak van sy privaatdokumente wat steeds in besit van sy nageslag is.

**Key words**

Early Pretoria, early Transvaal commercial development, coaching, republican identity, Anglo-Boer War, Peace Treaty of Vereeniging, British identity.

**Sleutelwoorde**

Vroeë Pretoria, vroeë Transvaalse kommersiële ontwikkeling, poskoetsbedryf, republikeinse identiteit, Anglo-Boereoorlog, Vredesverdrag van Vereeniging, Britse identiteit.