SONGS OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN VELD
VOLUME ONE

Josef Marais
and his Bushveld Band
with Miranda

Album No. A-471
Decca Records
OLD JOHNNIE GOGGABIE

(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band
with
MIRANDA

23689 A
(73293)
Album No. A-471
12 SIDES—2

(1) THE WANDERER’S SONG
(2) COME WALK WITH ME TONIGHT

Josef Marais
And His Bushveld Band

23689 B
PRETTY KITTY
(Josef Marais)
JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band
with
MIRANDA
23690 A
AUNT MINA'S COOKING
THE SIRUP
(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

23690 B
WHEN WILL WE BE MARRIED GERTJIE?

(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band
with
MIRANDA

23691 A
(1) SUGARBUSH (Vastrap)
(2) THE CAPE TOWN GIRLS

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

23691 B
THE ZULU WARRIOR
(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

(73295)
Vocal
with Chorus
and Orchestra

12 sides—7

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PERSONALITY SERIES
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
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23692 A
PITY THE POOR PATAT

(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

23692 B
IF MARIA MARRIED ME
(Diggenhof-Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

DECCA PERSONALITY SERIES
MANUFACTURED BY DECCA RECORDS, INC., NEW YORK, U.S.A.

(68375)
Album No. A-471
12 SIDES 9
Vocal With Orchestra

23693 A
MA SAYS PA SAYS
(Josef Marais)
JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band
23693 B
ALBUM NO. A-474
12 SIDES—11
Vocal
with Orchestra

JAN PIERIEWIET
(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

23694 A
(69258)
Album No. A-471
12 sides—12

(1) THERE COMES ALIBAMA
(2) TRAIN TO KIMBERLEY

(Josef Marais)

JOSEF MARAIS
And His Bushveld Band

23694 B
SONGS OF THE
NORTH AFRICAN HIGH
VOLUME ONE

Josef Marais
and His Oudist Band
with Miranda
RED Records
SONGS OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN VELD

VOLUME ONE

JOSEF MARAIS

and His Bushveld Band

with MIRANDA

DECCA ALBUM No. A-471

COMPLETE ON SIX TEN-INCH RECORDS

contents

23689 OLD JOHNNIE GOGGABIE
   with Miranda
   Josef Marais

(1) THE WANDERER'S SONG
   (2) COME WALK WITH ME TONIGHT
   with Chorus
   Josef Marais

23690 PRETTY KITTY
   with Miranda
   Josef Marais

AUNTIE MINA'S COOKING THE SIRUP
   with Chorus
   Josef Marais

23691 WHEN WILL WE BE MARRIED GERTJIE?
   with Miranda
   Josef Marais

(1) SUGARBUSH (Vastrap)
   (2) THE CAPE TOWN GIRLS
   with Chorus
   Josef Marais

23692 THE ZULU WARRIOR
   with Miranda
   Josef Marais

PITY THE POOR PATAT
   with Chorus
   Josef Marais

23693 IF MARIA MARRIED ME
   MA SAYS PA SAYS
   with Chorus
   Diggenhof-Maraas

23694 JAN PIERIJEWIT
   (1) THERE COMES ALIBAMA
   (2) TRAIN TO KIMBERLEY
   with Chorus
   Josef Marais

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ABOUT JOSEF MARAIS

His music, and its origin . . .

Notes by Budd Fielding White

There's mystery and magic in the word "Africa." The very sight or sound of it holds, for most people, a unique fascination. They picture Africa as a land of lions; zulu warriors; impenetrable jungles. Whether yours is the Africa of Stanley and Livingston, of William Seabrook or Edgar Rice Burroughs, or of Osa and the late Martin Johnson, it will probably always remain for you the fabulous Dark Continent — strange, primitive, unknown.

And yet, there are parts of the vast African continent which have a close kinship with our own country. The Union of South Africa, like the United States, is a young, vigorous nation, where the memory of rugged pioneer days is still fresh; and where the culture, ways of life, and even the language of the people have been largely invention born of necessity. Thus the spirit of South Africa should be easily understandable to Americans.

One of the most valid means of learning about the essence of a country — that is, learning to know and understand its people — is through its music, which reflects much of the nature, the temper, and the conglomerate personality of a people.

This album, newest of a series by Josef Marais, is typical of the music of the South African veld (pronounced "felt"). Through these captivating recordings, a great deal is revealed about the folk who populate the veld, their background, and how they feel about things.

Marais was born on the great Karroo Plateau, in the Province of the Cape of Good Hope, Union of South Africa. As a child, he was taught the two official languages of the country — English and Afrikaans. Although Afrikaans grammar books and dictionaries were issued only a little over twenty years ago, some form of the "Taal" — or language — has been spoken by the colonists, and the natives who worked for them, for almost three centuries — ever since the Hollanders, under Jan van Riebeeck, first settled in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652.

School-book history, for Marais, followed in many respects a surprising parallel to the things an American lad learns in studying U.S. history. South Africa, like America, is a nation where many races
have met and mingled; where the struggle for a free and independent way of life has been an integral part of the country's development. And, as the pioneers of the United States were men of the soil, so were the pioneers of South Africa. It is the influence of these Dutch farmers or Boers which has remained predominant through the years. In spite of the subsequent waves of immigration from all parts of Europe, the Dutch language took firm root and grew into the tongue spoken and understood by all.

But the language of the Dutch settlers — like our "American speech" — acquired, in its transplantation from a far off land, a new vigor and directness. Only the essentials of a language are kept. New situations call forth new words and old words change their meanings. This happened to English in the United States; it happened to Dutch in South Africa. Traditional Dutch became, by the metamorphosis of new usage, a kind of new language — related closely, yet different — called Afrikaans.

As Josef Marais grew older he became intensely interested in the folk-songs and folk-lore of his native land. As a child he had listened, enthralled, to the songs of the Hottentot farm boys and had learned them by heart. Throughout his youth he had collected such musical material as a hobby. It was only natural that this sort of thing should fascinate Marais, for he was beginning to show so marked an aptitude for music that he eventually won several scholarships in Capetown and later in London, where he completed his education. He continued collecting South African folk-music upon his return home, and then entered into musical activities on the continent until 1930, when he went back to London, with the firm conviction that the folk songs of all countries — tastefully translated and performed — have a universal appeal. The British Broadcasting Corporation gave him a chance to test his theory and he soon found his ideas more than substantiated.

In 1939, Marais came to the United States on the invitation of the National Broadcasting Company to present a similar program here. He began with a short presentation of Bushveld songs. U.S. listeners responded immediately, intrigued by the newness, freshness, and charm of his offerings. Very soon NBC expanded his broadcast to a half-hour drama and music program entitled "African Trek." Mr. Marais has authored a charming children's book about a little South African, called "Koos, The Hottentot."

Without benefit of any scintillating publicity build-up, quietly and steadily, Marais' popularity began to spread like wildfire in America, through his varied and frequent radio work, and through his Decca albums, the first of which was pronounced by CUE magazine to be "one of the most delightful musical volumes ever put out." And then a little thing like a World War interrupted his rise to the heights that those who were following his career expected of him. Marais became chief of the South African desk of the Office of War Information in New York. It was while in this capacity that he met Miranda, the lovely young Hollander who is now his singing partner. Miss Miranda, a native of Amsterdam, came to the United States in 1937. During World War II she offered her services to the South African OWI desk as a translator and editor for war news being broadcast in Afrikaans to South Africa. In this work she was associated with Mr. Marais. With the improvement of the war situation, OWI began to send not only news but also music to Holland, Belgium, and the Scandinavian countries. Marais' folk-songs were an important part of the programs, which Miss Miranda helped to plan. One day, quite by accident, he discovered that she had a delightful singing voice and invited her to sing duets with him over OWI's airways. She contributed a pure-toned, flute-like obbligato to Marais' voice and guitar, and the collaboration was so successful that they decided, after the war, to continue it as a permanent professional association.

Marais and Miranda have since appeared together in numerous radio shows, personal appearances, and special recitals, including Town Hall's famous "Music At Midnight" series. Their supper club engagements at New York's most intimate and exclusive bistros — including the Village Vanguard, The Blue Angel, and Le Ruban Bleu — have won, and continue to win for them, legions of new friends, as will this superlative Decca album.
THE LYRICS, AND NOTES ABOUT THE SONGS

OLD JOHNNIE GOGGABIE

Nellie wanted frocks
To show off to her friends;
The dresses that she wore
Were full of darns and mends.

Then came old Johnnie Goggabie,
Goggabie, Goggabie;
He fell for her, did Goggabie,
And swore his wife she soon would be.

Tho' Nellie was so poor,
She still had lots of pride;
She said: “With a name like his,
I'd really want to hide.

His name does not appeal to me,
Goggabie, Goggabie;
But he has lots of cash I see,
So Mrs. Goggabie I'll be.”

Tha' Nellie's married now,
She worries just the same
Her friends admire her frocks,
But now laugh at her name.

She says: “I'm Mrs. Goggabie,
Goggabie, Goggabie;
It's an awful name is Goggabie,
But still I get my dresses free.”

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In Afrikaans, the word “gogga” means an insect, so that anyone with a name like “Goggabie” labors under a distinct disadvantage. In the original Afrikaans there are but a few lines usually sung:

AFRIKAANS

Rokkies wou sy dra maar niemand kyk daarna,
En almal staan wordt er die rokkies wat sy dra
Toe kom Oom Jannie Goggabie, Goggabie, Goggabie,
Mooi is die naam nie Goggabie,
Maar suinig is Oom Jannie nie.

LITERAL TRANSLATION

Dresses she would wear but nobody looked at them,
And everybody stood dismayed at the dresses she wore,
Then came Uncle Johnnie Goggabie, Goggabie, Goggabie,
The name of Goggabie is not beautiful,
But Uncle Johnnie is not stingy.

THE WANDERER'S SONG

In the shade I lie and ponder
As the sun’s rays heat out yonder;
My one wish is that I
May wander the world till I die.

I will seek valleys enchanted,
I will find lakes that are haunted,
Heat, cold, wind, drought or rain,
A wanderer I will remain.

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The appeal of this song may lie largely in that it expresses the almost universal urge to wander — to sample the vagabond life — free of the encumbrances of routine and responsibility. The Afrikaans verse differs from the English version substantially, suggesting only a temporary excursion into the open spaces, as this literal translation indicates:

AFRIKAANS

Kom my perdjies draf maar lustig
Dis maar ses myl op en neer
Môre aand vreet jy rustig
By die huis weer in die skuur.

LITERAL TRANSLATION

Come, my little horses, trot along gaily
It's only six miles there and back
Tomorrow you will feed calmly
At home in the barn.

COME WALK WITH ME TONIGHT

Don't tell your Pa, but ask your Ma,
Come walk with me tonight,
Come walk with me tonight,
Come walk with me tonight.

Pa wouldn’t quite,
But Mama might say,
"Yes, it’s quite all right,"
To walk with me tonight
In the pale moonlight.

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A spirited, teasing little love-song, clearly indicating that in South Africa — as the world over — "Mama" is apt to be a bit more understanding than is "Papa" when it comes to a moonlight rendezvous. Hence, in this translation from the Afrikaans, the suitor advises the young lady to ask her mother, but bluff her father.

AFRIKAANS

Vra vir jou ma, verneuk jou pa
Kom stap vanaand met my.

LITERAL TRANSLATION

Ask your mother, bluff your father,
Come walk with me tonight.
Come walk with me tonight.
PRETTY KITTY

CHORUS
Out in the wide world, Kitty
Pretty Kitty;
Out in the wide world, Kitty
Far across the sea.

VERSE
My Kitty sailed away from me
To strange and distant lands;
And when I asked a goodbye kiss
She said, "Oh no! Shake hands."

(REPEAT CHORUS)

AFRIKAANS

Vr in die wereld Kitty,
Liefste Kitty,
Vr in die wereld Kitty,
Kitty oor die see.
Sy laat haar draai,
Sy laat haar swooi,
Maar sy laat haar nie verrasi.

(REPEAT CHORUS)

VERSE
When Kitty left, she said she'd write,
He promised her the same;
But his address somehow got lost
And she forgot his name.

(REPEAT CHORUS)

REFRAIN:
Kitty, Kitty, Pretty Kitty,
Will she be coming back to me?

(REPEAT CHORUS)

AUNTY MINA'S COOKING THE SIRUP

Auntie Mina's cooking, cooking the sirup,
Oh, Auntie Mina's cooking the mebos sirup now,
From the sugar that costs over threepence the pound
And the ripe apricots that have dropped on the ground,
Auntie Mina can cook mebos sirup so sweet
That the folks come for miles just to eat.

(REPEAT)

AFRIKAANS

Tante Mina kook, o sy kook, o sy kook nou,
Tante Mina kook, o sy kook die mebos stroop
Uit die suiker die kos oor die trippens die pond
En die baie lekker appelkoste daar op die grond,
Uit die suiker die kos oor die trippens die pond,
Ja, Ta Mina weet goed stroop te kook.

(LITERAL TRANSLATION)

Auntie Mina cooks, oh, she cooks, oh, she cooks now,
Auntie Mina cooks, oh, she cooks the mebos syrup,
From the sugar that costs over threepence the pound
And the very lovely apricots there on the ground.
From the sugar that costs over threepence the pound.
Yes, Aunt Mina knows well how to cook syrup.

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Comment seems unnecessary, as the lyric of this song is self-explanatory. It might be appropriate to mention, however, that the word "mebos" (pronounced mee-box) is a delicious South African sweetmeat, made from apricots, dried and sugared. It is either eaten in that form as dessert or made into a jam or preserve.

WHEN WILL WE BE MARRIED GERTJE?

VERSE
When Kitty left, she said she'd write,
He promised her the same;
But his address somehow got lost
And she forgot his name.

(REPEAT CHORUS)

AFRIKAANS VERSE

O wanneer kom ons troudag, Gertjie?
Hoe's dit dan so stil met jou,
Ow so ramp of soms weggaaf al Gertjie,
Het is tyd dat ons gaan trou.

CHORUS
Don't believe that I will never
Grose tired of waiting for you, Gertjie:
Remember, life can't last forever,
I can't wait so long for you.

AFRIKAANS CHORUS

Glò tog Gertjie, ek sal nooit nie,
Grose van jou slapetou bly nie.
Ly stink wistsie, ek kan nie dood nie
Maar die jare gaan verby.

VERSE II
I hear you've got your eye on Johnny,
But you'd better let him be;
For he will never suit you, darling,
You'll be sorry you lost me.

(REPEAT CHORUS)

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This plaintive little ditty might best be classified as the Afrikaans equivalent of the American "torch song," somewhat in the same nostalgic vein as the familiar favorite "I Wonder What's Become of Sally.

AUNTIE MINA'S COOKING THE SIRUP

Auntie Mina's cooking, cooking the sirup,
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From the sugar that costs over threepence the pound
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Auntie Mina can cook mebos sirup so sweet
That the folks come for miles just to eat.

(REPEAT)

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Uit die suiker die kos oor die trippens die pond
En die baie lekker appelkoste daar op die grond,
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He promised her the same;
But his address somehow got lost
And she forgot his name.

(REPEAT CHORUS)

AFRIKAANS VERSE

O wanneer kom ons troudag, Gertjie?
Hoe's dit dan so stil met jou,
Ow so ramp of soms weggaaf al Gertjie,
Het is tyd dat ons gaan trou.

CHORUS
Don't believe that I will never
Grose tired of waiting for you, Gertjie:
Remember, life can't last forever,
I can't wait so long for you.

AFRIKAANS CHORUS

Glò tog Gertjie, ek sal nooit nie,
Grose van jou slapetou bly nie.
Ly stink wistsie, ek kan nie dood nie
Maar die jare gaan verby.

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But you'd better let him be;
For he will never suit you, darling,
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(REPEAT CHORUS)

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Oh, Auntie Mina's cooking the mebos sirup now,
From the sugar that costs over threepence the pound
And the ripe apricots that have dropped on the ground,
Auntie Mina can cook mebos sirup so sweet
That the folks come for miles just to eat.

(REPEAT)
SUGARBUSH
(Vastrap)

VERSE I
Sugarbush, I love you so,
I will never let you go.
Don't you let your mother know,
Sugarbush, I love you so.

AFRIKAANS VERSE
Suikerbos ek wil jou hê,
Suikerbos ek wil jou hê.
Wêet sal mama daarvan sê,
Dat ek Suikerbos wil hê.

VERSE II
Sugarbush, come dance with me,
Let the other kérels be.
Dance the vastrap merrily,
Sugarbush, come dance with me.

AFRIKAANS CHORUS
Lekker lekker lekker oo lekker
Lekker lekker lekker oo lekker
Lekker lekker lekker oo oo
Lekker lekker jong.

VERSE III
Chocolate, you are so sweet,
You, yes you, I'd like to eat —
If I could, oh, what a treat:
Chocolate, you are so sweet.

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN "vastrap" is danced to this gay tune, with much clapping
of hands and stamping of feet. Originally a Hottentot dance, it is now popular
throughout South Africa for its lively syncopation. The word "vastrap" means
"step firmly" in Afrikaans, and that just about describes what one does in this
dance. Incidentally, "suikerbos" or "sugarbush" is used here as a term of
endearment, such as "honeybunch."

THE ZULU WARRIOR
Ikama zimba simba sayo
Ikama zimba simba se
Ikama zimba simba sayo
Ikama zimba simba
See him there,
The Zulu warrior;
See him there,
The Zulu chief, chief, chief, chief.

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Perhaps the most famous native of South Africa is the Zulu, who dwells in
primitive freedom in the vast territory of Zululand, north-eastern Natal. The
Zulu has been called the aristocrat of the veld, and his colorful tribal customs,
his culture, and his musical chants have been subjects of much interest the
world over. This chant, although of Zulu origin, has gradually become changed
through varying interpretations of those who have heard it. South African
soldiers during World War II, introduced it to American G.I.'s stationed in
Africa. The South Africans had converted it into a spirited marching song which
immediately caught the fancy of the Yanks. Today, American veterans of the
African campaign invariably request the song at supper clubs where Marais
and Miranda have appeared.

THE CAPETOWN GIRLS
The Capetown girls are pretty as can be,
Pretty as can be, we agree;
The Capetown girls are jealous as can be,
Jealous as can be, we agree.

I love prettiness,
I hate jealousy.
The Capetown girls are pretty as can be,
Jealous as can be — pity, pity me.

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Nestling on the slopes of Table Mountain, in the Province of the Cape of
Good Hope, Capetown is often referred to as "The Mother City of Southern
Africa." It is a popular resort city, famous for its magnificent scenery, and is
also a widely used gateway to the interior. Apparently, too, the metropolis is
well-known for its "prettily jealous" girls, if we are to believe this gay song.

Today, "patat" is Afrikaans for "sweet potato," but some centuries ago it
meant ordinary potato. (In Flemish, the sister language, patat still means
ordinary potato.) Literally, in modern Afrikaans, a potato is known as an
"aartappel" or "apple of the earth." All of which random information does
not detract from the charm of this humorous little song comparing, in slow
and sympathetic tempo, the tree and the potato — with the patat getting the
best of the comparison.
IF MARIA MARRIED ME

VERSE: If Maria married me I'd be happy, How I want her to be by my side, I would buy a little farm in a valley, Oh I hope that she soon will decide.

REFRAIN: Maria... Oh how happy dear, oh how happy dear, Oh how happy I'd be, Maria... What a pity dear, what a pity dear, That you do not love me.

VERSE: If Maria married me I'd be happy, We would live all alone on our farm, I would feed the pigs, the cows, and the chickens, And I'd keep my Maria from harm.

REPEAT REFRAIN:

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This appealing romantic ballad is typical of the South African love-song, and typical of the universal "love-in-a-rose-covered-cottage" theme, However, it differs from other Marais interpretations in several ways. First, instead of the usual accompanying combination of Bushveld Band instruments, this recording features the use of a muted trumpet. Secondly, its slow-tempo waltz style is intentionally reminiscent of American "country style" music — in fact the song might be classified as an "Americanized version" of an Afrikaans ballad.

MA SAYS PA SAYS

Ma says: Pa says we must keep on dancing, Ma says: Pa says we must keep on dancing, For if we keep on dancing we'll not start romancing, And if we start romancing we won't keep on dancing.

Ma says: Pa says we must keep on talking, Ma says: Pa says we must keep on talking, For if we keep on talking we won't go out walking, And if we go out walking we won't keep on talking.

Ma says: Pa says we must keep on singing, Ma says: Pa says we must keep on singing, For if we keep on singing bells will soon be ringing, And when wedding bells are ringing there's no time for singing.

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Like its platter-mate, "If Maria Married Me," this selection features a muted trumpet rather than the Bushveld Band's accompaniment, and is also in "Americanized" country style, although in faster tempo. The mood of "Pa Says Ma Says" is obviously mischievous and the song constitutes a good example of the often sly, dry veld humor.

JAN PIERIEWIET

Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, He doesn't like his name, To his papa said he: "It's the name forced on me; Oh, why didn't you see They would make fun of me?"

Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, He doesn't like his name, To his papa said he: "It's the name forced on me; So that I can go see Who my wife best could be."

Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, He doesn't like his name, To the boys he's a treat, As he walks down the street, For they follow and bleat: "Jannie Pierie-Pierie-Pieriewiet."

Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, Jan Pieriewiet, He doesn't like his name, To the boys he's a treat, As he walks down the street, For they follow and bleat: "Jannie Pierie-Pierie-Pieriewiet."

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Jan Pieriewiet delights most Afrikaans children. It's as though a little American boy should be called "Johnny Whippoor-will." Pieriewiet is the onomatopoeic name given to a small bird of the bush-shrike family. The song tells the sad story of a boy unfortunate enough to be called Pieriewiet and, in spite of borrowing his grandmother's spectacles, he cannot find a wife who will share his name, He, of course, blames poor papa Pieriewiet, who gave it to him.

THERE COMES ALIBAMA

There comes Alibama, Alibama over the sea; There comes Alibama, Alibama over the sea; There comes Alibama, Alibama over the sea; There comes Alibama, Alibama over the sea. Daar kom Alibama, Alibama oor die see; Daar kom Alibama, Alibama oor die see. There comes Alibama, Alibama over the sea; There comes Alibama, Alibama over the sea.

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In the latter part of the seventeenth century the Dutch colonists had great difficulty in getting the indigenous Bushmen and Hottentots to work for them,
so they imported slaves from the Malay Peninsula. The descendants of these slaves form a distinctive Mohammedan community on the Cape Peninsula and are South Africa’s best fishermen. Their bright red fezzes lend great color to the streets and fishmarkets of Capetown. The favorite song of these Malays is *There ComesAlabama* and it is an unforgettable experience to hear them sing this on a bright moonlight night along one of the Cape beaches, as they mend their nets. They sing *Ali-Ba-Ma*, stressing the *Ba* with great emotion, but none of them can tell you who *Alabama* is. Some people say it is the name of a prophet, others that it was a slave-ship of the bad old days. Another explanation, interesting to Afrikans, is that it refers to the ship *Alabama* which called at Table Bay during the American Civil War. Whatever theory is correct, *Alabama*, to the Cape Malays, is something remote and mysterious.

**TRAIN TO KIMBERLEY**

*Here comes the train, it's here again,*
*Train to Kimberley;*
*There goes the train, it's gone again,*
*Train to Kimberley.*

Oh, *Tante Sara*, you won't get much farther,
Oh, *Tante Sara*, you won't get much farther.

Oh, no one knows how far it goes,
Train to Kimberley;
It puffs and blows, but still it goes,
Train to Kimberley.

Oh, *Tante Sara*, you won't get much farther,
Oh, *Tante Sara*, you won't get much farther.

So ry die trein, so ry die trein,
*Kimberley se trein,*
So ry die trein, so ry die trein,
*Kimberley se trein.*

O *tante Sara,* met jou blokorn bloare,
O *tante Sara,* met jou blokorn bloare.

It's got a track to lead it back,
Train to Kimberley;
It must come back along that track,
Train to Kimberley.

Oh, *Tante Sara*, you won't get much farther,
Oh, *Tante Sara*, you won't get much farther.

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This song probably dates back to the 1880's, when the first railway from the Cape to Kimberley was completed. Kimberley, of course, is the site of the world's largest diamond mines and probably the natives working in the mines had something to do with the origin of the song. For some years there was a dearth of coal and the puffing old engine (affectionately nick-named *Tante Sara* or *Auntie Sarah*) was stoked with all the available wood. As the last two lines of the Afrikaans version suggest, the blue-gum tree must have been one source of fuel.
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