

The background of the poster is a sepia-toned photograph of a hilly landscape. In the foreground, two men are sitting on a large, dark rock. The man on the left is wearing a dark suit, a bowler hat, and glasses, and is holding a walking stick. The man on the right is older, with white hair, wearing a light-colored jacket and trousers. They are both looking towards the right. The hills in the background are rolling and covered in grass, with a soft, hazy light in the sky.

CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY

W A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE FROM MIRAMAX FILMS

A NOVEL BY

Alan Paton

Cry, the Beloved Country



ALAN PATON

SCRIBNER PAPERBACK FICTION

PUBLISHED BY SIMON & SCHUSTER

New York London Toronto Sydney Tokyo Singapore



SCRIBNER PAPERBACK FICTION

Simon & Schuster Inc.
Rockefeller Center
1230 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020

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First Scribner Paperback Fiction Edition 1995

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Manufactured in the United States of America

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Paton, Alan.

Cry, the beloved country.

I. Title. II. Series.

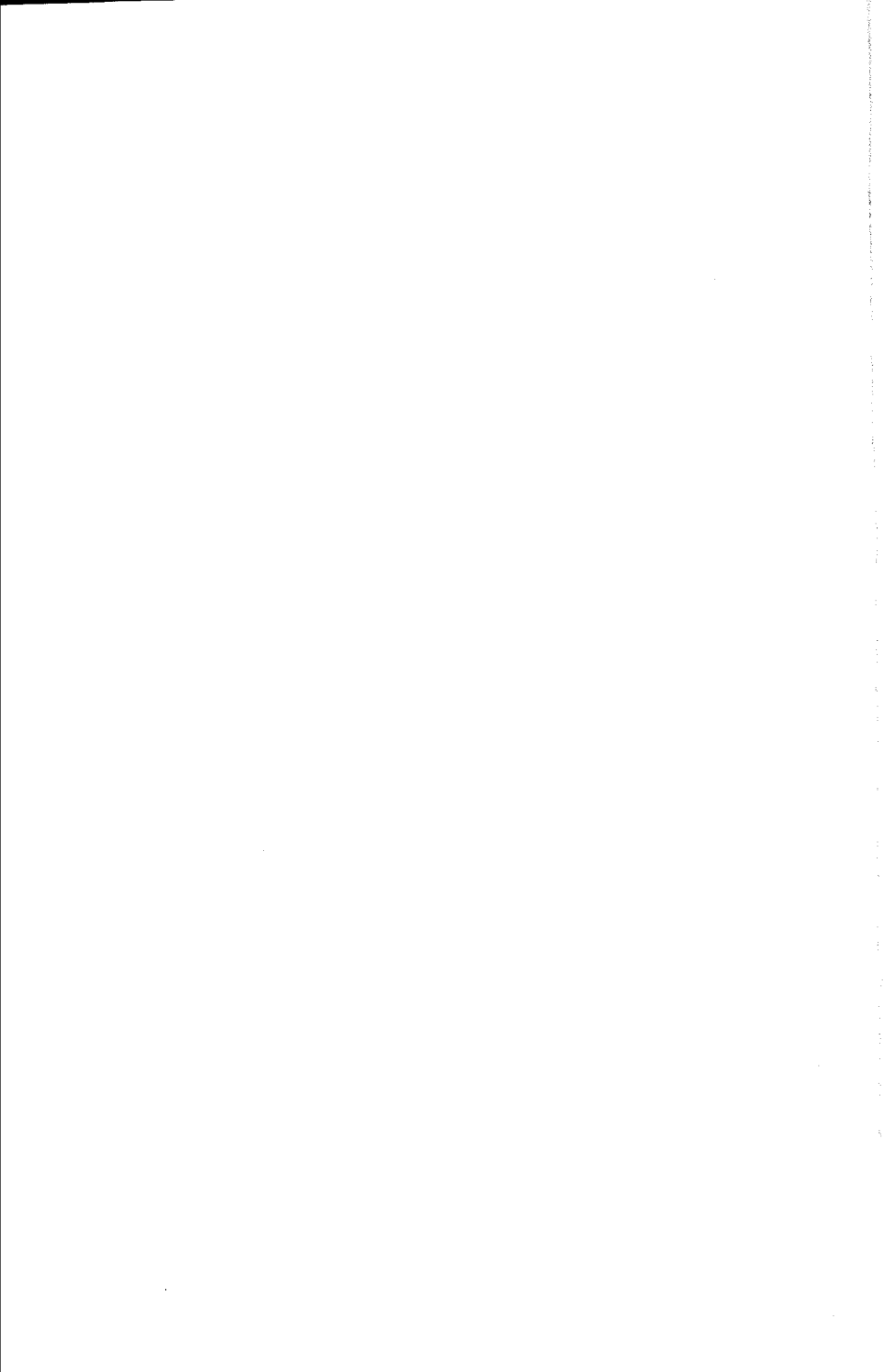
PR9369.3.P37C7 1987

823

86-9674

ISBN 0-684-81894-9

*To Aubrey & Marigold Burns
of Fairfax, California*



Note on the 1987 Edition



Cry, the Beloved Country, though it is a story about South Africa, was not written in that country at all. It was begun in Trondheim, Norway, in September 1946 and finished in San Francisco on Christmas Eve of that same year. It was first read by Aubrey and Marigold Burns of Fairfax, California, and they had it put into typescript and sent it to several American publishers, one of them being Charles Scribner's Sons. Scribners' senior editor, Maxwell Perkins, accepted it at once.

Perkins told me that one of the most important characters in the book was the land of South Africa itself. He was quite right. The title of the book confirms his judgment.

How did it get that title? After Aubrey and Marigold Burns had read it, they asked me what I would call it. We decided to have a little competition. We each took pen and paper and each of us wrote our proposed title. Each of us wrote "*Cry, the Beloved Country*."

Where did the title come from? It came from three or four passages in the book itself, each containing these words. I quote one of them:

Cry, the beloved country, for the unborn child that is the inheritor of our fear. Let him not love the earth too deeply. Let him not laugh too gladly when the water runs through his fingers, nor stand too silent when the setting sun makes red the veld with fire. Let him not be too moved when the birds of his land are singing, nor give too much of his heart to a mountain or a valley. For fear will rob him of all if he gives too much.

This passage was written by one who indeed had loved the earth deeply, by one who had been moved when the birds of his land were singing. The passage suggests that one can love a country too deeply, and that one can be too moved by the song of a bird. It is, in fact, a passage of poetic license. It offers no suggestion as to how one can prevent these things from happening.

What kind of a book is it? Many other people have given their own answers to this question, and I shall give my own, in words written in another book of mine, *For You Departed*, published, also by Charles Scribner's Sons, in the year 1969 (published in London by Jonathan Cape with the title *Kontakion for You Departed*).

So many things have been written about this book that I would not add to them if I did not believe that I know best what kind of book it is. It is a song of love for one's far distant country, it is informed with longing for that land where they shall not hurt or destroy in all that holy mountain, for that unattainable and ineffable land where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, for the land that cannot be again, of hills and grass and bracken, the land where you were born. It is a story of the beauty and terror of human life, and it cannot be written again because it cannot be felt again. Just how good it is, I do not know and I do not care. All I know is that it changed our lives. It opened the doors of the world to us, and we went through.

And that is true. The success of *Cry, the Beloved Country* changed our lives. To put it in materialistic terms, it has kept us alive ever

since. It has enabled me to write books that cost more to write than their sales could ever repay. So I write this with pleasure and gratitude.

Alan Paton

NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

Note on the 1959 Edition



IT IS SOME eleven years since the first Author's Note was written. The population of South Africa today is estimated to be about 15,000,000, of whom 3,000,000 are white, $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions are colored people, nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ million are Indians, and the rest are Africans. I did not mention the Indians in the first Author's Note largely because I did not want to confuse readers unnecessarily, but the existence of this minority is now much better known throughout the world because their position has become so desperate under apartheid legislation.

The City of Johannesburg has grown tremendously and today contains about $1\frac{1}{4}$ million people.

Sir Ernest Oppenheimer died in 1958, and his place has been taken by his very able son, Mr. Harry Oppenheimer.

Alan Paton

NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

Note on the 1948 Edition



IT IS TRUE that there is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. It is true that it runs to Carisbrooke, and that from there, if there is no mist, you look down on one of the fairest scenes of Africa, the valley of the Umzimkulu. But there is no Ndotsheni there, and no farm called High Place. No person in this book is intended to be an actual person, except two, the late Professor Hoernle and Sir Ernest Oppenheimer; but nothing that is said about these two could be considered offensive. Professor Hoernle was Professor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, and a great and courageous fighter for justice; in fact he was the prince of Kafferboetics. Sir Ernest Oppenheimer is the head of a very important mining group, a man of great influence, and able to do as much as any one man to arrest the process of deterioration described in this book. That does not mean of course that he can do everything.

Various persons are mentioned, not by name, but as the holders of this or that position. In no case is reference intended to any actual holder of any of these positions. Nor in any related event is reference intended to any actual event; except that the ac-

counts of the boycott of the buses, the erection of Shanty Town, the finding of gold at Odendaalsrust, and the miners' strike, are a compound of truth and fiction. In these respects therefore the story is not true, but considered as a social record it is the plain and simple truth.

The book was begun in Trondheim and finished in San Francisco. It was written in Norway, Sweden, England and the United States, for the most part in hotel-rooms, during a tour of study of the penal and correctional institutions of these countries. In San Francisco I was invited to leave my hotel, and to stay at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Aubrey Burns, of Fairfax, California, whom I had met two days before. I accepted the invitation on condition that they read the book. But I was not prepared for its reception. Mr. Burns sat down and wrote letters to many publishers, and when I was in Toronto (which fact they discovered) Mrs. Burns telephoned me to send the manuscript to California to be typed. They had received some encouraging response to their letters, and were now determined that I should have a typescript and not a manuscript to present to the publisher, for I had less than a week to spend in New York before sailing to South Africa. I air-mailed the manuscript on a Tuesday, but owing to snowstorms no planes flew. The package went by train, broke open and had to be rewrapped, and finally reached an intermediate Post Office on the Sunday, three days before I was due in New York. My friends traced this package to this intermediate Post Office, and had the office opened and the package delivered, by what means I do not know. In the meantime they had friends standing by to do the typing, and they worked night and day, with the result that the first seventeen chapters arrived at the house of Scribner's on Wednesday, a few minutes before myself. On Thursday the next thirteen chapters arrived; and on Friday the last seven chapters, which I had kept with me, were delivered by the typing agency in the afternoon. There was only that afternoon left in which to decide, so it will readily be understood why I dedicate with such pleasure the American edition of this book to these two unselfish and determined friends.

For the benefit of readers I have appended a list of words at the end of the book, which includes by no means all the strange names and words that are used. But it contains those, a knowledge of the meaning and approximately correct pronunciation of which, should add to the reader's enjoyment.

I add too for this same purpose the information that the population of South Africa is about eleven millions, of these about two and a half million are white Afrikaans-speaking, and three-quarters of a million are white English-speaking. There are also about 250,000 Indians, mostly in Natal, and it is the question of their status that has brought South Africa into the lime-light of the world. The rest, except for one million colored people, by which we mean of mixed blood, are the black people of the African tribes. Johannesburg is referred to as the "great city"; this is judged by South African standards. Its population is about 700,000, but it is a fine modern city, to be compared with any American city except the very greatest. The Umzimkulu is called the "great river," but it is in fact a small river in a great valley. And lastly, a judge in South Africa presides over a Supreme Court; the presiding officer of a lower court is called a magistrate.

Alan Paton

NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA

