EARLY TOMBSTONES IN THE JOHANNESBURG-HEIDELBERG AREA

While doing a foot survey with Mrs Jean Mason - COCOS in 1981 in the Johannesburg area we found the graveyard of the Marais family on the farm Rietvlei No 17.

The tombstones represent burials of The Marais family and made from a dark slate. Because of the texture of the slate it was not possible to photograph them, so we decided to take rubbings using rice paper and carbon paper. I believe this method has not been used before in the Johannesburg area although brass rubbings are common overseas. The results can be seen in sketch.

There are three well preserved slate tombstones and some broken ones. The earliest date is that of Sarel Johannes Marais born 1814, died 1893. This is also the best engraved stone depicting a church with its steeple and weather vane. Later Johanna Marais died 1896, aged 47 years 10 months and 7 days. Martha Magdalena Berg nee Marais died 1903.

No oral or written history could be found on the Marais family except that their farm Rietvlei was well established with a solid built house, wagonshed, walled in orchard irrigated by water from the Bloubosspruit which runs down the valley from Mondeor.

VIES JOHANNES W AAT ON SELKAAR SCHE ENDALLEEN ARHIDERESTBURIEN ZE LIE ON SU





