

PRETORIA I.

GOVERNMENT NATIVE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL IS FORGING  
AHEAD NEAR PRETORIA.

Illustrations: Nos. UT.703, 708 and 710.

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(NOTE-- This article replaces "Government Native Industrial School for Pretoria", issued in March, 1948, surplus copies of which should be destroyed)

~~October, 1948.~~

February, 1949.

GOVERNMENT NATIVE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL IS FORGING  
AHEAD NEAR PRETORIA.

By K.G. Coleman.

A big industrial school, intended eventually to accommodate about 800 Native students of various trades, is rapidly taking shape on the outskirts of Pretoria with the help of Native craftsmen under the control of the Transvaal Education Department.

Excellent progress has been made since building was started early ~~last~~ year. Already several blocks of workshops are in use, while the first section of the student apprentices' living quarters is ~~nearing completion~~ *now in occupation and three staff houses are nearing completion.*

By making the best possible use of available buildings, instruction has been begun and ~~208~~ <sup>220</sup> Native student apprentices are being trained as bricklayers, blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, shoemakers or market gardeners. All will eventually practise their trades for their own people in Native areas.

The school forms part of an important Native educational centre for which the Pretoria Municipality has set aside nearly 100 acres of land at Vlakfontein, 15 miles from the heart of the city. Also on this site will be a Native teachers' college and a Native university college (Kolege Ya Bana Ba Afrika), both of which were started in 1946 in temporary premises on the opposite side of Pretoria at Atteridgeville.

The three institutions will be complementary. Students of the industrial school will play their part in the erection of the permanent buildings and the provision of furniture and fittings, while Natives training as teachers will be able to take their first-year degree subjects at the university college and to study crafts at the industrial school.

DEMAND FOR TRAINING.

The school really owes its existence to an experimental course for 25 Native operatives begun at Middelburg ~~last year~~ *in 1947.*

The Transvaal Education Department was inundated with applications for the course, and it became obvious that if this demand was to be met far more accommodation would be needed than was available at Middelburg.

Negotiations were therefore opened with the Pretoria Municipality, and the Vlakfontein project is the result. Besides the trades already being taught, it is hoped eventually to add courses in cooking and catering, pottery, weaving, watchmaking and motor repairing.

Each course will last for three years, after which the trainees will sit for their industrial certificates. A further two years' practical work with the Department will be necessary before a young Native can be classed as an operative and paid at the same rate as industrial teachers in Native schools.

Those finishing their courses will either be absorbed by the Transvaal Education Department or placed in locations to carry out their trade. The idea is that every location in the Transvaal shall eventually have its own trained Native bootmaker, tailor, watchmaker and so on.

Touring the school recently with Mr. H. Muller, organiser of Native industrial work for the Transvaal Education Department, and the school's principal, Mr. H. Kux, I was impressed with the effectiveness of the lay-out and the way in which accommodation and materials have been adapted to enable instruction to start with the least possible delay.

#### ENTHUSIASTIC STUDENTS.

For the time being some classes are working under cramped conditions; but all the students seem full of enthusiasm and it is already obvious that once the buildings are complete the school will be a model institution of its kind.

The workshops and classrooms are near the north-east corner of the site, with space to the south for a big stores depot which will eventually supply schools all over the Transvaal.

Still further south, on a small ridge, the foundations of the principal's house are being prepared, while further west, on the highest point of the ridge, is a site for a church.

The first buildings for students' quarters are rapidly taking shape on ground further west beyond the Native teachers' training college, still nearer Pretoria, on ground set aside for eventual extensions, a football ground has been laid out and is proving very popular with the students.

A tour of the various classes soon convinces one of the practical value of the instruction. The tailoring class, which started at the end of April <sup>last year,</sup> is ~~already~~ hard at work on uniforms for the students -- khaki shirt with blue collar and pocket, blue shorts, cap and sandals are supplied at cost (about 25/-). For winter brown lumber jackets and warm trousers will be worn.

The shoemakers are mostly turning out sandals or slippers; but students will also be taught all kinds of repairs, besides the manufacture of shoes (men's and women's), harness and other forms of leatherwork. It is hoped eventually that the school will run its own tannery.

#### FURNITURE FOR NATIVE SCHOOLS.

Student carpenters are mainly tackling tool boxes at present. Eventually woodworking students will make all the furniture for Native schools throughout the Transvaal; but they are restricted to handwork until the necessary machinery has arrived from Middelburg.

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The blacksmiths are making their own tools, as well as gutter brackets and other fittings wanted for the new school buildings. They also do general repair work. Eventually they will be able to supply most plumbing requirements, with apparatus for forging and all kinds of welding.

Other student apprentices are learning signwriting and architectural drawing, while those studying market gardening already grow enough vegetables to supply the needs of all the students and staff.

*Some 25 students began their training as carpenters or bricklayers at Middelburg in 1947, and 20 are now in their final year. About 75 more began last year in various trades, and this year a further 120 are starting their courses.*

The Transvaal is the first provincial administration to establish a Native industrial school of this nature, though technical training is provided at certain mission schools in various parts of South Africa and <sup>last year</sup> the Union <sup>Education</sup> ~~Native Affairs~~ Department ~~has just~~ established a school for Native building operatives at Zwelitsha, near Kingwilliamstown, in the Eastern Cape Province.

**Collection Number: AD1715**

**SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS (SAIRR), 1892-1974**

**PUBLISHER:**

*Collection Funder:- Atlantic Philanthropies Foundation*

*Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive*

*Location:- Johannesburg*

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