UNISA LIBRARY GERMAN AFRICANA COLLECTION

THE HANS MERENSKY PAPERS 1900-1986

Hans Merensky
1871-1952

Original inventory compiled by
Transvaal Provincial Museum Service
1967
Updated by
Marié Coetzee
2012
Hans Merensky was born on the Berlin Mission Society Station Botshabelo near Middelburg on 16 March 1871 and he died at Westfalia on 21 October 1952. He was educated in South Africa and Germany and graduated with distinction as a mining engineer at the University of Berlin. In 1904 Merensky returned to South Africa and started practising as a consulting geologist and mining engineer. Soon he received many commissions for geological reports on a variety of mineral deposits from a large number of German capitalists in Johannesburg, and his practice became exceptionally profitable. Unfortunately he began to speculate on the stock market, first with his own money and then with that of his family, friends and acquaintances. By 1913 Merensky was declared insolvent. During World War I he spent five bitter years in the concentration camp at Pietermaritzburg.

In 1923 Merensky learnt that platinum ore had been discovered in the Waterberge. Merensky, who was well acquainted with the geology of the area, immediately realised the importance of the find. A year later the first platinum ore bearing dunite pipe was discovered. Further follow-up work led to the discovery of the Merensky Reef, a pseudo-stratified, mineralised pyroxenite stratum in the norites of the Bushveld Complex. It is estimated that the Merensky Reef extends for some 300 kilometres and constitutes by far the largest known reserve of platinum on earth.

In 1926 diamonds were discovered in Namaqualand. Through negotiation he obtained twenty-three claims which he later sold to the Oppenheimer-Barnato group for more than a million pounds. With ample capital at his disposal he purchased Westfalia from Sir Lionel Phillips. Here Merensky devoted himself to soil conservation, forestry and the cultivation of fruit, especially citrus and avocado pears. Merensky also played an important role in the discovery of gold in the famous West Wits Line as well as in the Free State. In 1937 he discovered one of the world’s richest deposits of vermiculite near Phalaborwa.

Merensky’s successes brought him numerous honours, mainly in the academic field, such as honorary doctorates awarded him by the Universities of Stellenbosch and Pretoria, and the Charlottenburg Technische Hochschule.

During World War II Merensky was interned on his farm Westfalia. In 1946 he discovered phosphates of good quality sufficient to provide for the country’s needs for many years to come. The state took over the claims and Foskor was established. After his phosphate triumph, he retired and set up the Merensky Trust of R5 000 000. Merensky never married. The Merensky Trust was converted into the Merensky Foundation in 1974 and it is intended to help develop South Africa’s natural resources and preserve its water, soil, fauna and flora.
HANS MERENSKY PAPERS (1900 – 1986)

The Hans Merensky Papers were microfilmed in 1994 by the University of South Africa as a joint Unisa and Merensky Foundation Project. Microfiche copies of the Merensky Papers are available to researchers in the Unisa Archives as Accession 51 in the Hesse Collection of German Africana. The original Papers of the renowned mining engineer, geologist, prospector, farmer, nature conservationist and philanthropist are housed at the Westfalia Estate Museum in the Duiwelskloof District.

The Papers consist of Merensky’s own files, Olga Lehmann’s files, who wrote his biography *Look beyond the wind* and files of the Merensky Foundation. The original Merensky Papers were arranged by the staff of the Transvaal Provincial Museum Service in 1967. The first section of the Papers reflect Merensky’s private life and his estate and the second part his geological and farming activities. A detailed index ensures easy access. Of special interest is the personal correspondence, the beneficiaries (individuals and organisations) of his estate and the many geological prospecting reports, dating from 1900 to 1949 about gold, platinum, iron, diamonds, copper, manganese, coal and even oil to name a few minerals. The new additional third part of the Papers consists of speeches, articles, brochures and photographs celebrating Hans Merensky’s life, including the 1971 centenary celebrations, which were brought together by the Merensky Foundation.
THE MERENSKY PAPERS

Abridged introduction to the original Papers in the Westfalia Museum

BACKGROUND HISTORY

When the Executors of the Hans Merensky Trust were approached by the Government in 1957, with a view of obtaining Dr. Hans Merensky's Papers for incorporation into the Transvaal Archives, they could not accede to this wish as it was their intention to institute an Archives in memory of the late Dr. Hans Merensky. The Archives were to include his documents, correspondence, reports on prospecting, notes on his ups and downs, trials and tribulations, successes and failures, in short, as many items of personal, economic and scientific interest as could be made available to create an image of this famous geologist, farmer and benefactor.

In 1954, the authoress Olga Lehmann gathered material for the biography on Dr. Hans Merensky, called, Look beyond the wind and she collected and was given free rein with all papers, i.e. letters, documents, maps, photographs and reports. The biography which appeared in 1955, had several reprints and was also translated into German, titled Hans Merensky, ein deutscher Pionier in Südafrika.

In 1967 the Merensky Papers emerged in their present form. Literally thousands of pieces of information were collected, sorted, some eliminated and others reproduced before cataloguing the available material in indexes and cross indexes and given its final name.

HOW IT WORKS

It was decided to divide the material into two main parts:
- one to contain the private and confidential papers in one (grey) cabinet,
- the other, to keep the geological, mining and farming interests of Dr. Hans Merensky in the second (green) cabinet.

THEREFORE

The grey cabinet contains the following items:
- Numbers. 1P - 27P (P standing for Private) documents, biographical papers, publications, correspondence of a more private nature.
- Files 28 E to 51 E (E standing for Estate) contain all available Estate items, as death notices, letters of administration, lists of heirs, deeds, donations and trusts established for family members, correspondence with heirs, organisations and authorities, as well as the Final Liquidation Account.

A second index and cross index has been drawn up for the green cabinet, comprising Dr. Hans Merensky's business, farming, but mainly mining interests. The files numbered from 1 G to 77 G (G standing for Geology), with the exception of 6 files referring to Farming and, therefore, bearing the letter F. The files are subdivided into two parts: The first contains only geological reports, each folder showing on its face the year of prospecting the place, the product and the language in which the report is written, whereby the numbers at the left side merely give the sequence of the reports. There follows a collection of assays, mostly originals, others entered into a book in handwriting.

The second and third comprise the correspondence pertaining to the Merensky's geological and farming interests (e.g. Westfalia under F = Farming) in alphabetical order. The last file (77) is a collection of press cuttings for general reference.

It is hoped that good use will be made of the Merensky Papers.
MERENSKY PAPERS INVENTORY

Part 1: Private and Estate Papers

Private

1 P Documents, private and semi-private, originals, copies or photocopies
2 P Balance Sheets, (private) 1939 - 1952 (1942/3/4 missing)
3 P Receiver of Revenue, (forms and correspondence, up to time of death)
4 P Legal Cases (Kuranda, Mertinat, Alexander Merensky, Kling)
5 P Merensky Family correspondence, alphabetical, including Grassmann & Klugkist
6 P Pressure for payment
7a P Dr. Reuning vs. Dr. Hans Merensky (correspondence re Namaqualand Diamonds controversy)
7b P Dr. Reuning vs. Dr. Hans Merensky (publications in connection with above)
8 P Dr. Alexander Merensky, father of Dr. Hans Merensky (documents, correspondence and publications)
9 P Dr. Alexander Merensky, the father (His farms, correspondence and other records)
10 P Dr. Hans Merensky - biographical items, correspondence; copies of documents; notes, press cuttings
11 P Dr. Hans Merensky - Portrait in Oil and Bronze Bust (correspondence)
12 P Dr. Hans Merensky - death notices, estate notices, funeral and photographs of funeral, as also letters & cards of condolence.
13 P Dr. Hans Merensky - private and semi-private with nephew, Dr. C. Th, Klugkist (from 1936 onward)
14 P Loans made by Dr. Hans Merensky
15 P Correspondence with friends (or foes) - from A-L; from M-Z
16 P Correspondence as above
17 P Dr. Hans Merensky's German Farms (Rodenwalde - Gutzmin - Susswinkel)
18 P Dr. Hans Merensky's S.W.A. -Farm - Ohlsenhagen
19 P African German Investments (correspondence between Dr. Klugkist and mainly Mr. Wilhelmi)
20 P African German Investments - Reorganisation - 1949 - (S.A. Securities Ltd.)
21 P Misc. Business
22 P Notes, reports, interviews and other biographical material for Olga Lehmann's book on Dr. Hans Merensky: Look Beyond the Wind; also some correspondence on German translation, the title being:"Hans Merensky - ein deutscher Pionier in Südafrika"; Verlag Schütz, in Germany.
23 P Typed Manuscript of Look Beyond the Wind
24 P Donations by Dr. Hans Merensky (A-J)
25 P Donations by Dr. Hans Merensky (K-Z)
26 P Special donations by Dr. Hans Merensky, as Pretoria Library, Botsabelo Church, and Precious Stones.
27 P Donation (and Forestry Report) for Stellenbosch University.

Estate

28 E Estate Dr. Hans Merensky - legal notices, copies of Power of Attorney, press cuttings
29 E Estate Dr. Hans Merensky - documents, lists of heirs, relevant correspondence, - originals, copies and photocopies
30 E Estate documents, lists, correspondence (mostly copies, duplicates triplicates and relevant publications)
31aE Second Trust - assets in Germany (documents)
31bE Second Trust - assets in Germany (correspondence, forms, lists, etc.)
32 E Legal Correspondence with Master of Supreme Court, Receiver of Revenue, Solicitors and German Authorities.
33 E Receiver of Revenue (1952 - 1954)
34 E Death Duty - appeal, opinion, court order, etc.
35 E Estate Assets (alphabetical)
36 E Liabilities (general)
37 E Distribution of gold, diamonds and other specimen
38 E Rejected would-be-heirs
39 E Personal Estate in East- & West Germany, correspondence 1952 - 1955
40 E Personal Estate in East- & West Germany, correspondence 1956 - 1963
41 E Legal case Dr. Baasch (German solicitor) vs. Hans Merensky Trust
42 E Last Will, clause 7 (a) - European employees (forms and general correspondence)
43 E Last Will, clause 7 (b) - Non-European employees (forms and general correspondence)
44 E Last Will, clause 11 - welfare, religion, education, research
45 E Last Will, clause 12 - Relatives of Dr. Hans Merensky (correspondence & forms)
46 E Last Will, clause 13 - Friends of Dr. Hans Merensky (from A - M )
47 E Last Will, clause 13 - Friends of Dr. Hans Merensky (From N - Z )
48 E Last Will, clause 13 - Dr. Baasch's correspondence with heirs (from 1953 - 1954)
49 E Last Will, clause 13 - Dr. Baasch's correspondence with Heirs (from 1955 - 1960)
50 E Last Will the Maria Merensky Trust
51 E Last Will the Hans Grassmann Trust

The foregoing index and following cross index only cover files 1P to 51E.

CROSS INDEX to Files 1 P - 51 P E (Private and Estate)

A

Adamson - 24 P
Akademie (S.A.) van Wetenskap en Kuns - 44 E
Alexander Merensky (father) - 1 P; 8 P; 9 P
Alexander Merensky (brother) - 4 P; 18 P
Algemene Armesorg - 44 E
Anglo-American Corp. - 1 P; 21 P
Archives - 10 P
Assets, general - 35 E; in Germany (Second Trust) 31 E; 40 E
August Thyssenbank - 18 P; 21 P

B

Baasch - 39 E; 40e; 41 E; 48 E; 49 E
Badenhorst (formerly Klugkist) - 45 E; 20 P
Balance sheets (Private) - 2 P
Behn (German solicitor) - 15 P; 17 P
Beier - 46 E; 48 E; 49 E
Berliner Mission - 24 P; 44 E
Blohm - 40 E; 41 E; 42 E
Bockelmann - 5 P; 45 E
Botsabelo - 26 P; 44 E
Brazil - trip to - 10 P
Brorson - 17 P; 18 P; 20 P
C

Camp life WWI - 10 P
Cancer Research - 44 E
Cape town School - 44 E
Child Welfare - 44 E
Citizenship - 10 P
Cliff - 24 P
Coetze (Th) & children 1 P; 4 P
Custodian of Enemy Property - 31 E; 40 E

D

Death notice - 1 P; 10 P; 12 P
Death duty - 34 E
Deutsche Kirche Johannesburg - 44 E
Deutscher Klub - 24 P
Deutscher Schulverein Kapstadt - 24 P; 44 E
Deutsche Schule Karibib - 24 P; 25 P
Deutsche Schule Johannesburg - 44 E
Deutscher Schulverein Pretoria - 44 E
Deutscher Schulverein Windhoek - 44 E
Deeds - 1 P; 10 P; 29 E; 30 E
Diamonds - 37 E; 40 E
Doctorate (Pretoria) - 1 P
Documents 1 P; 29E; 30 E; (and others)
Donations - 24 P; 25 P
Douglas, A - 1 P; 20 P; 41 E; 46 E
Draper Medal - 10 P
Duiwelskloof Hospital - 44 E

E

Eberhard - 42 E
Education (Clause 11) - 44 E
Ellmer - 40 E
Estate - general files and such with special references - 28E - 51E
Estate Notices at time of death - 12 P; 28 E
Everard - 6 P

F

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Fischer (Prof. Dr.) - 44 E
Forestry (Chair for) 27 P
Forestry (Clause 11) - 44 E
Friedlaender - 1P
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German (generally standing for "Deutsch", see under "D")-24 P
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Gevers (Prof.) - 15 P; 37 E
Grethen, Jutta (nee Merensky), see Merensky
Gold - (distribution of) 37 E
Grassmann - 1 P; 5 P; 45 E; 51 E
Gutzmin - 17 P; 31 E; 40 E

H

Hachfeld - 18 P
Hammerschmidt - 41 E
Hans Merensky Association - 1 P
Hans Merensky Trust - 1 P (and others)
Hans Merensky Trustees - 1 P (and others)
Hassinger - 4 P
Hermannsburger Schule - 24 P; 44 E
Hinrichs - 17 P; 46 E
Hirsekorn (Dr.) - 18 P
Hitler - 10 P; 17 P
Howard & Timmins (publishers of Book) - 22 P

I

J

K

Kaulitz - 25 P
Kelly - 38 E
Kling - 4 P; 6 P
Klugkist - 1 P; 5 P; 13 P; 19 P; 21 P; 29 E; 45 E
Krause - 25 P
Kroonstad Kinderheim - 25 P; 44 E
Kuranda - 1 P; 4 P

L

Last Will & Testament - 1 p; 29 E
Lawlor - 46 E
Lehmann (Olga) - 22 P; 23 P
Letters of Administration - 1 P; 32 E
Liabilities (general) - 36 E
Library - 26 P
Loans - 14 P
Look Beyond the Wind (book by O. Lehmann) 22 P; 23 P
Lübbe, H & G - 3E; 46 E; 49 E
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Maggs - 6 P
Malcomess - 17 P
Mauch (Karl) - 22 P
Mecklenburg (Herzog von) 31 E; 46 E
Merensky and family (correspondence - 5 P)
   Alexander (father) - 1P; 8P; 9 P; 10 P
   Alexander (brother) - 4P; 5P; 18 P
   Hans (Dr.) - Archives - 10 P)
   Biography - 10 P)
   Book - 22 P; 23 P)
   Bronze bust - 11 )
   Camp life - 10 P)
   Citizenship - 10 P) private & personal
Death - 1 P; 10 P; 28 E)
   Funeral - 12 P)
   Honours - 10 P)
   Library - 26 P)
   Portrait - 11 P)
Estate Files - 28 E - 51 E (general)

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   Jutta (née Merensky) } also 46 E
   Klaus )
   Maria ) also 46 E; 50 E
   Wolf )

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Hans Merensky Stipendienstiftung - 41 E; 44 E
Hans Merensky Trust - 1P, 41 E (and others)

N

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O

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Rand Club - 10 P
Raudszus - 40 E; 41 E; 49 E
Receiver of Revenue - 3P; 32 E; 33 E
Red Cross - 25 P; 44 E
Relatives of Dr. H.M. - 5P; 45 E
Religious Bequests - 44 E
Research - 44 E
Reuning (Dr.) - 6a P; 7b P
Reuter - 25 P
Richards - 6 P
Ritter C (Germany) - 39 E; 47 E
Ritter, S. - 10 P
Robertson - 20 P
Rodenwalde - 17 P; 31 E; 40 E
Roettgers - 42 E
Rosenfeld - 42 E
Rustenburg Plats - 6 P

Schütz - 22 P
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S.A. Akademie van Wetenskap en Kuns - 44 E
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South West African Trading - 6P
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Süßwinkel - 17 P; 40 E
Swakopmund Jugendheim - 44 E
Swakopmund Church - 44 E
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Testament/s (originals) - 1 P (and others)</td>
<td>37 E; 42 E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thain-Harper</td>
<td>1 P; 17 P; 31 E; 39 E; 40 E; 47 E; 48 E</td>
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<td>Thormann Chr.</td>
<td>1 P; 1 P; 17 P; 31 E; 39 E; 40 E; 47 E; 48 E</td>
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<td>Thyssenbank</td>
<td>18 P; 21 P; 47 E</td>
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<td>TOC-H</td>
<td>25 P; 44 E</td>
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<td>Trost</td>
<td>39 E</td>
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<td>Tzaneen Vroue Federasie</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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<td>Universities (general) - 37 E</td>
<td>37 E</td>
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<td>Potchefstroom</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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<td>Pretoria</td>
<td>25 P</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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<td>Stellenbosch</td>
<td>27 P</td>
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<td>Witwatersrand</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Van Rensburg</td>
<td>38 E</td>
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<td>Von Bülow</td>
<td>1 P; 15 P; 20 P; 39 E; 40 E; 41 E; 46 E; 49 E;</td>
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<td>Von Mecklenburg (Herzog)</td>
<td>41 E; 46 E;</td>
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<td>Von Perbandt</td>
<td>46 E; 47 E; 49 E</td>
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<td>Von Thaer</td>
<td>16 P; 40 E; 46 E</td>
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<td>Walter (Prof.)</td>
<td>25 P</td>
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<td>Warmback</td>
<td>1 P; 20 P; 41 E</td>
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<td>Welfare (Clause 11)</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilhelmi</td>
<td>19 P; 20 P;</td>
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<td>Wipplinger</td>
<td>18 P; 21 P</td>
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<td>Witwatersrand University</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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<td>Y.M.C.A.</td>
<td>44 E</td>
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</table>
Part 2: Geological and Farming

Geological

1. G Undated Geological Reports and Maps on: Tin, Asphalt, Ores, Minerals and Diamonds
2. G Report/s on Kruisriver Cobalt (1899)
3. G " " General Mining, Gold and Iron Ore (1900 - 1904)
4. G " " Tin, Gold-Antimony and General Mining (1905)
5. G " " Molybdenum in Natal (1906)
6. G " " Diamonds, Tin, Tourmaline, Kimberlite, Copper, Lead (1907)
7. G " " Diamonds, Tin, Gold, Lead, Copper, Tourmaline, Agricultural (1908)
8. G " " Diamonds, Gold, Lead, Copper, Tin, Silver (1909)
9. G " " Gold, Coal, General, Oil, Zinc, Silver, Copper, Tin (1910)
10. G " " Tin, Gold, Copper, Tourmaline (1911)
11. G " " Tin, Gold, Zinc, Copper, Diamonds, Kimberlite (1912)
12. G " " Diamonds, Gold, Min. Oil, Tin (1913)
13. G " " Tin, Lead, Zinc, Gold, Asbestos (1914)
15. G " " Diamonds, Lead, Copper, Asbestos, Iron Pyrites, Coal, Gold, Scheelite, Oil (1921)
16. G " " Mineral Oil, Brine, Gold, Kimberlite, Oil/Coal (1922)
17. G " " Gold, Diamonds, Galena, Tin, Mineral Oil, Copper, Quartz (1923)
18. G " " Asbestos, Coal, Gold, Ancient Mining, Platinum (1924)
19. G " " Platinum, Copper, Phosphate, Diamonds, Alluvial Deposits (1925)
20. G " " Gold, Platinum, Asbestos, Phosphate (1926)
21. G Report/s on Tin, Copper, General Mining, Diamonds, Manganese, Phosphate, Platinum, Water, Coal and Oil Shale (1927)
22. G " " Diamonds, Oil (1928)
23. G " " Diamonds (1929)
24. G " " Diamonds (1930)
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 G</td>
<td>Tungsten, Chromites, Iron, Gold</td>
<td>1939/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 G</td>
<td>Assays (Chrome only)</td>
<td>1939 - 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 G</td>
<td>Assays on various minerals</td>
<td>1925 - 1937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 G</td>
<td>Assays on various minerals</td>
<td>1938 - 1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 G</td>
<td>Assays on various minerals</td>
<td>1940/1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 G</td>
<td>Assays on various minerals 1939 - 1965 (book in handwriting)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Assays, Forms, Maps, etc. on Aluminium, Apatite and Artesian Water</td>
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<tr>
<td>34 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Maps, etc. Andalusite</td>
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<tr>
<td>35 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Assays, Maps, etc. Asbestos, Amianthus Mine</td>
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<tr>
<td>36 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Assays, Forms, etc. Beryllium</td>
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<tr>
<td>37 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Assays, etc. Chrome - Rhodesia &amp; Misc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>38 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Forms etc. Coal (&amp; Manganese), mainly &quot;Gute Hoffnungshuette&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>39 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Assays, Maps, etc. Copper in Namaqualand, Ubib and Springbok (SWA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>40 G</td>
<td>Correspondence, Assays, Forms, Maps, etc. Diamonds in SWA</td>
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<td>41 G</td>
<td>Government Gazettes on Precious stones Act Diamond Bill - 1922/6/7/33</td>
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<tr>
<td>42 G</td>
<td>Correspondence Agreements and other legal documents (Sir Ernest Oppenheimer Deal), Maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>43 G</td>
<td>Diamonds, - Namaqualand Correspondence</td>
<td>1926 - 1929</td>
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<td>44 G</td>
<td>Diamonds, - Namaqualand Correspondence also with H.M. Association and Merensky Trust</td>
<td>1926 – 1929</td>
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<td>45 G</td>
<td>Diamonds - Namaqualand (Manuscripts &amp; Publications re Dr. Reuning)</td>
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<td>46 G</td>
<td>Diamonds - Printed Material (Dr. Hans Merensky vs. Dr. Reuning), etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>47 G</td>
<td>Diamonds - Reports, Press Cuttings, Brochures and other Publications</td>
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<tr>
<td>48 G</td>
<td>Diamonds - Newspaper Cuttings</td>
<td>1927; 1928</td>
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<td>49 G</td>
<td>Diamonds - Newspaper Cuttings</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 F</td>
<td>Farming, Graskraal (Westfalia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 F</td>
<td>Farming, Kalkfontein - Correspondence, Agreements, Deed, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>52 F</td>
<td>Farming, Westfalia - General</td>
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<tr>
<td>53 F</td>
<td>Farming, Westfalia - Merensky Dam</td>
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<tr>
<td>54 F</td>
<td>Farming, Westfalia - Soil Erosion and Forestry</td>
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Part 3: Merensky Foundation 1952-1986
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This Section consists of
- speeches, including Superintendent Pakendorf’s speech at Merensky’s cremation 24/10/1952
- interviews with Merensky
- newspaper and journal articles on Merensky (local and Germany)
- brochures and photographs celebrating Hans Merensky’s life, including the 1971 centenary celebrations
- report of a visit to Germany sponsored by the Foundation (Marietjie Roux)