

= Early life of Jan Smuts =

Jan Christian Smuts ( aka Jan Christiaan Smuts ) , OM , CH , ED , KC , FRS ( 24 May 1870 ? 11 September 1950 ) was a prominent South African and Commonwealth statesman , military leader , and philosopher . He served as a Boer General during the Boer War , a British General during the First World War and was appointed Field Marshal by King George VI during the Second World War . In addition to various cabinet appointments , he served as Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa from 1919 until 1924 and from 1939 until 1948 . From 1917 to 1919 he was one of five members of the British War Cabinet , helping to create the Royal Air Force . He played a leading part in the post @-@ war settlements at the end of both world wars , making significant contributions towards the creation of the League of Nations and the United Nations . He did much to redefine the relationship between Britain and the Dominions and Colonies , leading to the formation of the British Commonwealth .

Jan Smuts was born in 1870 , the second son of a traditional Boer farming family . By rural tradition , the eldest son would be the only child to receive a full formal education ; however , on the death of his elder brother in 1882 , 12 @-@ year @-@ old Jan was sent to school for the first time . After four years of education he had made exceptional progress , gaining admission to study at Victoria College in Stellenbosch . He graduated in 1891 with first @-@ class honours in Literature and Science . With this strong academic background , he applied for , and won , the Ebdon scholarship for overseas study , electing to read Law at Christ 's College , Cambridge . After further academic success , and the recipient of many prestigious academic awards , he graduated in 1894 with double First @-@ class honours . After graduating , Smuts passed the examinations for the Inns of Court , entering the Middle Temple . In 1895 , despite the prospect of a bright future in the United Kingdom , the homesick Smuts returned to South Africa .

= = In South Africa = =

= = = Childhood = = =

On 24 May 1870 , at the Smuts family farm , Bovenplaats , in the district of Malmesbury , Cape Colony , a child was born to Jacobus Smuts and his wife Catharina . This child , their second son in what was to become a family of four sons and two daughters , was christened Jan Christiaan after his maternal grandfather , Jan Christiaan de Vries

The Smuts family were prosperous yeoman farmers , long @-@ established in the area . For four generations , since 1786 , they had farmed in the Malmesbury district , settling on the farm Ongegund , of which Bovenplaats was a part , in 1818 . This area was part of the so @-@ called Swartland , the chief wheat @-@ growing area of the Cape Colony .

1870 found Bovenplaats under the care of Jacobus Abraham Smuts and his wife Catharina Petronella . Jacobus Smuts lived in much the same manner as his forefathers ? a hard @-@ working farmer , a pillar of the Church , and one who took a leading part in the social and political affairs of the neighbourhood . Such was the regard in which he was held that he was later to be elected as the Member for Malmesbury in the Cape Parliament . Smuts 's mother , born Catharina Petronella de Vries , was the sister of Boudewijn Homburg de Vries , the predikant of the nearby town of Riebeek West , some three miles ( 5 km ) from Bovenplaats . The de Vries family originated from the area around Worcester , Cape Colony . Catharina accompanied her brother as his housekeeper when he took up his appointment at Riebeek West , eventually meeting and marrying her husband in 1866 . She was a woman of considerable education and culture , at least according to the standards of the area , having studied music and French in Cape Town .

When Jan was six years of age the family moved from Bovenplaats to a new farm some thirteen miles ( 19 km ) away . This farm , Klipfontein , was a bequest to Jacobus Smuts , who , keen to have a farm of his own rather than one under the supervision of his father , moved his family there in 1876 .

= = = = Family life = = = =

The Smuts family were traditional Afrikaner farmers . As such , questions of property and family affairs were extensively governed by custom . Custom dictated that it was upon the first son that family expectations fell ; the family would strive , so far as their means allowed , to provide him with the best possible education with the goal of paving the way for his entry into one of the professions . As for the others , they would be put to work on the farm , while at the same time receiving a rudimentary home education . As the second son this was to be Jan 's role . While he remained at the farm , his elder brother , Michiel , was sent to begin his schooling in Riebeeck West , destined , like his uncle Boudewyn , for a future as a predikant in the Dutch Reformed Church .

Farmwork combined with lessons from his mother ? such was the order of Jan 's life for the next few years . During his early childhood , still too young to be given formal responsibilities on the farm , Jan accompanied the Coloured farm labourers as they went about their daily work . At this time the relations between master and servant , between black and white , were certainly not based on social equality ; nevertheless , on these Swartland farms there was little of the rigid segregation which was already emerging elsewhere in South Africa and which was later to have such profound consequences . Since 1828 the Cape had enshrined in law the principle of strict legal equality between the races . Unlike the rest of South Africa , all adult males , were entitled to vote and to stand for election to the Colonial legislature , subject only to a property qualification . In these country districts therefore , there existed a certain intimacy between the farm owners and their labourers . At harvest times it was common to find both working together to gather in the crops and it was also commonplace to find the farm 's children playing with one another , irrespective of race .

In this relatively liberal environment Jan accompanied the servants in their work , listening to their stories , learning the ways of the countryside , and trying to help as best he could . As his knowledge and confidence increased Jan began to go out into the countryside by himself , exploring the hills and valleys which surrounded him . Later , as an older boy , his chief responsibility was as a herd ? first of the pigs and poultry in the farmyard , and later of the cattle out on the veld . The same laws of custom which had preordained Jan 's role as a farmer also had their beneficial aspect ; Boer farmers customarily allotted their sons a share of the natural increase of the beasts under their care . As time passed Jan gradually built up a respectable holding of livestock .

At home , away from the work of the farm , his education was not neglected . Although restricted to rudimentary home schooling , his mother 's own notable education placed him and his siblings at an advantage compared with other children in similar circumstances .

= = = = Outside influence = = = =

The Smuts family lived in an almost exclusively Afrikaner world . Nevertheless , this cultural identity , unlike that of the Boer republics to the north , did not define itself on opposition to Britain or the British . Swartland farmers had been largely insulated from the causes of discontent of earlier years , discontent which eventually culminated in the mass Boer migrations of the Great Trek . As a result , Jacobus Smuts largely unmoved by the Afrikaner nationalism preached by such organisations as the Afrikaner Bond , founded by Rev. SJ du Toit in 1877 . After 1884 , having come under the leadership of Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr , the Bond became more to the Smuts ' taste . Hofmeyr changed the fundamental basis of the organisation , from one preaching Afrikaner separatism to one which combined a pragmatic policy of economic protectionism for Cape farmers and their produce with a call for unity between the English and Dutch @-@ speaking populations and cooperation with the Colonial authorities . As a member of the Cape legislature Jacobus Smuts pledged his support to Hofmeyr and the reformed Bond .

Unlike many parts of South Africa , conflict was an element largely absent from Jan Smuts 's early life . Whether conflict between Briton and Boer , or conflict between Black and White ? it had been many years since the farmers of the Swartland had had to deal with turmoil on their doorsteps . The absence of conflict , along with its inevitable counterpart , development of prejudice , had its effect

upon Smuts .

In later years Smuts was to look upon this time with the uttermost fondness . Of all his childhood experiences it was the time spent out on the veld , whether tending the cattle or out on excursions of his own , which seemed to have the most marked effects on him , developing an attachment which was almost spiritual in nature . As he wrote in 1902 , aged 32 :

In ordinary circumstances Jan Smuts would have , in time , taken over the running of the family farm , spending his life as a farmer as his father , grandfather , and great @-@ grandfather had before him . However this was not to be ; events were to conspire to change this predetermined fate .

= = = Schooldays = = =

In 1882 tragedy struck the Smuts family . Their eldest son , Michiel , suddenly succumbed to typhoid while attending school at Riebeek West . This time of family grief and upheaval had a direct effect upon Jan ; now , as the eldest son , the weight of family expectation fell squarely upon his shoulders .

Within weeks Jan was sent from the familiar surroundings of Klipfontein to a boarding house at Riebeek West , to take his brother 's place at the school of Mr TC Stoffberg . As had been the case with his brother , his parents had already mapped out his future ; like his brother Jan was destined for a future in the Dutch Reformed Church , to be ordained as a predikant at the conclusion of his studies . This vocation , though imposed upon him by his parents , was by no means regarded as an imposition by Jan , growing up as he had in an environment where adherence to the Church and piety of deeds counted for a good deal . This upbringing had turned twelve @-@ year @-@ old Jan into a deeply religious , serious @-@ minded boy . Now , attending school for the first time , he faced a number of obstacles . Foremost amongst these was his rudimentary grasp of English , at a time when it was the main medium of instruction and crucial for any Afrikaner who wished to play a role in wider Cape society . Thanks to his mother 's efforts. in this as well as in other subjects , he was better prepared than most children in similar circumstances , but nevertheless he was to start his schooling alongside children many years younger than himself with many years of study separating him from his contemporaries .

Even so , despite these disadvantages , Jan proved himself an outstanding scholar . He surpassed the other children both in terms of innate ability and in terms of dedication to his work . It was not for nothing that his headmaster , Mr Stoffberg , described him as " one of the most brilliant pupils he had ever taught , and the most hard @-@ working boy he had ever met . " Within three years Jan had made sufficient progress to have caught up with his age group , children with up to ten years of formal education behind them . He compounded this remarkable achievement when the time came for him to sit the Cape Colony elementary examination in 1885 ; Jan was placed ninth in the entire colony . The next year he surpassed even this , coming second in the School Higher examination .

During these few years at Riebeek West Jan worked assiduously at his studies ? self @-@ evidently , given his achievements . His academic abilities were soon noted by his headmaster , who went out of his way to provide Jan with further curricular reading . Yet this was to prove insufficient to meet what was becoming an almost insatiable thirst for knowledge . Jan borrowed books and yet more books from the headmaster , poring over them at all times rather than engaging in the childish pursuits of the other children , separated from them by his strong work ethic . A few weeks before the School Higher examination this had its consequences ? Jan fell ill , an illness exacerbated by his unrelenting study . With a strict injunction from his doctor , ordering a complete rest with an absolute prohibition on work and reading , Jan was packed off to bed . Nevertheless , despite the doctor 's orders , Jan went to strenuous lengths to evade the ban . One story told of him during this enforced convalescence describes how he used to involve the headmaster 's youngest son in his subterfuges , bribing the four @-@ year @-@ old child to bring him books from his father 's study . This enjoyed considerable success until the day of an unannounced visit from the headmaster 's wife . In his sparsely furnished room there were few possibilities , but Jan made the best job that he could of concealing his by now substantial collection of books . The headmaster 's wife upon entering the

room found Jan , as expected , in bed . However the boy did not look to be comfortably resting as he ought , in fact he looked positively uncomfortable . She offered to make Jan 's bed for him , he declined , insisting that he was perfectly comfortable ; she insisted and , being the headmaster 's wife , got her way . Embarking upon her deed of kindness she found , to her astonishment , the real reason for Jan 's restlessness ? underneath his bedclothes he was making a valiant effort to conceal an immense pile of contraband books !

This dedication to reading and study might , in another boy , have been nothing more than a reaction to the impending examinations ? but not in Jan 's case . What made this particular episode revealing was that the books found under his bedclothes were largely unconnected with his studies . In Riebeek West he developed a lifelong habit , that of reading avidly outside the prescribed curriculum , seeking knowledge for its own sake .

In 1886 , at the age of sixteen , Jan embarked on the next stage of his education . Jan applied to , and was accepted by , Victoria College , Stellenbosch ? one of the most prominent institutes of higher education in the Cape . In late 1886 he bade farewell to Riebeek West , ready to embark upon a new stage in life .

= = = Life in Stellenbosch = = =

Mr Stoffberg 's school did not take its pupils to the final stage of secondary education . Before Jan could set his schooldays behind him and commence his higher education he would have to sit the Matriculation exam . Jan duly moved from Riebeek West to Stellenbosch , spending early 1886 to late 1886 preparing for this test .

At Riebeeck West Jan had been a hard @-@ working , deeply religious child , with a strongly reserved , almost solitary , nature . This disposition , a legacy of his pious , rural upbringing , is manifest in what is his earliest surviving letter . This letter , written to Professor C Murray , a tutor at Victoria College , was for the most part a run @-@ of @-@ the @-@ mill enquiry into the administrative arrangements for the forthcoming term . Yet in amongst this mundane request for information on such matters as textbooks and school fees Jan found himself confiding his innermost motive forces to this stranger . As he wrote :

In the event , Smuts 's resolution to " make the proper use of my precious time " overcame such moral and religious temptations as a small town like Stellenbosch was capable of providing . Religion and his studies ? these remained unchallenged as the twin poles of his existence during his matriculation year . In the seclusion of Mr Ackermann 's boarding house Jan studied assiduously , attended Church with zeal , and ignored the blandishments of the " puerile element " .

The Matriculation exam tested candidates on five subjects : Latin , Greek , Mathematics , Science , and English Literature . By exam @-@ time this dedication to his studies had paid off spectacularly ; the 1887 Cape lists placed Jan third overall , with the highest marks in the Colony in Greek . In what had been by any standards a year of tremendous success the latter achievement was especially outstanding ; a misunderstanding at the start of the year led Jan to believe that he would be exempted from the Greek exam ? as a result it was a subject which he largely disregarded . Six days before the exam this potentially devastating oversight was exposed ? there was now less than a week in which to catch up with a year 's study . Jan immediately shut himself away in his rooms , spending the next days in total seclusion , working from sunrise to sunset in the attempt to master the grammar and vocabulary upon which he was shortly to be tested . By the time of the exam this hard work had paid off . Within a relatively short period Jan had largely memorised his books and had mastered the Greek language to a remarkable degree .

Without doubt Smuts 's determined work ethic played a central role in these successes , yet he was also aided in no small part by his formidable memory . At that age Jan found himself able to memorise large portions of book simply by reading through them , and though this ability gradually diminished as the years passed , it never entirely disappeared . As his son was later to recount :

With the hurdle of Matriculation behind him the start of the 1887 term finally saw Smuts admitted as a student of Victoria College and enrolled as an undergraduate of the University of the Cape of Good Hope .

===== Victoria College =====

Victoria College proved fertile grounds for Smuts 's imagination . As his biographer WK Hancock was to write :

Smuts thrived in this environment . With these new vistas of knowledge and learning now revealed that he spared no effort in his attempts to master them . His surviving notebooks from this period reveal the range and breadth of his studies : Latin , Greek , German , the Classics , Optical Physics , Inorganic Chemistry and Metallurgy , Organic Chemistry and Agriculture , and Geology - to name but a few . Once again , as had been the case at Riebeek West , this was not merely study for the sake of exams - as ever , Smuts continued to study avidly outside the confines of the curriculum .

Over the next few years at Victoria College , Smuts 's religion continued to be of crucial importance . On Sundays he would attend both morning and evening church services , also leading a Bible study class for local Coloured boys , and during the week he was an assiduous attendee at evening prayer meetings . Within Victoria College , one of the strongest friendships he formed was with Professor JI Marais , the head of the Theology faculty .

Smuts 's religious observance was unsurprising in one whose moral outlook was based exclusively upon Biblical teachings and who was destined for a future in the Church . Yet , though religion continued to serve in this central role , his studies at Stellenbosch , with their decidedly scientific bias , led Smuts towards a more critical examination of his faith . From this time onwards Smuts was , by gradual degrees , to start to move away from the uncompromisingly Calvinist outlook within which he had been raised .

If Stellenbosch marked Smuts 's intellectual awakening , it also was where he came to mature socially . Here he began to cast off the shyness and reserve which afflicted him , joining the local militia , becoming a regular contributor to the college magazine , and becoming leader of the Victoria College debating society . For the first time , in both verbal and literary debate , Smuts began to grapple with the political and social issues facing South Africa .

Though Smuts did much to cast off his shyness and reserve , he made few hard @-@ and @-@ fast friendships at Stellenbosch . Yet it was here that he met the woman who was to play a central role in his life thereafter . Sybella Margaretha Krige , known to all as Isie , was the daughter of Japie Krige , a prominent local wine and dairy farmer . Six months younger than Smuts , she had shared a similar upbringing with much the same resulting character traits . As their son , also name Jan Christian , was later to write :

Isie was an intelligent young woman who , like Smuts , had scored highly in her Matriculation exam . It was thought , as a girl , a future in higher education was largely closed to her . The time spent in her company , whether reading poetry and singing together at the piano , or walking together in the mornings and evenings on the journey to and from Victoria College , did much to break down Smuts 's social isolation , enabling him to cast some of those protective prejudices which he had harboured of the " puerile element " , that is to say his peers . As he wrote in his diary some years later : " [ She ] , less idealistic than I , but more human , recalled me from my intellectual isolation and made me return to my fellows . "

===== Political Awakening =====

In 1888 Cecil Rhodes paid a visit to Victoria College . As the leader of the College debating society , Smuts was called upon to deliver the welcoming address on behalf of the student body . Rhodes , on the verge of becoming Prime Minister of Cape Colony , was a vocal advocate of Southern African political and economic unity . Now , on the occasion of this visit , Smuts chose to give his address on the theme of Pan @-@ Africanism .

Smuts 's engagement with politics was very much a product of his time at Stellenbosch . While his parent 's political moderation and rejection of Afrikaner exclusivism had left him largely unencumbered by any innate prejudices , it was his time at Victoria College which saw him develop his own independent political outlook . These views developed in tandem with another of Smuts 's

fixations , his philosophical pursuit of the embodiment of unity . This intellectual quest was later to develop into his philosophy of Holism , but even at this early undeveloped stage he brought these ideas to bear in shaping his political opinions . So it was that Smuts emerged as an outspoken supporter of South African unity , and , by extension , a supporter of Rhodes .

Two essays written during this time foreshadow Smuts 's later views , both political and philosophical . The first of these , entitled South African Customs Union , was written in 1890 in competition for the JB Ebdon prize offered by the University of the Cape of Good Hope . This essay , an examination of the economic relations of the colonies and states of South Africa , though ' Highly Commended ' by the judges , failed to win the prize . Nevertheless , despite achieving only modest success , it is unsurpassed as a clear and authoritative statement of Smuts 's political outlook at this time .

Within the essay Smuts considered the vexed question of the political and economic relations of the colonies and states of South Africa . Though close in terms of geographical proximity , their troubled relations over the preceding quarter century had done much to create an atmosphere of political estrangement . Smuts considered that this estrangement had come about largely as the result of petty jealousies , fostered by politicians interested more in their own parochial concerns than those of South Africa as a whole . And it was to South Africa as a whole that Smuts looked ; he did not take the side of one colony or state over the others , but rather treated the region as one single unity . In his own words he summed this up :

A call for unity was his emotional response to the question . Coming down to earth , he proposed two concrete policies as steps towards its ultimate realisation - expansion of a pan @-@ South African railway system , fostering greater commercial links and binding the region together , combined with the elimination of all regional tariffs and trade barriers with the formation of a South African customs union .

The writing of this essay was an important formative experience for Smuts . For the first time he had seriously grappled with questions of contemporary politics , and in doing so came to comprehend something of his own political role in resolving them . As he was to write :

Seminal though this moment was , it was just a start . As his biographer , WK Hancock , noted : " All the same , [ Smuts ] knew that nations are not made by administrative arrangements alone " . In The Conditions of Future South African Literature , his next essay of significance , he dealt with the other significant factor in nation @-@ building - the cultural and emotional ties needed to form a united community . Within this essay , not at first sight written on an overtly political topic , Smuts declared that a true South African literature did not and could not exist until a true South African nation had been born . The question then arose - what was hindering this development ? Smuts identified the inhibiting factor as the relations between Briton and Boer - particularly the effect of the influx of British emigrants to the gold mines of the Transvaal on the deeply conservative Afrikaner population . The relations between these two groups were fraught ; the discover of gold and the rapid industrialisation of the Transvaal had done much to disturb the settled ways of the Boer population . With its vast mineral wealth the Transvaal was rapidly becoming the most significant economic unit of South Africa , but the sudden tide of primarily British immigrants caused a great deal of unrest , with the established population decrying the immorality and degeneracy they perceived in the new mineworkers . These divisions , though strongest in the Transvaal , existed to one degree or another throughout South Africa . Smuts , though sympathising with the concerns of the old population , fearful their established ways and traditions would be swamped in a flood of migration , urged the Afrikaners to embrace the new spirit of dynamism which he saw the new migrants injecting . Likewise he exhorted the new population to integrate with the old , to consolidate the white population both for the sake of a future South African nation but also to secure their survival in the face of the vastly greater Native population .

= = A New Direction = =

In later years Smuts summed up this period :

In the examinations of 1891 , Smuts took a double @-@ First in Literature and Science . He applied

for , and won , the Ebdon scholarship for overseas study offered by the University of the Cape of Good Hope . On 23 September 1891 he departed the Cape , on board the ship Roslyn Castle , bound for the United Kingdom and a place at Cambridge University .

= = = Cambridge = = =

Smuts was admitted to Christ 's College , where he elected to study Law .

The choice of Law marked the start of a new chapter for Smuts . The preceding years at Stellenbosch had been ones of tremendous intellectual development . From the narrow focus of his upbringing , his outlook had now expanded , awakening within him a consciousness of the breadth of knowledge now open before him . Smuts , though remaining an adherent of the Church , and respectful of the Bible and its teachings , had developed a more questioning and critical outlook during the course of his studies . Whereas at the outset of his university career he was content to follow his parents ' wishes and be ordained into the Church , as his time at Victoria College came to an end he found himself more and more unwilling to commit to this path . Though he had now as yet wholly rejected the idea of ordination , he wished for a period of more diversified study before making that decision . So it was that Smuts came to select Law , rather than Divinity or Philosophy - the logical choices for a future Minister of Religion .

During his time at Cambridge Smuts maintained a regular correspondence with his old friend and tutor Professor Marais . Smuts 's choice of Law gave rise to a lively discussion between the two , with Marais regretting Smuts 's choice , declaring Law to be ' simply classified humbug ' and accusing ' those who pore over legal tomes ' of having a ' contracted view of life ' . In response Smuts published an essay in Christ 's College Magazine in defence of Law . Entitled ' Law - A Liberal Study ' , it attempted to rebut these criticisms , declaring that from Moses onwards lawyers had been the ' great lights and ornaments of the Church ' and identifying within Law ' ... as it develops through the ages of human history , ... the deepest , truest , most permanent thought and social achievement of progressive humanity.'

Aside from friendship on this intellectual level , Marais was also able to come to Smuts 's rescue at a time of awkward crisis .

Smuts came to Cambridge at the age of twenty @-@ one , three or more years older than the typical university undergraduate . He was isolated from the other men of his year by a different social background , different upbringing , and different attitudes . Smuts 's disdain for frivolity and laxity combined with his lack of interest in sports and his decision to take up lodgings outside the college , did much to divide him from the other students . During his first year at Cambridge , Smuts suffered from tremendous homesickness , describing himself as being ' utterly desolate ' . Yet during this time Smuts had not found himself without social opportunities - as his biographer WK Hancock wrote :

This could of course have simply been a case of Smuts 's diffidence and reserve re @-@ asserting itself in the face of new and unfamiliar surrounding ; however Smuts 's biographers almost universally ascribe it to the poverty Smuts endured during this first year .

The Ebdon scholarship was usually worth £ 200 per year . However , in 1891 , due to a failure of the fund 's investments , it was worth only £ 100 . The sale of Smuts 's personal livestock holdings on the family farm had enabled him to pay his sea passage and left him with a small residue to bank , yet despite this there remained a substantial gap between his resources and his essential needs as a student . During his first term Christ 's College provided him with a small scholarship , but the gap remained . This was a crippling burden for Smuts , yet it was Professor Marais who was to come to his rescue . Smuts , having confided his difficulties to Marais towards the end of 1891 received by immediate return a cheque for £ 50 . Marais urged Smuts to write to him whenever he felt himself in need , in return of which Smuts took out a life insurance policy naming Marais as beneficiary . Should Smuts have died this policy would cover the loans , but while he lived , Smuts 's integrity was Marais 's only cover .

With Marais 's loans combined with the Ebdon scholarship , Smuts began to enjoy a degree of financial security . Though far from affluent he was at least able to meet his basic expenses . From

his second year onwards Smuts began to enter more into the social arena of the university . He ceased to be lonely , making a number of friends and acquaintances , principally amongst the other colonial students . Though no longer so reclusive as he had been during his first year , he remained extremely serious and devoted to his work ; an attitude which served as a barrier separating him from the English undergraduates , though not from the Fellows at Cambridge , with many of whom he struck up friendships .

In respect of his studies , he achieved the unique distinction of sitting both parts of the Law Tripos in the same year , passing both with first @-@ class honours . Over the course of his studies at Cambridge Smuts won many academic awards and accolades , culminating , in 1893 , with the award of the prestigious George Long prize in Roman Law and Jurisprudence - a particular honour given that the prize was very rarely awarded as the rigorous academic standard required was very rarely met . This was all combined with extensive extracurricular reading and private research into various topics including poetry , philosophy , botany , and archaeology . As his biographer WK Hancock wrote :

= = = Aftermath = = =

Smuts 's time at Cambridge had been one of outstanding success ; his tutor Professor FW Maitland , himself one of the most eminent legal minds of the time , described Smuts as the most brilliant Law student he had ever taught . With testimonials such as this , in summer 1894 Smuts was able to persuade the Ebdon trustees to award him £ 100 for a further year 's study . After a short holiday in Strasbourg , spent studying English conveyancing and German philosophy , Smuts returned to England . For a short time he contemplated moving to the Netherlands to seek a Dutch degree , but by October 1894 he had instead decided to read for the Bar . In December 1894 he passed the Honours Examination of the Inns of Court , passing first in his year . Smuts was called to the Middle Temple and soon received an offer of a fellowship in Law from his old college , Christ 's . The possibility of a distinguished legal career in England , whether in practice or in academia , now lay before him . Instead , he rejected both paths ; in June 1895 , as his Ebdon funding came to an end , the homesick Smuts returned to the Cape , determined to make his future there .

= = Select bibliography = =

= = = Smuts , General = = =

Cameron , T - Jan Smuts : An Illustrated Biography , ( 1994 )

Hancock , WK - Smuts : 1 . The Sanguine Years , 1870 ? 1919 , ( 1962 )

Ingham , K - Jan Christian Smuts : The Conscience of a South African , ( 1986 )

Millin , SG - General Smuts , ( 2 vols ) , ( 1933 )

Smuts , JC - Jan Christian Smuts , ( 1952 )