



J. BURMAN. *In the footsteps of Lady Anne Barnard*. Human & Rousseau: Cape Town, 1990. 128 pp. Illus. R49,95 (exclusive). ISBN 0 7981 27600.

This is an attractive mosaic of anecdotes and descriptions from the history of the south-western Cape at the time of the first British occupation (1795-1803). It is equally an informative route map for a modern historical treasure hunt, well illustrated by Lady Anne's sketches as well as recent photographs of places she visited.

Beginning with background information on Lady Anne Barnard who accompanied her husband (appointed as colonial secretary) to the Cape in 1797, Burman also provides an account of the naval and military action in False Bay when the British first occupied the Cape, almost two years before the Barnards' arrival. With the aid of a good selection of illustrations, Burman presents a nostalgic picture of the Cape Town and Stellenbosch of Lady Anne's day. The major part of the volume is an account of the route taken by Lady Anne and her husband during their first month of holiday in 1798. The journey is illustrated by a map on the inside front and back covers.

Having crossed the Cape flats, the Barnards proceeded across the Hottentots Holland Mountains. They passed the present Hermanus and visited the 'drupkelder' near Gans Bay. Their route took them to the Zwarteberg bath (Caledon), Genadendal, Swellendam, the Land of Waveren (Worcester and Tulbagh), the Swartland and along the west coast back to Cape Town. Burman's prime concern is the identification of the various farmsteads at which Lady Anne and her entourage stayed, many of which have disappeared, others dubiously identifiable, while others have remained as famous landmarks.

Where Lady Anne's impressions fail to provide information on the places and people visited, Burman complements from the journals of other early travellers such as Sparrman, Thunberg, Barrow, Burchell, Lichtenstein and Teenstra, although his paraphrasing does not always do the original justice.

With his penchant for shipwrecks, Burman concludes with a lively account of the wreck of the *Sceptre* in Table Bay on 5 November 1799.

The text is dotted with instructions to the motorist which interrupt an otherwise pleasant historical reverie, while stylistic quirks, lapses into the trite and personal intrusions by the author are a trifle discordant.

Burman has compiled a colourful and informative volume with much detail for the traveller with an interest in history. While his information is gleaned from acceptable sources, his sometimes vague statements and absence of specific references make the work less valuable for the serious reader.

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