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Notes on Paardepoort Farm no 77 Utrecht District

Debbie Whelan from Archaic Consulting was requested by Gavin Anderson of Umlando to carry out a short preliminary investigation based on photographs and readily available information provided of the structure on Paardepoort Farm, Utrecht district. Gavin Anderson provided the photographs which have been inserted into this document. Maps, Land Registers, Survey diagrams and archival references were consulted.

Short Report on the farm

Possibly due to the situation within the ZAR, the land records for the early history of Paardepoort 77 are scanty. Indeed, the date of this early grant is not registered in the Land Register, and the earliest recorded land transfer is in 1860. The first grant of land was 2503 morgen (the Survey diagram notes 5299 Engelsch Acres) to Petrus Johannes Uys. This was then transferred to Pieter Uys and then in 1860 to both Margaretha Johannes Uys and Alida Maria Uys. It is not surprising that one of the three koppies amongst which it sits is known as Uys Kop.

Subdivision A (extent unknown) was registered in 1880 in the names of Maria Johanna Potgieter, Hans Jurie Potgieter and Cornelis Janse Potgieter. The first indication of the size of this property is only in 1891 where Subdivision A is noted as being 1251 morgen and 489 roods. In this last land transaction, Maria Potgieter has fallen away and the property is registered as Hans Jurie and Corenlis Janse owning the whole. (it seems as though she went and married Matthys Lourens). Then, in 1910 this was sold to Matthys Johannes Lourens who, in 1929 transferred the property to his wife Maria Lourens. This was through Deceased Estate as the Archival Records note that he died in 1928 and also that his wife's maiden name was Potgieter (MSCE O 74/1928 Lourens, Matthys Johannes Uys. (S/S Maria Johanna, Born Potgieter). This would suggest that Matthys Potgieter, in whose name the farm was registered in 1943, was still a descendent.

Subdivision A is the portion that was excised off the main farm to the north east. The house in question is on the Remainder.

Also in 1890, **Subdivision B** was registered in the name of Petrus and Ledew de Jager, with the property being sold by Margaretha Johannes Uys. Ledew transferred his portion to Petrus in 1891. In the April of that year, a holding known as B+B" was transferred by Petrus de Jager to Johannes Nicholaas Moolman. This is reflected as being the **Remainder of B**, consisting of 1251 morgen and 489 roods. In 1897, Moolman transferred the portion to Matthys Johannes Uys Lourens and then in 1910, Lourens to Cornelis Potgieter. In 1930, this remainder was transferred to the name of Anna Potgieter, and Subdivision 2, consisting of 2 morgen, was transferred to the Union Government.

In 1965, the Remainder of B, now consisting of 1169 morgen, was moved from the Estate of the Late Anna Adendorff (married) into the names of Cornelis Tobias Vermaak and David Doyes Vermaak. In 1979, the former ceded his half share to David Vermaak.

How the property transaction occurred between the Uys family and the Potgieters and De Jagers is not certain, although Alida Maria Uys was born Potgieter, so the family could have claimed inheritance. (MSCE 0 14332/1929 Potgieter, Alida Maria. (Born Uys). Thus, the entire property has essentially been in the hands of two families for over a century.

The House on the Remainder of Paardepoot

The author was hoping that the land registers would assist in establishing a date for the house which is a good example of rural vernacular architecture, Fig 1 shows an elevation particularly reminiscent of properties constructed between 1890 and 1920. Since the part of the farm on which this structure sits was not the original excised portion, and that the siting of the house close to water and against hills is sensible, there are more than likely portions of this structure which date back to the first Uys habitation on this property (as noted, undated due to lack of information on the land register)

The house is constructed of mixed construction and largely local shale under a corrugated sheeting roof. There is a low shale/stone podium on which the extended portion of the house sits. It is suspect by the author that the rear portion formed the original house, and that the extended portion, prominent in Figure 1, was a slightly later extension. Some of the windows are timber and many have been replaced with steel casement versions. There is a generous wrap around veranda to three sides which appears to be supported by steel posts. There is little gentrification, suggesting little need or money for such frippery, and typical of such houses which are both remote and situated in hard farming areas. The rear portion of the house is characterized by the chimney, adding to the supposition that this was the early part of the house.



Fig 1: Front view of house, showing suspected later extension



Fig 2: Showing rear portion, with suspected original building and kitchen chimney.



Fig 3 showing relationship of extended portion to rear house



Fig 4: Showing suspected early part of house and inappropriate addition of steel windows

Conclusions:

This structure is part of a long tradition in the Uys Family. As the author's brief is of a restricted nature, the follow up would be better photographic material or a site inspection, and clarity as to where the descendents of this family have moved to in latter years and what their sensitivity is regarding the house. In addition to canvassing local emotions regarding the farmstead, the investigation of options and alternatives is also recommended as part of a greater brief.

The house is a good example of a rural vernacular building, constructed incrementally to suit position and economy. At face value the property has much to recommend it in terms of scale, proportion and a certain discreet elegance. Should its retention be an option, support from professionals in the field and Amafa for like building materials could be sought.

Justification for its retention, or demolition at this stage cannot form a part of a document of this brevity.

References:

Land Register: Paardepoort 77

Survey Diagram: Paardepoort 77

Provincial Archives Repository Database:

MSCE O 74/1928 Lourens, Matthys Johannes Uys. (S/S Maria Johanna, Born Potgieter).

MSCE O 14332/1929 Potgieter, Alida Maria. (Born Uys).

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