

F. A. STEYTLER

Perhaps one of the most admirable characteristics of Mr. Steytler was his zest for history. He approached it with a gusto that is unfortunately all too rare and one recalls his excited summons of "Kom kyk hierso!" when he unearthed a humorous item or document of significance among the archival records or his triumphant return from the battlefield of Ulundi with old cartridge cases and fragments of shells. In the veld which he loved, he had a keen eye and an uncanny instinct for turning up interesting relics. He capped a life of rich experience with illuminating anecdotes and gave his colleagues and friends revealing glimpses of the pioneers of humble farm schools in the Free State and of those in high places whom he had known intimately, especially General Hertzog and Mr. N. C. Havenga.

For the South African Archives and the nation he secured extensive microfilms of records in the British Colonial and Foreign Offices (1896-1902) and of Milner's South Africa papers at Oxford that open wide the doors to further research into a crucial period of South African history. His unswerving patriotism did not blind him to the virtues of traditional adversaries; he pointed out on more than one occasion the felicitous style and grace of the private letters of many of the late Victorian men of affairs and lamented the current signs of decline in standards of bilingualism.

As a colleague, Mr. Steytler was courteous, helpful and brimful of suggestions. White-haired in his later years and always distinguished in appearance, he was a gentleman to the inch — a dapper and infectiously enthusiastic man with a wide range of interests who endeared himself to those who knew him.

A. M. Davey.