



Nicolaas Pieter Johannes Janse van Rensburg

3 August 1864 - 11 March 1926

A.K.A - Siener van Rensburg

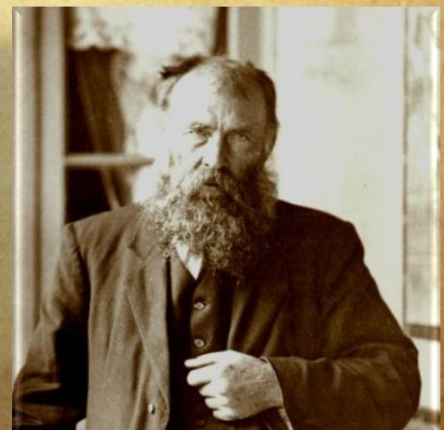
Nicolaas Pieter Johannes ("Niklaas" or "Siener") Janse van Rensburg (3 August 1864 – 11 March 1926) was a Boer from the South African Republic - also known as the Transvaal Republic - and later a citizen of South Africa who was considered by some to be a prophet of the Boers. Consequently, his nickname became Siener (Afrikaans for "seer" or "soothsayer"). His seemingly accurate predictions of future events were wrapped in a patriotic, religious format. During the Boer War he soon acquired a reputation which made him a trusted companion, if not advisor to General de la Rey and President Steyn. The true extent of his influence with these figures is disputed, though the devoutly religious de la Rey seemed to have considered him a prophet of God.

Van Rensburg was born on the farm Palmietfontein in the Potchefstroom district, the son of Willem Jacobus Janse van Rensburg and Anna Catharina Janse van Rensburg. He was a very poor sheep farmer but like many farmers of the time he had something of everything. As recorded by contemporary commentators, he would not read a single word which was not on the pages of the Bible. He averted his eyes from all written words (except Biblical). He had precisely 20 days of schooling at the Rooipoort farm school, and was taught to read by his mother. From a young age he was described as different and later in life people remarked upon his unusual eyes. He was average-to-small in build, and had a timid demeanour. He was thoroughly proper and respectable, as you might expect, but people often observed that he didn't pay much attention to his outward appearance.

At age 16, he participated in a government expedition. He contracted and survived malaria on the expedition and afterwards settled near Wolmaranstad in the then western ZAR. At age 21 he was an elected elder for the Reformed Church, perhaps due to his scriptural knowledge. He married Anna Sophia Kruger in 1884.

Boer war

Van Rensburg and his brother Pieter were commandeered to participate in the second Anglo-Boer War under General Sarel P. du Toit. Van Rensburg however remained unarmed and never fired a shot. His contribution was to be a stream of visions and prophecies for the duration of the war. As the seer would later explain, he believed that a nightly visitor woke him only a day before the outbreak of the war, with a message that his work was dedicated to God.



Following this vision, van Rensburg was beset with a fear that would not dissipate. When this disturbed state continued into their sojourn in Kimberley, his superiors sent him home. Experiencing no relief, he returned to the Siege of Kimberley, where he believed a new vision had revealed to him the defeat and loss of life that the war would bring about. Shortly afterwards, possibly at Graspan, his disturbed state lifted permanently as a soldier was wounded on his side, as, according to van Rensburg, another vision had forewarned. Van Rensburg then travelled with general Piet Cronjé but escaped the encirclement by British forces at Paardeberg. Subsequently, he travelled with different commandos, where a number of apparently accurate predictions established his reputation.

A report of his visions attracted the attention of General de la Rey, who recruited Van Rensburg for his commando. On 7 December 1900, General de Wet found himself cornered against the Caledon River, which was in flood, while British forces were assailing his position. When his surrender appeared imminent, a message from De la Rey was delivered by a Boer scout. Van Rensburg had allegedly foreseen the situation and the message outlined an escape route, which was duly followed, leaving the pursuers to flounder in the torrent which De Wet had just traversed.[8] De la Rey, also hard pressed by his enemy, dispatched Van Rensburg to accompany President Steyn to Roodewal, De Wet's safe retreat in the northern Free State. Here Van Rensburg advised them to wait upon two horsemen which he described, who arrived the next day with a message from acting President Schalk Burger.

On 13 September 1901, van Rensburg found himself in the camp of Commandant Roux at Rietkuil near Vredefort. Sensing imminent danger, he advised those present, who had just retired for the day, to depart from the camp at once. Roux was slow to take heed, and his men even more so, as scouts had not observed enemy units. Van Rensburg, his wife and children escaped on a cart, shortly before the greater part of the camp was captured in a surprise attack.

Flight from the enemy

In January 1901 Van Rensburg had a vision indicating the flight of three Boer women, who were soon found and rescued by his host Willem Bosman. Days after re-joining De la Rey's commando he had visions of members of his own family being captured, and asked for leave to assist them. The Van Rensburg family fled from their farmhouse as British forces approached, but the wagon train carrying the elderly, women and neighbours was surprised and captured by traitors the following morning. Van Rensburg's parents, eldest daughter Hester and four younger children were subsequently interned at the Mafeking concentration camp.

Van Rensburg, his wife, eldest son Willem and two daughters travelled with a group which managed to evade their pursuers, and Van Rensburg once again joined De la Rey's commando. Upon meeting his wife again in mid October



1901, they found their farmhouse destroyed. Van Rensburg's ominous premonition concerning their daughters, Anna and Maria, was confirmed when news arrived that they and two relatives had died during an outbreak of measles in the concentration camp.

Van Rensburg was present when Commandant Van Aardt's company returned from the action at Yzerspruit on 25 February 1902. Van Aardt was in a despondent state as his brother was missing in action. Van Rensburg however assured him that his brother was neither dead nor captured, but alive, though in great pain. The wounded soldier was returned to camp the same evening, carried on the horse of a burgher who found him.

Before the Battle of Tweebosch, Van Rensburg gave a number of predictions indicating how the enemy would approach along the Harts River, and when he deemed them most vulnerable. He also envisaged how the victory would enhance De la Rey's reputation. Methuen's force collapsed in the face of De la Rey's sudden attack on 7 March 1902, and Methuen was captured.

On 17 March 1902 President Steyn, in the company of De Wet and Hertzog, arrived at Zedelingsfontein, De la Rey's headquarters near Klerksdorp, to consult De la Rey's physician about an eye ailment. Van Rensburg was once again dispatched to guard the president. Around the 23rd he had a vision of English troops arriving, but the president was unwilling to heed his warning, until De la Rey intervened urgently on Van Rensburg's behalf. The president departed for the safety of the Molopo River on the evening of the 24th. British troops arrived at Zedelingsfontein during the early hours of the 25th and captured two of De la Rey's adjutants.

Gaining entry to General Kemp's war council in the bushveld region, he soon warned them against attacking a retreating enemy, which would leave them vulnerable to encirclement. At the subsequent Battle of Harts River on 31 March 1902, some British units did fall back, though some Canadians stood their ground until overpowered by burgher forces. Kemp, though partially or grudgingly heeding the seer's visions, was generally reluctant to give him credit.

When the Union of South Africa came out in support of the Allied Powers in World War I, Van Rensburg allied with the rebels. The rebellion received a fatal blow even before it started, when the influential general Koos de la Rey was accidentally killed on 15 September 1914.

De la Rey, when killed, was en route to General J.G.C. Kemp, who subsequently organised the rebellion in western Transvaal. On 2 November, Kemp addressed a public meeting at Vleeskraal, near Schweizer-Reneke, with the locally influential Van Rensburg at his side. Van Rensburg also addressed the assembly, and assured them that his visions indicated they had little to fear. 610 men then joined the rebel cause, and with conscription imminent, the number of rebel volunteers grew to 1,800.

General Kemp decided on a company of 720 men, mostly farmers, which included Van Rensburg and his son. They departed immediately on a journey to join Manie Maritz in German South-West Africa. After a desert trek and much hardship they linked up with Maritz's company on 29 November. Rebels under De Wet and Beyers were rounded up by South African forces in the days that followed.

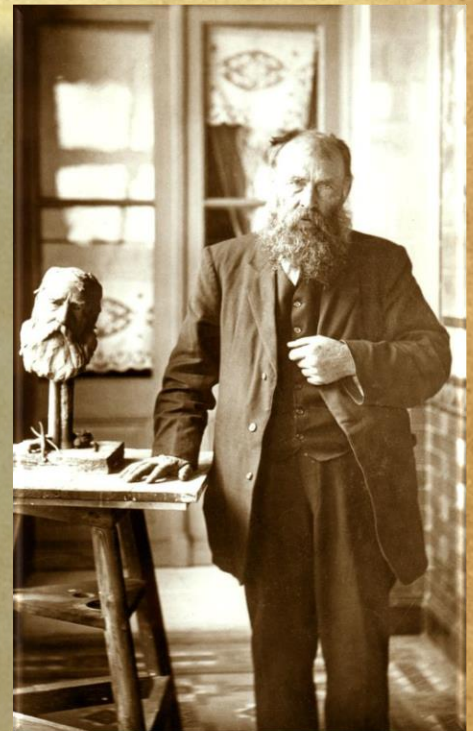
Returning to South Africa, Maritz and Kemp engaged government forces at Nous, Lutzputs and finally at Upington, on 3 February 1915. Van Rensburg's son Willem was mortally wounded in the Upington clash, and the whole rebel force captured, with the exception of Maritz who fled via German South-West Africa, to Angola and from thence to Portugal. Van Rensburg, like his comrades, received a prison sentence. He however served about a year, first in Boksborg, then in the Old Fort, Johannesburg.

After his release Nicolaas van Rensburg returned to his farm Rietkuil, near Wolmaranstad. Some of his visions were then recorded by reverend Dr. Rossouw. Van Rensburg's daughter Anna Badenhorst also recorded a set of visions up to his death at age 61. The latter set is considered to be difficult to interpret and not very coherent.

With the outbreak of World War II, the collections of visions were considered inflammatory. Distribution was prohibited and some copies seized on orders of prime minister Jan Smuts. Upon Anna's death her hand written documents were transferred to Lichtenburg museum's archives, where they were rediscovered in 1991. The farm and van Rensburg family cemetery are located 11 km from Ottosdal, in the North West Province.

Visions

His mother perceived his visions even as a toddler, and noticed that these seemed to disturb him. General Hertzog described him as someone continuously distracted by a maze of imagery and symbolism. In all, some 700 visions have been recorded.



The nature of his visions invariably concerned the welfare of the Boers, the Netherlands and Germany, and were experienced by him as visual imagery to be interpreted afterwards. When the image of the sisal plant occurred in his visions, he for instance interpreted this as a portent of an important meeting, assembly or parliament. He is believed by some to have made many accurate predictions of local events, including foretelling the death of general Koos de la Rey and the political transition of South Africa after his own death. At times his visions also concerned international events, among which the start of World War I and the rise of Communism. He was unable to interpret some of his own visions. These, written down, are still open to interpretation, and believed by some to pertain to future events.

Reitz's assessment



Boer soldier Deneys Reitz's account of the Boer War contains a colourful objective account of one of the seer's predictions (shortened):

... a prophet, a strange character, with long flowing beard and wild fanatical eyes, who dreamed dreams and pretended to possess occult powers. I personally witnessed one of the lucky hits while we were congregated around the General's cart. Van Rensburg was expounding his latest vision to a hushed audience. It ran of a black bull and a red bull fighting, until at length the red bull sank defeated to its knees, referring to the British. Arms outstretched and eyes ablaze, he suddenly called out: See, who comes?; and, looking up, we made out a distant horseman spurring towards us. When he came up, he produced a letter from General Botha, hundreds of miles away.

General de la Rey opened it and said: "Men, believe me, the proud enemy is humbled". The letter contained news that the English had proposed a peace conference. "Coming immediately upon the prophecy, it was a dramatic moment and I was impressed, even though I suspected that van Rensburg had stage-managed the scene. Of the general's sincerity there could be no doubt as he firmly believed in the seer's predictions."

List of Predictions.

Prophecies from 1899 until his death in 1926:

Fulfilled:

- * The outcome of the Boer War.
- * The Great 'Flu epidemic of 1918.
- * England's loss of all her colonies.
- * Independence for Ireland.
- * The atomic disaster at Chernobyl on April 26 1986.
- * Lady Di's death The divorce and tragic death of "a beautiful English Lady in a car accident who would be mourned by the whole world."
- * Civil war in Bosnia.
- * Dr HF Verwoerd, former Prime Minister, will die at the hand of a close friend.
- * The release of Nelson Mandela by ex-President FW de Klerk.
- * The Necklace Murders
- * South Africa will be governed by a black government.

Not fulfilled yet:

- * Japan will be destroyed by earthquakes.
- * Ethnic violence in Russia and Europe
- * Racial violence will explode worldwide at the turn of the century and start World War III, in which Germany and America will fight side by side.
- * Laser weapons: It is a chilling experience to read about his predictions in 1920 of this coming Third and Final War at

the beginning of the 21st century when the armies of the world will use what he called “terrible electrical rays that sow death and destruction from above and below, and soak the earth in blood”.

The old prophet described the events on the battlefields of the world in such detail as though he himself had been an eye-witness.

In 1918 Rensburg prophesied:

“I see there will be a time when the whole world will be ploughed under. This will be the beginning of the Third – and last – World War and everything will be in confusion. Then I saw a snake lying on the ploughed land. I could not see its head or tail.

Some World Predictions:

*America and England will become bankrupt and full of debts.

*England will be struck by 7 plagues when World War 3 is at hand.

*England will be totally annihilated, even their ground will burn away as a Russian-led invasion will invade Europe, through Turkey, and use terrible weapons.

*The invasion will be stopped in France by German-American forces. Mr. van Rensburg actually made a remark that Germany will receive new ‘ground-breaking’ technology from America that they (the Germans) will use to defeat the Russian invasion; the USA will be unable to respond in a timely manner because of a severe attack on their troops, ground and finances.

*Mr. van Rensburg also indicated that the trouble for South Africa will be much shorter lived when compared to other countries also less troublesome, as the Lord will send His power and blessing causing South Africa to be a safe-haven for Christians from all over the world.



Genealogy

Son of Willem Jacobus (Kort Koos) Janse van Rensburg, and Anna Catharina Janse(n) van Rensburg

Husband of Anna Sophia Janse van Rensburg

Father of Willem Jacobus Janse van Rensburg, Hester Petronella Coertze, Cornelius Francois Janse van Rensburg, Anna Catharina Janse van Rensburg, Nicolaas Johannes Johannes Janse van Rensburg, Maria Elizabeth Janse van Rensburg, Elizabeth Johanna Aletta Botha, Anna Sophia Badenhorst, Petronella Nicolasina Niemand, and Johannes Cornelius Janse van Rensburg.

Brother of Anna Catharina Kruger, Elizabeth Aletta Nicolasina Combrink, Pieter Nicolaas Janse van Rensburg, Wilhelmina Jacoba Janse van Rensburg, and Magdalena Petronella Smit.

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