

# **DE VOORTREKKERS (WINNING A CONTINENT), 1916**

**Intertexts: Gustav Preller (?)**

**(English texts only)**

## **WINNING A CONTINENT**

**by Gustav Preller, adapted and produced by Harold Shaw**

**Piet Retief, a farmer in Cape Colony, has planned a great emigration to the Unknown North for the purpose of buying territory from the natives on which to establish a Free Dutch Republic.**

**Piet Retief: Dick Cruickshank; Mrs. Retief: Caroline Frances Cooke; Piet Retief junior: Jack Turnbull**

**“Most of you, my friends, have trekked far to support my plans. I hope to prove myself worthy of your confidence.”**

**“Being a God-fearing people, we shall trade fairly with the natives and thereby gain their assistance in establishing a Model Republic for our posterity.”**

**Karel Landman of Cape Colony has sold his farm, and prepares to join Retief’s party in the national movement to the North.**

**Karel Landman: M.A.Wetherall; his wife: Mabel Rushton**

**Unwelcome visitors.**

**Louis Perreira: Julius Repton; Joan Diaz: C.J. Kitto**

**Letter: Dearest Johanna, upon receipt of your reply to this our family shall begin our trek to the appointed meeting place on the Orange River. Many days and nights before I behold your face, but until then I remain, Yours affectionately, Jan Faber**

**“Tomorrow I lead several families in a far trek to the North, where we join Piet Retief and his party.”**

**“...we shall also open up trade with the Zulus in the Free Republic we are going to found beyond the borders of Cape Colony.”**

**Having robbed the Zulus for years, Perreira scents trouble in the proposed trek of the Boers towards Zululand.**

**“If these cursed Dutchmen get into Zululand, they will teach these natives trade valuations, and ruin our business.”**

**“We shall reach Port Natal by sea in time to poison the mind of the Zulu king against the Boers, and make him stop them on the border!”**

**Breaking the home ties.**

**Thirty miles away, Willem Faber and his family prepare to trek and join the Faber party.**

**Willem Faber: W. Harbard; His wife: Lena Martin**

**Jan Faber, their son, is the accepted suitor of Johanna Landman.**

**Jan Faber: H. Petersen**

**Dearest Jan, By the time you receive this letter we shall have departed as per arrangements agreed to by our fathers. Goodbye till we meet again, Johanna Landman.**

**At the meeting place. The Landman party awaits the arrival of Piet Retief and the other emigrants who have joined the great movement.**

**The eyes of love.**

**Crossing the Orange River. Half of the Great Trek has been accomplished.**

**In the kraal of Dingaan, King of the Zulus.**

**Hut of the Rev. Owen, a missionary who has been permitted to settle and work near Dingaan's kraal.  
The Rev. Owen: E. Wyrly Birch; His wife: Violet Dickens;  
June Bird: Eileen Gerard; Mrs. Halley: E. Turnbull**

**The words of the Saviour awaken gentleness in the heart of Sobuza, one of Dingaan's warriors.**

**"Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land the Lord thy God giveth thee."**

**"...and desiring that all men, white and black, should live peaceably and without strife, God said 'Thou shalt not kill!'"**

**Dingaan's way.**

**"Have I not told you that no child of mine shall live? And here you are nursing the child of Umnandi, my favourite wife!"**

**"Take them away! The birds want food!"**

**"We shall see what the Great Elephant has to say to a white heart within the body of a Zulu warrior!"**

**The arrival of Piet Retief.**

**Humiliation.**

**“Go South, the White Man’s country, where you may live without strife.”**

**“I return the presents you gave me six moons ago. Use them only in self-defence or to provide yourself with food.”**

**Piet Retief is elected leader of the Great Trek and President of the new republic.**

**Charl Cilliers: Stephenson Maré; The Rev. Erasmus Smit; C.J. Hamlin**

**“With the help of Almighty God, I, Piet Retief, hereby promise to fulfill the office you have honoured me with to the best of my ability, and to lead you on to freedom.”**

**“Henceforth thou art my Father and my Chief, and thy people shall be my people.”**

**The President calls for volunteers to accompany him on a visit to Dingaan’s kraal, for the purpose of purchasing land for the new Republic.**

**Willie van Rensburg has been selected to accompany the President’s party because of his perfect knowledge of the Zulu language.**

**Piet Retief, junior, who also speaks perfect Zulu, rebels at being left behind.**

**“The boys are the only ones among us who can interpret for us. It is wise that they both accompany us.”**

**Departure for Zululand.**

**“By leaving now we can easily reach Dingaan’s kraal in time to inflame him against the Boers.”**

**Giving the horses a breather.**

**Wives of Dingaan.**

**“The Great Elephant hears not well when his visitors hold the Rod of Thunder.”**

**“Great Elephant and greatest son of a great father, we come to ask what laws have you for men who desert their tribe?”**

**“Hundreds of these white deserts and their families are at this moment trekking towards Zululand.”**

**“Thy wisdom is great, O Elephant! And we warn you that if these deserters enter Zululand, they will take your country, rob your cattle, and despoil your people!”**

**The Rev.s Lindley and Venables, American missionaries in Zululand, having heard of the Boers’ arrival, have hastened to Dingaan’s kraal to bid them welcome. The Rev. Daniel Lindley: Perry Marmont; The Rev. Venables: A.O. ???**

**The entire Retief party are disarmed before being permitted to enter the kraal.**

**Terms having been agreed upon, Dingaan’s Treaty resigns unto Retief and his countrymen “The place called Natal, with all the land annexed, for their everlasting property.”**

**The Treaty.**

**“Prepare to dance for my guests!”**

**Having witnessed many such scenes before, the Rev. Owen has no interest in the war dance that Dingaan has prepared for the enlightenment of Retief and his party.**

**“Your warriors become too offensive in their zeal to entertain us, please ask them not to come so close.”**

**“...Drink, oh, drink of the beer, your burning throats call for it! Drink as much as you can, for tomorrow you will drink no more!”**

**Realizing that this is his one chance of helping his baas, Sobuza has feigned death.**

**“The Great Elephant has slain only part of this horde of whites. We warn you: Beware lest their friends avenge them!”**

**“Your work has only begun. Follow the spoor by which they came, and eat up their friends!”**

**Jan is sent out with a party to reconnoiter.**

**At Weenen, the Place of Weeping, where nearly 600 helpless Boers were massacred by the armies of Dingaan.**

**Jan informs General Pretorius of Dingaan’s treachery to the Retief party, and massacre at Weenen.**

**General Pretorius: Stephen T. Ewart.**

**General Pretorius sends for all Boers in the district to join him in reinforcing the weakened pioneers at Weenen.**

**“If our reinforcements do not arrive before the Zulus attack again, we are lost!”**

**The arrival of General Pretorius.**

**The revenge of Dingaan.**

**“We have eaten up hundreds of whites, O Elephant, but in turn have left many of our braves on the field of battle.”**

**“There is but one end for councillors who give bad advice!”**

**Evening.**

**The secret that has been told to all the maids in all the worlds.**

**Having sufficient warning of the oncoming savages, General Pretorius has been able to choose his own battleground.**

**“They will not attack until daydawn tomorrow. Meanwhile, see to it that the laager is properly secured and patrolled for the night.”**

**The great vow.**

**“We solemnly promise that, if God grant us victory on the morrow, we shall forever after keep that day sacred, and hand it down to posterity as a day of thanksgiving, and build a Church unto its memory.”**

**Early morning of December 16, 1838.**

**The first experience with firearms has demoralised the Zulu army.**

**The Boers have again driven the blacks to cover, and they reform their broken regiments.**

**“Would ye return to your king defeated by a mere handful of white men? I call ye cowards, cowards all!”**

**The third attack.**

**Having left thousands of their dead on the unequal battlefield, the demoralized Zulu army returns to report its defeat to Dingaan.**

**The men who conquered a continent.**

**“Until thy Inkoos, my white king, is avenged, thou shalt see me no more.”**

**Having been fever-stricken for months in the hut of a friend, Sobuza has again taken up his quest for Dingaan, and finds him, deserted and wandering in a strange land.**

**The Church of their promise.**

**“...and in keeping our Covenant, we shall, on every Sixteenth Day of December, render thanks to Thee, Almighty God, for our safe return and the preservation of our race and country.”**

**THE END**