

**Flip van der Watt, *Tukkies Oorskou sy Eerste Honderd Jaar 1908 – 2008***

University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 2008

202 pp

ISBN 978-0-620-40825-7

R250.00

On 10 February 2008, the University of Pretoria (UP) celebrated its centenary. As part of the celebrations, Professor Van der Watt, a retired senior academic and the editor of the fourth volume (1993-2000) of the *Ad Destinatum* series on the history of the university, as well as the author of *Rectores Magnifici* (2003), the history of the first eleven university principals, was commissioned to write a history of the institution. He was supported in this endeavour by Professor Karin Harris, director of the UP archive and her efficient staff of archivists.

*Tukkies Oorskou sy Eerste Honderd Jaar* is a coffee-table book with magnificent photographs, accompanied by short, but informative essays, relating to the history, events and architecture of UP. Although the purpose of the publication is to celebrate the achievements of the university, Van der Watt follows Oliver Cromwell's advice to paint a "warts-and-all" portrait. He succeeds admirably in conveying the turbulent history of the university, especially the struggle to turn it into an Afrikaner institution. Despite including a large portion of Afrikaans-speaking students, the university, then called the Transvaal University College, was initially an English-medium institution. With the growth of Afrikaner nationalism, the demand for lectures in Afrikaans became stronger. The result was a protracted and bitter struggle on the campus between Afrikaner and English academics and students. The Lamont case of 1932 finally led to the complete Afrikanerisation of the university. H.P. Lamont, the head of UP's French department, under the pseudonym Wilfred Saint-Mandé, wrote a book entitled *War, Wine and Women*, in which he made derogatory remarks about Afrikaners. This led to an outcry amongst Afrikaners when it was rumoured that Mandé was a lecturer at the university. On 23 May 1932, four young Afrikaners decided to take matters into their hands to defend the honour of the Afrikaner. Even though they lacked direct proof that he was Mandé, they abducted Lamont and tarred and feathered him. Fortunately the UP adapted with less turbulence to the new South Africa after 1994, and is deservedly seen as one of South Africa's leading tertiary institutions.

*Tukkies Oorskou sy Eerste Honderd Jaar* is a beautiful, informative and highly readable book, especially the essays on the various university principals. They are a joy to read – see for example the one on A.E. du Toit, "Omstrede kampvegter vir 'n Afrikaanse Universiteit", which can serve as an example of how a short biographical essay should be written. The book furthermore maintains a healthy balance between historical investigation and the celebration of the university's achievements. For any

## *Book Reviews*

former UP student wanting to go down memory lane, this is a must buy. The book can be ordered by email from [eeufees.winkel@up.ac.za](mailto:eeufees.winkel@up.ac.za) or telephonically (+27-12-4202278). The centenary shop can be visited in the Ou Lettere Building, Room 1.16, Hatfield Campus.

*FA Mouton*

*University of South Africa*