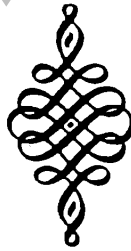




SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



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THE STORY OF HMS CARLISLE'S 3.7" BATTERY 1933

Rear Admiral M W St L Searle CB, CBE, RN (retd)

Editorial Note

In the July 1981 Edition of the Bulletin we published Parts I and II of Rear Admiral Searle's account of the activities of HMS Carlisle's 3.7" Battery in 1933. Readers of the Bulletin will be pleased to know this first article aroused very considerable interest from a surprisingly large number of people.

Part III covering the subsequent events in Bechuanaland follows in this edition. As Rear Admiral Searle remarks in his Introductory Note 'The Bechuanaland Expedition...has been described... with varying degrees of accuracy and points of view'. Those Readers who have had the opportunity to study what bibliography is available on the subject will hopefully agree that the Bulletin is fortunate to be able to publish what is surely the most accurate account of what actually happened! Details of the strength of 'The Armed Escort', a list of Officers and a Nominal List of Ratings are set out in Appendix A. Those Readers who (understandably) maintain a close watch on the Editor's arithmetic will of course appreciate that no details are given of the Royal Marine Platoon and that the lists are 'Nominal'

Unfortunately no photograph of Rear Admiral Searle taken at the time of the Bechuanaland Expedition is available but he has been kind enough to let us have a photograph taken of him together with the Commanding Officer of HMS Sheffield Captain A.W. Clarke on 31st December 1942 in the Clyde after the Battle of the Berents Sea. As a Commander he was serving as executive officer in HMS Sheffield



PART 111 - BECHUANALAND

Introductory Notes

- (a) The Bechuanaland Expedition, or 'The Tshekedi Khama Affair' has been described, in part, and with varying degrees of accuracy and points of view in:-

'Tshekedi Khama' by Mary Benson (Faber 1959)

'Adventurous Life' by Admiral Lord Mountevans (Hutchinson 1946)

'Evans of the Broke' by Reginald Pound (Oxford Univ.Press 1963)

- (b) This account is in narrative form and only information known at the time, by the Battery Commander, is included. Hence the political situation and the events which led to the Expedition are omitted; they are most fairly described by Reginald Pound.
- (c) There may be some confusion in the narrative by the use of 'C-in-C', 'Admiral' and 'High Commissioner'. These titles all refer to the same person viz. Vice-Admiral E.R.G.R. Evans.

H.M.S. 'Carlisle' - Returning to Simon's Town from Beira
Saturday 9th September, 1933.

All hopes of reaching Simon's Town for the weekend had been long since abandoned for at dawn the ship was still heading into a S.W.'ly gale, making good less than 10 knots; the howitzer equipment, lashed down on the upper deck, was awash. There was still 350 miles to cover. At about 0830 a signal from C-in-C was received, in effect: 'On arrival be prepared to land Howitzer Battery and R.M. Platoon for active service provisioned for 14 days. Report ETA'. By noon the signal had been amended to read: 'Three Howitzers, R.M. Platoon, and a half-platoon of seamen. Report requirements. The F.R.M.O. will command the force'. Presumably a better balance of weapons was being sought and some serious emergency had arisen somewhere. The requirements reported included the 3.7-inch ammunition outfits, also mess traps and other victualling stores. The ETA was 'dusk Sunday'.

There was disappointment that No. 4 Detachment had to be disbanded, but its seamen provided the half-platoon, or were absorbed in the reorganised H.Q. It was clear that a H.Q. with administrative elements would be needed and that no resources for this were available at Simon's Town. The Battery H.Q. was reorganised to include Medical, Stores, Cooks, Ordnance and Regulating personnel. The total strength of the H.Q. was 2 officers and 20 ratings. During the day decisions as to the uniform, equipment and stores were made. In general, the personnel of the battery and H.Q. would wear 'night clothing' i.e. worn blue uniform, full marching order, steel helmets, and would take overalls, white uniform and caps, and ground sheets. The R.M. insisted on taking their hammocks.

Arrival at Simon's Town - Sunday 10th September 1933.

The gale had moderated during the night, speed had been increased and Carlisle was berthed alongside by 1300. The sloops Rochester and Weston were seen to be present. It was then learnt that the C-in-C was acting

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in his capacity as High Commissioner Bechuanaland and had left for Pretoria. The role of the Force was the support of the High Commissioner in Bechuanaland.

The force was to be known as "The Armed Escort" (A.E.); (the F.R.M.O. is hereafter referred to as C.O.A.E.), and was to consist of Carlisle's RM Platoon, the Howitzer Battery (3 guns) and its H.Q., and a Seaman Platoon made up from Rochester (C.O. and 1 Section), Weston (1 Section) and Carlisle (2 sections). The total strength of the A.E. was 158 officers and men (See Appendix A). The A.E. was to travel to Bechuanaland, as soon as possible, by the train already at the station. The landing of the units, their arms and equipment would present no problem so the first priority was to learn the composition of the train and then organise the entraining. The B.C. and the C.G.M. drove to the station and found that the S.A.R. had provided main-line rolling stock consisting of passenger coaches (2nd Class 6 bunks), one coach (1st Class 4 bunks), two covered vans for ammunition and for stores, two open wagons (with tarpaulin covers) for the howitzers. Restaurant cars would be coupled up later. The Minister of Defence had put the S.A.R. at the disposal of the Admiral.

The Dockyard Departments had re-acted throughout the week-end with commendable rapidity and imagination. The 3.7-inch ammunition, adequate quantities of S.A. ammunition and miscellaneous ordnance stores had already been loaded on the train. The victualling and naval stores had also been loaded and the S.H.S.O.'s lorries were ready to transport the personal gear, arms and equipment of Officers and men to the station. The only problem was that the passenger accommodation was only just adequate (the strength of the H.Q. had been underestimated). The allocation of the compartments was chalked up by the C.G.M. taking into account his experience in Rhodesia and his knowledge of the seniorities of the personnel. Unfortunately, sometime later the R.M. Platoon Commander and his Sergeant altered the planned accommodation in favour of the Royal Marines claiming that the R.Ms needed more space for their hammocks. Furthermore, it was claimed that when landed on active service the R.Ms were under the Army Act and were no longer under the Naval Discipline Act. This legal conundrum had not been foreseen but this was not the time to argue the change in relative seniorities of a Captain R.M. and a Lieut-Commander R.N. Obviously a R.M. officer should be considered the operational expert in land war-fare and therefore by implication, 2nd i/c of the A.E. However, this incident made the relationship of the senior R.N. rates and the N.C.O's of the R.M. Platoon a constant difficulty.

Departure of Armed Escort for Bechuanaland - Sunday 10 September 1933

The train steamed off at about 1730, along the suburban line to the main line junction at Salt River. (The main line coaches, with their distinctive observation platforms at each end, attracted the curiosity of local residents and of course the speculations of the journalists.) At the junction two Restaurant cars, with European staff, were coupled up

in the centre of the train. Eventually the train started at about 1900 on its two-day journey to Bechuanaland.

The first job was to establish a train routine to cover meals, cleaning, 'rounds', 'pipedown' and minor duties. The H.Q. office organised this for the R.N. units (the R.M. preferred not to conform). In the event, the Battery and H.Q. were to live in the train for the next 10 days. The catering throughout was undertaken by the S.A.R. and meals of the usual good quality were served in three sittings; the final sitting being for the Officers and the duty ratings.

The primary problem of life on board a train was communication; in 1933 there was no public address system and the promulgation of orders, or information, was a tedious process. During the night the train passed through the pleasant hinterland of the Cape Peninsula and then, with double-banked engines, made the long and dramatic climb up the Hex River Pass onto the Great Karoo.

Journey to Bechuanaland and Intelligence - Monday 11th September.

By dawn the long, straight stretches of railway through the Great Karoo - flat, scrub, desert - had been reached. The train was running as an 'express' and was given priority on the single-track railway. The only stops made were to take on water, or change a locomotive or its crew. There was now time to study the intelligence notes given to the B.C. at Simon's Town. The notes had been prepared by the Staff Officer(1) in his office at Cape Town Castle and with help from the H.C.'s officials. The first page is reproduced below, a second page, probably not relevant, has not been preserved.

'Notes regarding movement of Armed Escort to Bechuanaland.

Situation. The Chief of the Bamangwato - Tshedi - violently assaulted a white man at a Police Court case at Serowe a few days ago. Such an action has not recently occurred before, and, combined with a somewhat restive feeling which has been apparent for some months, is taken as a possible demonstration against authority. It may be necessary to depose this Chief (who is acting Chief during the minority of Chief Seretse), or to make a demonstration of force. The Bamangwatos have, in the past, given no trouble, and under their old Chief were specially visited by the Prince of Wales in 1925.

Geographical. Serowe is the largest native town in South Africa. It has a population of 25,000 natives and probably not more than 20 whites. It is a well laid-out native town. It is administered by a Magistrate, who is at the moment ill. It has one boarding house for whites. The town is 35 miles from Palapye Road (pronounced locally Par-la-sche) which is the nearest railway station. A road connects the two places. At Palapye there is an hotel, but very few buildings fit for white people. There is a fair amount of water in the district. The

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The country is more fertile than most of Bechuanaland. The nearest towns are Mafeking (263 miles to the south) and Bulawayo (227 miles to the north).

Supplies. Apart from fruit, beef, milk and native supplies, there are probably insufficient supplies to maintain 150 men, without special arrangement being made.

Medical. The malarial season starts in October. The weather at present is cool and healthy.

Local transport. To move the Armed Escort from Palapye to Serowe, probably the only transport obtainable would be one or two motor lorries and plenty of ox waggons.'

The above notes were of interest but the prospect of a 35 mile trek by ox waggon seemed unlikely. Further intelligence would have to be gathered from local sources. (The inadequacy of Intelligence is no criticism of the S.O.(1), Cape Town, he was responsible for covering the entire Africa Station, comprising thousands of miles of coastline and its ports; he could not be expected to have knowledge of the political, economic and communications networks of the land-locked territories. The complex political situation and the events which triggered off the 'Tshekedi Affair' have been published elsewhere, e.g. see 'Evans of the Broke' by Reginald Pound 1963; they were not known to the Armed Escort at the time and are not part of this narrative.

Arrival at Palapye Road, Bechuanaland - Tuesday 12 September.

Shortly before noon Mafeking was reached, i.e. nearly 1000 miles had been covered. This was the administrative centre for Bechuanaland, though on Union soil. The train made an unexpectedly long stop and later it was learnt that the Resident Commissioner (R.C.) and the H.C.'s Political Secretary (P.S.) had joined the train for discussions with the C.O.A.E. and for the onward journey to Palapye Road. The train moved off on its final non-stop run at about 1400 and drew into the station at Palapye Road after dark at about 2000.

The Armed Escort fell-in by units on the platform. There was a small gathering of curious but silent natives in the background and a few European spectators. The Bechuanaland Police were in complete control. Later, it was known that journalists from the Transvaal were also present. The train was then shunted back about 300 yards onto a siding, where it remained, without its locomotive, until the return journey.

A Conference at Palapye Road - Tuesday 12 September.

Late that night the Resident Commissioner held a conference in the restaurant car, attended by the Political Secretary, the C.O.A.E., the C.O. the R.M. Platoon (and 2nd in comd A.E.) and the Battery Commander.

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It was clear that the R.C., P.S., and C.O.A.E. had discussed the situation earlier in the day and that the R.C. now wanted to hear the views, and to answer questions, of the unit commanders. The P.S. gave a very lucid review of the political situation in the Protectorate and the latest intelligence from the Bechuanaland Police.

The R.C. outlined his intended plan:- The next morning Tshekedi Khama would be brought from Serowe and his defence of his constitutional misbehaviour would be heard at an Enquiry by a Magistrate in the local Court. The Police would be present, no public disorder was expected, but a military presence was needed. The C.O.A.E. allocated the R.M. Platoon for duty at the Court, and the Seaman Platoon in reserve.

The R.C. then said that the H.C. would arrive p.m. the next day, and having heard the findings of the Court of Enquiry, would take the appropriate action. It should be assumed that the H.C. would decide either to banish, depose, or suspend, Tshekedi, and that the H.C. would declare his decision before the assembled tribesmen on Thursday, at Serowe. The H.C.'s advisers expected that swift and decisive action would be accepted by the Tribes without trouble. The Police, though below strength in Serowe (as many were deployed elsewhere dealing with an outbreak of cattle disease) were adequate to undertake all civil arrangements, but the A.E. presence would be needed. The C.O.A.E. should plan accordingly. The C.O.A.E. expressed grave doubts as to the military prudence of taking the Armed Escort to Serowe; it might well be overwhelmed, '100 to 1'. Could not the H.C. make his decision known at Palapye Road? The R.C. had probably heard the above view earlier in the day as he now invited the questions and views of the C.O.'s subordinate units.

It was learnt that the natives were virtually without firearms. The country was flat open bush veld, no high grass, no cover for ambush, or threat of bush fires. Motor transport was being arranged. There were no maps available. The C.O. R.M. Platoon did not support the views of the C.O.A.E., neither could the B.C. The latter pointed out as inconceivable that the Admiral, having ordered sailors a thousand miles inland, would accept passive inactivity. The meeting ended with conflicting views as to the political or the military roles expected of the Armed Escort.

Palapye Road - Wednesday 13th September.

By daylight Palapye Road could be seen for what it was - not much more than a wayside station, with lengthy sidings, water tanks for S.A.R., a few corrugated-iron roofed buildings, protected by small trees; and dust. The weather was clear, dry, hot during the day and no unduly cold at night. These conditions persisted throughout the following days.

A daily routine was introduced for the R.N. elements, based on a ship's tropical routine. Orders were given to ensure that the R.N. train did not look like an untidy gypsy camp, but otherwise life was

relaxed. All buildings were out of bounds. The only problems were the adequate supply of water to the train and the lack of shade.

The forenoon was spent in cleaning the howitzers and small arms, loading the limber boxes, issuing S.A. ammunition and filling L.G. magazines. The Battery personnel, including the signalment of the battery H.Q. were issued with 75 rounds per rifle or 16 rounds per revolver. This was half the full authorised allowance but it was desirable to reduce the weight to be carried by each man. (It is not recollected what scale of ammunition was issued to the Platoons.) Also 20 rounds of 3.7-inch blank cartridges were included in the limber load in anticipation of a requirement for a ceremonial salute.

The Magistrate's Enquiry - Wednesday 13th September.

A short reconnaissance by the B.C. did not reveal much intelligence. The Magistrate's Enquiry was being conducted in front of a low building surrounded by a perimeter wire. There were a number of Europeans and Natives in European dress making pronouncements but proceedings seemed relaxed and incomprehensible. The local Police were in evidence, smartly turned-out and in control. A number of shabbily-dressed natives were lounging around and seemed apathetic to the proceedings. The Royal Marines were prominent, smart, hot and dusty.

There were a number of native shacks and huts scattered about, the bush was very dry but not dense enough to be a threat of bush-fires on the scale sometimes experienced at Simon's Town. No contact was made with any Europeans. There were a surprising number of small lorries and cars - mostly of rather battered appearance - scattered around.

Planning for move to Serowe - Wednesday 13th September.

By noon the transport problem seemed to have been solved. Three 5-ton lorries of the R.R. had arrived from Bulawayo, and with the same drivers who had served the Battery so well about 3 weeks earlier. These six-wheel, Thornycroft vehicles with six forward gears, could each carry a limber (24 (?) rounds H.E.), reserve 3.7-inch and S.A. Ammunition, and one Detachment. The howitzers were to be towed in readiness for action. There were no maps available but the drivers were confident they would not get lost as there was only one road.

By sundown the lorries had been loaded, a detachment had been exercised in getting in and off the lorry, and the Battery was ready to move off when so ordered. At about sunset the Admiral arrived from Pretoria in a light aircraft and was met at the small airstrip by the C.O.A.E. and the B.C. He was in a jovial mood and greeted the C.O. with "Well, Major! All ready to move off at dawn?" and without waiting for a reply, turned to the B.C. saying 'I'll want a 19-gun salute' - presumably the (Vice) Admiral deemed 19 guns appropriate to a High Commissioner, the B.C. hadn't a clue.)

Later the Admiral held a meeting in the small hotel, attended by R.C., C.O.A.E. and B.C. to hear details of the plan for the next day. He first wished to know the time of departure of the first unit of the A.I. so that his car could get clear ahead of it.

It was decided that the R.M. Platoon would move off at 0600, followed by the Seaman Platoon, and the Battery would leave for Serowe at 0630. All units should be in position at Serowe by 1200. The intended procedure was then described, it would start with a 19-gun salute by the Battery. Tshekedi Khama would be suspended. The Platoons should be prepared to stay overnight at Serowe and as long as required by the R.C. An average speed of 6 1/2 m.p.h. would be necessary to comply with this programme but this did not seem unreasonable for a journey said to take 2 hours by car. (i.e. 17 m.p.h.)

Serowe - Thursday 14th September.

Shortly before 0100 the B.C. received Operation Order No. 1 from the C.O.A.E., whose earlier apprehensions had not been dispelled. The order dealt with the advance to Serowe and put in writing the procedure which had been decided upon previously.

(In fairness to the C.O.A.E. it should be said that he had been on the Station for only a few months. As F.R.M.O. he was the adviser on land warfare to the C-in-C but he had taken no part in the training and had no knowledge of the units to suddenly placed under his command. He could have reasonable confidence in the R.M. Platoon, but certainly not in the hastily-formed Seaman Platoon; he knew very little of the 3.7-inch Howitzer Battery, or of its possible use. Further, the role of the A.E. was vague; 'active service' and 'in support of the H.C.' could imply anything from 'a military punitive expedition' to 'action in aid of the civil powers' to 'a ceremonial parade to impress the natives'.)

The three Detachments, and the (operational) H.Q. moved off at 0630, i.e. a quarter of an hour after the last of the lorries carrying the advance guard of the two Platoons. The administrative elements of the H.Q. were left at Palapye Road in charge of the Supply Officer and the R.P.O.

All went well for the first few miles but then the road became a deeply rutted sand track and the dust cloud became intolerable. The distance between lorries was increased from 100 yards to a quarter of a mile, but an orderly progress could not be maintained because successive small dried-out drifts, with steep sides were met. The lorries, with Howitzers in tow, crossed these obstacles with great difficulty; soon boiling radiators and overheating enforced stops for cooling down, or to allow the dust clouds of the rear lorry to be kept in sight.

The sides of the road ruts were usually sandy but when not, the discrepancy between the wheel bases of the lorries and the howitzers, coupled with overall breadth of the howitzer shields exceeding that of road, caused further difficulties and delays

Thus the journey proceeded throughout the forenoon. There were no signs of habitation en route and fortunately no traffic was met. By 1315, i.e. already one and a quarter hours after the C.I.A., the road improved and low hills in the distance showed Serowe was near. A halt was ordered so as to form-up, dust-off and smarten-up. The Battery arrived in good order at 1330 at the large open space on the outskirts of Serowe; it deployed in line on the right flank of a canopied dais around which the H.C. and authorities were waiting, and the Platoons had been drawn up. (Average rate of progress of Battery was 5 m.p.h.)

The tribesmen, shabbily dressed, and at most 3000, had been assembled in a long line some 100 yards in front of the dais, many sitting patiently on the ground.

At the pre-arranged signal the Admiral and entourage mounted the dais and the 3-gun battery fired a 19 gun salute. The reaction of the assembled tribesmen was small; they all stood up in silence. There followed a rather long oration by the Admiral apparently addressed to Tshekedi Khama, who stood, with two supporters, before the dais; its content could not be heard from the Battery. On completion of this ceremony the Battery went to a 'stand easy'. The native crowd shambled away and the B.C. went to apologise to the Admiral for the delayed arrival. The Admiral brushed this aside, his concern was the return of the Battery to Palapye Road before dark. He said the Platoons would be staying in Serowe for the time being.

The B.C. was then approached by Mr. Douglas Buchanan - an old friend of the B.C.'s family (and Tshekedi's legal counsel). He was sorry that the B.C. was personally involved in 'such a needless display' of force. The speedy departure of the Battery was now of primary importance and, as the immediate readiness for action was obviously no longer a requirement, the howitzers were partially dismantled and loaded on the lorries. The Battery moved off at about 1430, having spent little more than one hour at Serowe. Good progress was made. Dust was still a problem but the lorries could be kept in mutual touch by Aldis lamp from the roof of the cabs. The lorries were more manoeuvrable in the absence of the howitzer and the crossing of the many drifts caused only minor delays. Eventually the Battery reached Palapye Road, with head lights burning, by 2000 hours. (Average speed 6 1/2 m.p.h.) A meal, 'pipe-down' and a promised 'lie-in', ended an exhausting day.

Palapye Road - Friday 15th to Sunday 17th September.

This period was one of relaxation, good meals, and less cramped accommodation in the train. The first day was spent in cleaning arms and equipment and the return of all live ammunition.

An invitation from the C.O.A.F. to visit Serowe by batches of Officers and men from the Battery was declined. The Detachment Commanders were opposed to any splitting up of their units and any change of command.



HOWITZER BATTERY MOVING INTO POSITION
FOR THE CEREMONY DEPOSING CHIEF
TSEKEDI KHAMA.

There was little to do. The event of the day was the passage of the mail train to or from Rhodesia and the gift of a newspaper. There was little other rail traffic and football could be played on the track. One day was occupied by a route march along a bush track but this was really a picnic and an endeavour to find shade.

During this period - as earlier - there was no contact with journalists or the like. The sensational and often inaccurate press stories of the activities of the A.E. were not derived from the Battery.

Meanwhile at Serowe the R.C. was awaiting the choice of the "Khotla" (Tribesmen in council) of a successor to Tshekedi. After much haggling and an ultimatum from the R.C. an Acting Chief was nominated p.m. Saturday 16th September. (Tshekedi Khama had been escorted from Palapye Road to Francistown by mail train on the previous night; this hastened the proceedings.)

Return Journey to Simon's Town Monday 18 September to Wednesday 20th.

The two Platoons returned from Serowe and the A.E. entrained for its journey back to Simon's Town a.m. Monday 18th September. It had been decided that for publicity, or other reasons, the A.E. should break its journey at Kimberley and, after marching through the town, should visit the diamond mines. The A.E. arrived at about noon on the Tuesday and conformed with this programme. It was an unpleasantly cold and windy day; the A.E. could not be well turned out as appropriate for the occasion but made the best of it, though marching without arms. The mines were of interest, particularly the 'Big Hole' of the original diamond mines.

The journey to Cape Town was then resumed (about 600 miles) and the Salt River Junction was reached by 1430 the next day, Wednesday, and Simon's Town by about 1530. Here the A.E. was received with some adulation, and with obvious relief by the S.O.(1) Cape Town. The units of the A.E. then rejoined their ships.

The 3.7-inch Howitzer Battery Disbanded-September 1933.

After the mustering, cleaning, returning of all stores and the return of the Howitzers to the N.A. Depot, the 3.7-inch Battery was disbanded. (The Officers concerned are not referred to hereafter by their normal service titles.)

By this time the 'Dorchester' had arrived and became the Flagship; her G.O. was given the title of F.G.O. On board this ship the Admiral called a meeting of Officers from all ships present to hear his views on the Bechuanaland Expedition and to express his satisfaction at its efficient execution. This latter was nice to hear but this meeting inhibited objective discussion on some of the important aspects of the operation e.g. the composition of the A.E., its organisation, and command structure.

In due course, the F.R.M.O. submitted his report on the A.E. and (from a fragment still preserved) it seems that little of importance was discussed therein, e.g. the need for an Officer i/c Transport; the undesirability of including men under 20 years of age on active service, and of the selection of men by ballot from an excess of volunteers!

The conclusion was reached that the Field Service Pocket Book (the authoritative book on naval landing parties) gave adequate guidance. Some matters were discussed informally by the G.O.s, particularly on the limitations of the Howitzers in bush warfare and the circumstances in which it would be prudent to issue live S.A. ammunition (about which some eye-brows had been raised).

The G.O. 'Carlisle' had had no anxiety about the issue of live ammunition to the Battery. All personnel from 'Carlisle' had been trained that the bolts of rifles were to be kept closed, the striker uncocked, and safety catch applied. Also ammunition was to be issued, in clips, carried in the ammunition pouches, and all loading to be carried out from the pouches. This was not difficult to enforce; a man who repeated a neglect of these rules during musketry course should be returned to his ship as 'dangerous'. Admittedly the above was contrary to range regulations in the U.K. and elsewhere, but they were quite inappropriate to the sandy terrain of Africa.

Bechuanaland Expedition - Some Conclusions.

The Expedition gave a great boost to the morale and a sense of purpose to the participants at a very dull period of naval service. Politically it earned the respect of the S.A. Government, may have embarrassed the U.K. Government, and possibly the High Commissioner (personally) but strengthened the hand of the Resident Commissioner.

Militarily, taking into account the intelligence available at the time, the composition of the Armed Escort was unsound. There was no role for a Howitzer Battery in what might, at worst, develop into a need to support the civil powers. The 'Carlisle's' Platoon organisation and an adequate H.Q. would have been more appropriate. In the event, the Battery was used successfully as a demonstration of military might and in a ceremonial role. The Royal Navy's reputation with the SADF was much enhanced. There was ample evidence of this some months later during the annual SA National Rifle Meeting in 1934 at Bloemfontein. It was at these meetings that the Navy made contact not only with the S.A. Defence Force but with the backveld Afrikaners of the Commandos. The Navy was represented by a team from 'Carlisle': 2 Officers, 6 Seamen and 3 R.Ms. They did reasonably well, particularly in all the rifle team events; the Seamen won both the Lewis Gun and the Vickers MG Competitions - the R. Marines were the runners-up. (Capt. Phillips of 'Milford' was in general charge of the naval representatives - a happy choice.) The SADF expressed their admiration and the Afrikaners their astonishment. (The G.O. 'Carlisle' was asked by a group of them if he was from the Union Castle Company- it got round later that these sailors had come from Bechuanaland!)

OFFICERS OF ARMED ESCORT

Commanding Officer, A.E.
 R.M. Platoon, C.O. & 2nd i/c A.E.
 Battery Commander (& G.O.'Carlisle)
 No.1. Section Commander
 No.2. Section Commander
 Battery Warrant Officer
 Battery H.Q. Supply Officer
 Battery H.Q. Medical Officer
 Seaman Platoon C.O.

Major H.A.C. Webber, R.M.
 Capt.J.H. Leech-Porter, R.M.
 *Lt. Cdr. M.W. St.L. Searle
 *Lt. B.W. Thruston
 *Lt. G.A.G. Ormsby
 *Mr. E.E. Household, Gunner
 Pay Sub.Lt. G.S. Mowll
 Surg.Lt. C.H. Egan
 Sub.Lt. J.A.H. McKean
 (HMS Rochester)

* = and previously in Rhodesia

NOMINAL LIST OF RATINGS OF ARMED ESCORT TO BECHUANALAND
SEPTEMBER 1933

No. 1 Detachment

W. Moor	P.O.
P. Wakeham	L.Sea
A. Swankie	A.B.
C. Daly	"
E. Crompton	"
H. Cave	"
J. Hunter	"
P. Toman	"
J. Graham	"
R. Hambly	"
C. Bailey	L. Stoker
J. Hulse	A.B.
A. Brokenshire	A.B.
A. Thomas	"
A. Houldey	"
G. Lafferty	"
P. Taylor	Stoker
J. Simpson	"
W. Pearce	"

No. 2 Detachment

E. Bowey	P.O.
S. Farrar	L.Sea
H. Simpson	A.B.
C. Stevens	"
H. Sharratt	"
T. Best	"
E. Opie	"
J. Dearion	"
J. McMahon	"
C. Marsh	L. Stoker
E. Furgerson	L.Sea
J. Masters	A.B.
J. Jones	A.B.
A. Waldron	"
C. O'Connor	"
A. Carver	Stoker
C. Parsons	L.Stoker
S. Harper	Stoker
S. Walker	A.B.
W. Butler	A.B.

No. 3 Detachment

J. Janes	P.O.
R. Teeling	L. Sea
F. Paice	A.B.
J. Roberts	"
W. Gorman	"
W. Walker	"
J. Coates	"
J. Lunn	"
A. Hewardine	"
J. Dawson	"
P. Caddy	"
C. Budd	"
J. Mallett	L.Sea

Headquarters

J. Clarke	C.G.M.
R. Hume	R.P.O.
G. Toon	Yeoman
E. Downing	O.A.
A. Reddy	O.A.
J. Elliott	Shipt
W. Tucker	S.B.P.O.
R. Jervis	Sy.P.O.
W. Paul	L. Cook
W. Every	L. Sea
H. Welsh	P.O.Cook
M. Phillips	O.S.I.
A. Graham	A.B.

No. 3 Detachment (contd.)

S. Coomer	A.B.
R. Fisher	"
A. Westlake	L. Stoker
J. Shaw	Stoker
W. McLoughlin	"
G. Addiss	A.B.
M. Forbes	"

Messmen

R. Bennett	A.B.
H. Egan	"
W. Grice	O. Sea
J. Lund	"
J. Lucas	"

Seaman Platoon

Platoon Petty Officer
 Platoon Messenger
 Platoon Signaller

No. 1 Section "Carlisle"

Ldg. Sea.	Hindley
A.B.	Walker M.
"	Garland
"	Dinwiddy
"	Evans H.
"	Gibbs
"	Jones R.

No. 3. Section "Carlisle"

Ldg. Sea	McCabe
A.B.	Wilson
"	Rennison
"	Halford
"	Trussler
"	Gordon
"	Ransley

Headquarters (contd)

R. Pattenden	A.B.
A. Hewitt	"
A. Hamilton	"
P. Bevan	L. Sig.
E. Spedding	Sig.
J. Allen	"
R. Manley	A.B.
J. Caldwell	"
W. Evans	"

Petty Officer Pepper (R)
 A.B. Johnson (R)
 Sig. Richards (R)

No. 2 Section "Rochester"

Ldg. Sea.	Hammerton (C)
A.B.	Smithwaite
"	Patten
"	Trench
"	Lucas
"	Shipman
"	Johnson

No. 4 Section "Weston"

Ldg. Sea.	Bowman
A.B.	Smith
"	Penlly
"	Patterson
"	Barton
"	Chaland
"	Piper

WILLIAM RUNCIMAN

by D.W. Runciman

William Runciman was descended from Scottish forbears from the Nithsdale (Dumfries) area. The surname was a professional one and not a place name as the Hon. Sir Stephen Runciman (famous Historian and author of many Volumes on the History of the Crusades) tells us:

"In the middle ages, while knights had their own horses, the mounted sergeants used to hire horses which were known as 'rouncies' from big livery stables who used to send a man with the expedition to collect the dues and see that the horses which survived the campaign were returned. He was the 'rouncie-man'. The best rouncies came from the English-Scottish border, which is doubtless why the surname seems to be found only along the borders. The rouncies at this western end of the Border were considered to be particularly good, as the breeders here used to import Spanish stallions. Later, by Chaucer's time, the rounce came to mean any hired horse."

William's Great-grandfather, Walter (1770-1846) had been pressganged into the Navy. Of his three sons, two entered the Merchant Service and went to sea. One of these, Walter (1810-1878) the youngest son, was proud to have commanded a fast schooner the 'Ellen Sharpe' carrying mail from Scotland to the south of England but gave up the sea in deference to his wife's wishes. He became a lay preacher and founded the family from which the present (second) Viscount Runciman of Doxford is descended.

The eldest son, Thomas (born 1795) Williams's Grandfather, was Master of the ship 'James and Christen' when his own son William first went to sea in her as a ship's boy in 1838. This William (1824-1896) spent his life at sea. His second marriage into a Simon's Town family caused him to bring his two sons by his first marriage to South Africa early in 1873. These boys were William (born 1858) and George (born 1860).

What follows is the story of Captain William's elder son, William Runciman of Simon's Town.

William Runciman, elder son of Captain William Runciman and Ann (Hoggett) was born in the seaport town of South Shields at the mouth of the River Tyne, on 11 April 1858. His father was Ship's Master and away at sea for long periods. When his mother Ann died on 2 September 1865 aged 39 years, young William and his brother George (born 1860) went to live with relatives in Leith and Dunbar. The latter town was Captain William's birthplace and it is known that the boys were educated in both towns.

In 1870 or 1871 William's father married again. His second wife, Alice Anne Black came from Simon's Town and so it was that Captain Runciman brought his wife and his two sons to South Africa aboard his ship the *Leio* in 1873. They arrived in the Cape on 27 March 1873.

Family legend tells a story of how young William volunteered to swim in very rough seas to a ship in distress just off Cape Town at the end of

this voyage in 1873. As was so often the case, very few of the sailors on the Leio could swim at all while William then aged 16 was a strong swimmer. He was successful in carrying a rope to the stricken ship and she was taken in tow and brought to Cape Town harbour.

William joined the firm of William Anderson and Co in Simon's Town soon after he settled in this country. He was an intelligent boy and worked hard. He showed so much promise that he was sent, after only six months to the firm's Head Office in Cape Town to learn all he could about the business of ship's Agents and ship's chandling. While William was in Cape Town he lived with his stepmother and brother in his father's house first at Mentone Cottage in Green Point and then in Somerset Road. At the age of 19 William returned to Simon's Town as the resident manager of Anderson's and soon after he was made a junior partner of the firm.

In the 1870's Simon's Town was but a straggling line of stores, warehouses and small shops. Shipping business was, however, brisk and the port was a busy place. Into this bustling village life William plunged becoming an active and energetic member of the small community.

Many years later - in 1933 - William was to make notes for a lecture he gave on his personal reminiscences of fifty to sixty years before. Here are some extracts from these notes:

"Comparing the past conditions with the present it would be difficult for the present generation to conceive how one could have existed at that time....There was no local government of any description and consequently there was no sanitary system, no sewage system, no removal of house refuse, no street cleansing, no water distribution, no civil hospital or district nurse, no side-paths, no supervision whatsoever. People did just what they liked or did not like. The residential area of the town was confined principally to the main road from the Palace Barracks to the foot of Cemetery Hill. The merchants and shopkeepers resided on the first floor above their premises. The hillside residences did not exist..... Sixty years ago Simon's Town was not only the Imperial Naval Station, it was a flourishing mercantile port. Before steam had monopolised the propelling power of merchant ships, the trade between Europe and the East was conducted by sailing ships around the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn.....

Ships and ship-building was an important business. I can remember three schooners being built and launched.....Fishing was a comparatively big business - principally of snoek, with which the harbour and False Bay teemed during the season....Another feature of the trade was the frequent calling of squadrons of foreign warships, composed of five to seven corvettes, for coal and provisions..... There was no Bank in those days. The Naval storekeeper was the Dockyard cashier and made a journey to Cape Town with an armed escort to draw money from the Bank for His Majesty's ships and Dockyard requirements. The merchants and shopkeepers were the bankers of the inhabitants.... Later the Cape of Good Hope Savings Bank had a branch which opened three hours a week.....The communications with Cape Town for passen-

gers was to and from Wynberg by the old Cape cart, thence by rail to Cape Town. The journey occupied three hours with stopping places for change of horses and refreshments. In those days there were no hard roads across the beaches, the carts drove along the hard sand at the water's edge over the Long Beach, Glencairn and Fish Hoek.

Notwithstanding the isolation from Cape Town, and other disabilities, the community, being so self-contained, were thrown together for social intercourse and amusement and on the whole life in those days in old 'Snookie' was very happy. Those who could afford it kept a riding horse. Gymkhanas were held on the top of Redhill. A pack of hounds was kept and a most enjoyable afternoon's sport was obtained in following a 'drag'."

Simon's Town was thriving, developing into a small town and William threw himself heart and soul into the improvements on hand and those still in the planning stage.

On 11 May 1881 William married Elizabeth (Bessie) Sarah Black. She was born in Simon's Town 1 May 1858, a member of a large clan living in the area. Her parents were Alexander Nicholas Black (1827-1889) and Susannah Jarman (1830-1871). She was also a niece of William's stepmother Alice. Bessie had been given a Birthday Book in 1873 and entries in this tiny book give otherwise unobtainable details. When William and Bessie's first child was born the Birthday Book says "My own Baby Gardner William born 1882. Tuesday 1/4 eleven a.m."

In 1883 the leading citizens of Simon's Town won their battle to have a Municipality proclaimed. In the first election William was voted to the Council at the head of the poll. The first Mayor was G.R. Budge and he and his Council set to work enthusiastically to improve the town's amenities, which improvements were now in the hands of men concerned and interested in their own district. The water supply, drainage and sewage disposal were the first works to be undertaken and William was one of the prime movers in the Reservoir scheme whereby the town gained storage of three million gallons of water in the Victoria Reservoir above the town. The entry in Bessie's Birthday book says: "1884 - 28 January: Will seized with Typhoid Fever". Certainly improvements in sanitary arrangements in the town were long overdue!

William was elected Mayor of Simon's Town for the first time in 1888. He was to serve many terms of office during the next thirty-seven years: 1888-1889, 1893-1898, 1899-1901, 1902-1904 and 1909-1925 (twenty-six years in all but not consecutively). William was a member of the Planning Committee which organised the celebrations to mark the opening of the Railway Extension from Kalk Bay to Simon's Town on 1 December 1890. A full day of festivities was enjoyed by the populace and many Cape Town dignitaries, including Ministers Rhodes, Merriman and Innes travelled the new line that day. While the visitors were entertained to a festival luncheon by Mayor Hugo, the children of the town were given a free train ride up and down the new line followed by a picnic lunch. The afternoon's fun consisted of sports and games and the evening ended with a firework display.

On March 10 1892, William and Bessie's second child was born. Bessie tells us that her second boy was born on a Thursday evening, 11.49 and that he was christened Alexander Walter. (Although this boy was called Walter at school, he was always known as 'Bobby'). William had chosen a site for his home, on the hillside overlooking the harbour. He called it 'Highlands' and it was a dignified doublestorey building with plenty of space for a family. The grounds included stables and servants quarters. William walked down the hill every day to his offices and business by way of a set of stairs leading from his side garden gate to the main road on the lower level. The whole property was enclosed by a stone wall and there was a ship's mast in the front garden, from which the Union Jack was flown.

William in his expanding civic life, met all the leading men of the times and was on good terms with almost all. In 1893 on June 14, he was involved in a midnight adventure with Cecil Rhodes. Rhodes was dining with friends in Mowbray when he heard that a cargo boat hulk was in trouble in heavy seas with 30 men on board. He immediately dashed off the following note to William (to be delivered by special messenger to Simon's Town):

Bollihope
Mowbray
1/2 past 9.

Dear Mr. Runciman

We have just heard that the lost cargo boat is anchored in Sandown Bay near Hangklip as per enclosed telegram. You will oblige me by sending off at once the Kaffir to her assistance, that is, if she is in Simon's Town. You will by this action save many hours as the Saxon will not arrive here until to-morrow morning.

I will be responsible for any expenditure and....(this part indecipherable).

Kindly act at once. Of course I understand the Kaffir may have left. If her captain is absent place her in charge of the mate or borrow a naval officer.

Yours truly
C.J. RHODES

Cecil Rhodes, however, changed his mind and decided to go to Simon's Town himself despite the bad storm and pouring rain which was falling. He arrived there soaked and chilled after a drive in an open carriage at about 2 o'clock in the morning. He knocked up William and demanded to be taken to the ship out in the harbour. William insisted on giving Rhodes dry clothing and 'a good stiff brandy and soda' before telling him that it was out of the question in that weather. Rhodes, however, was not to be dissuaded and eventually William accompanied Rhodes to the water's edge. Only with great difficulty was a crew of Malay fishermen persuaded to row the two men out to the ship which, with Rhodes aboard, set off at once.

Next day Rhodes returned to Simon's Town at about 2 p.m. to find that

his absence was causing much concern in Cape Town. Rhodes was at the time Prime Minister and Parliament was due to open on 16 June.... and his speech was not yet prepared! Rhodes commandeered William's office and spent some time there composing a long telegram which William was asked to dispatch at once - this appeared to be the text for the next day's speech. Rhodes left Simon's Town for Cape Town in the late afternoon of June 15 and was safely back for the opening of Parliament the following day. This incident was deemed characteristic of Rhodes' concern for other men in danger, irrespective of race or class.

Bessie and William's third child was born in 1893. The entry in the Birthday book is: 'My girlie Alice Elizabeth Ann born Wednesday 7.30p.m. 12 July.' This child was known throughout her life as 'Peggy'.

From notes for an article written by Capt. I.D. Difford of the Cape Times in 1923, the following extract reads:

"The first High School was established at Simon's Town in 1895 and owes its institution to Mr. Runciman's unremitting efforts on behalf of Education. There are few in the Cape that have done more for Education than he, for he was also instrumental in establishing the Arsenal Road Primary and has always been closely identified with all that concerns the training of the young"

On 5 August 1896 William was presented with a silver trowel with which he had laid the Memorial Stone at Simon's Town High School.

William's father Captain William Runciman, had retired from the sea in 1884. According to a newspaper source he had, since retirement, been employed as Assistant Dockmaster under Capt. Wilson, the Port Captain of Cape Town: but no proof of this fact has been found. Now, late in 1896, William was struck two stunning blows. On October 3, his father died at his son's residence in Simon's Town and was laid to rest in the old cemetery. Hardly were these sad rites over than William's dear wife Bessie died on 17 November - only seven weeks after Capt. Runciman's passing. She was thirty-eight years old and her two youngest children only four and three years old. Bessie is buried in the old Simon's Town cemetery and her epitaph reads: "And what doth the Lord require of Thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God".

William's stepmother - and the late Bessie's Aunt Alice - took over the running of William's home and the responsibility for his children. She was to remain at 'Highlands' for the rest of her long life, dying there in 1933 at the age of 88 years.

The separate Parliamentary constituency of South Peninsula was formed in 1898 and the first election for a Member of Parliament was to take place in April 1899. A newspaper report of November 29 1898 records a meeting of the Progressive Party which was held in the Boy's Mission Schoolroom, Simon's Town on 28 November, to hear the result reached by a Committee of the townsmen appointed at a prior meeting to select a candidate to oppose the Afrikaner Bond at the forthcoming election. The Progressive Party's candidates for selection had been: 'Mr. W. Runciman, a resident of Simon's Town who has for twenty-one years been identified

with the business and public interest of this town and district and Mr. Cloete, who was for some little time Acting Agent at Pretoria.

Dr. Henry Clarke, District Surgeon, who was in the Chair, announced the conclusion reached by the Committee. This was that 'Mr. William Runciman had been unanimously declared the most suitable candidate'. Dr. Clarke read the pledge given by Mr. Runciman to the effect that if elected, he would support the Progressive Party in Parliament and would immediately resign should he find himself unable to agree at any time with the majority of the Party. Mr. Runciman then addressed the meeting promising to do his best for the Party and that he would work for the federation of States in South Africa; promote compulsory education; strive for improvements in farming and industry, irrigation schemes, communications country-wide, harbour installations and a lowering of the Customs tariffs; and to back up Cecil Rhodes in developing Rhodesia.

"Nominations for the Parliamentary election were two in number in South Peninsula in 1899 -Mr. William Runciman of Simon's Town (Progressive) and Mr. H.L. Currey (Afrikaner Bond) a young advocate....A show of hands on Nomination Day favoured the former but the latter demanded a poll" (From 'Historical Simon's Town' Brock and Brock) Election Day was 5 April 1899 and was a lively day in Simon's Town. 'After voting had taken place frustration prevailed because the Hout Bay ballot box had gone adrift and the counting could not begin until the next day. Nonetheless, a band of Runciman supporters were not to be deprived of their celebration. A torch-light procession made its way through the town with much shoutingSimon's Town's first member of Parliament was in fact William Runciman' Thus on 5 April 1899 six days before his forty-first birthday, William started on his long Parliamentary career which was to last twenty-seven years, spanning the Cape Legislative Assembly and the Union Parliament.

In May 1899 Edgar Wallace, afterwards a famous author, had left the Army. He had called on William (who had known him casually for several years) for advice on how to obtain his release. William had found no difficulty in instructing Wallace on how to comply with the regulations. William was known to have said that Edgar Wallace was not gauche and uncouth as he himself claimed, but that he had found him always self-possessed, affable and very earnest - and certainly so on this occasion - when he stated his request very clearly: 'I want you to help me Mr. Runciman to get out of the Army. It is no life for me. I feel strangled and I want to be free to exercise and give expression to my feelings which I cannot do in the Service'.

Just before the turn of the century William became the senior partner in the chandling business. Extensive reconstruction of the old Anderson & Co's buildings were carried out and the name of the business changed to Wm. Runciman & Co. It was one of the largest and most successful concerns in the town, being not only Ship's Agency and Ship's Chandlers, but supplied ship ballast and was a family grocery and wine and spirits merchants as well.

1899 saw the start of the Anglo Boer War and a period of enormously

increased activity in the area began as a result of Naval Transport Services bringing British war equipment in through the Naval Station of Simon's Town. Extensive harbour improvements were also planned. The first phase of the War was over in 1900 and in March of that year the first of two Illuminated Addresses were presented by the Mayor William Runciman. Firstly: "To Captain the Honourable Hedworth Lambton, C.B., Officers and Men of the Naval Brigade of H.M.S. Powerful, Simon's Bay, South Africa. We the inhabitants of Simon's Town the Naval Station, rejoice that this opportunity is afforded us on behalf of all loyal South Africans, of welcoming you back from the seat of war, and to record our admiration of your very conspicuous part you have performed in so gallantly and worthily upholding the best traditions of the British Navy and in maintaining the supremacy of our Queen and Empire...."

In October 1900 the second address was to: "Captain John Edward Bearcroft, C.B., Officers and Men of the Naval Brigade, Simon's Bay, South Africa. The inhabitants of Simon's Town take this opportunity of welcoming you back from the seat of war....In the campaign in which you have been engaged for the past ten months with the eyes of the world upon you, we, as residents of the Naval Station, have taken special interest in your operations and beg to convey to you our feelings of admiration and gratitude for the valuable services you have rendered in maintaining British supremacy in South Africa...."

In 1901 the first Moslem school was opened in Simon's Town and William the Mayor, performed the Opening Ceremony. The highlight of 1901 was, however, the visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York on their tour of the British Empire. The whole of the Cape Peninsula was en fête for this occasion. Their Majesty's ship H.M.S. Ophir, arrived in Simon's Bay on 18 August. Simon's Town was flag bedecked and bunting flew from every vantage point. There was a large archway over the entrance to the dockyard building where the Duke and Duchess would step ashore on South African soil. The wording on the archway read: "A Hearty Welcome to the Cape Colony". Another banner over the main street welcomed the royal visitors to the town. The day was declared a holiday and all the townsfolk were out to cheer the Duke and Duchess and their retinue.

An Illuminated Address was presented by the Mayor William Runciman which started:

'TO: Their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York. May it please your Royal Highnesses:
We, the Mayor and Councillors, on behalf of the inhabitants of Simon's Town, beg to tender to Your Royal Highnesses a most hearty welcome to His Majesty's Naval Station of South Africa, and to express our profound sense of the honour and pleasure Your Royal Highnesses confer in coming personally amongst us as the Representatives of our Beloved Sovereign....'

The Royal couple were driven in procession through Simon's Town's main street in an open carriage as far as Admiralty House. There the Duchess was presented with a posy by a schoolgirl. The photograph in William's presentation album shows William standing behind the Duchess while she

receives the posy. Perhaps his own daughter, Peggy (then aged 7) is amongst the small girls watching. They are standing under the watchful eyes of their teachers and are all dressed in their best .. and elastic-sided boots.

In 1902 William received an invitation to represent Simon's Town at the Coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in Westminster Abbey. He travelled to Britain and stayed with his cousin Sir Walter (later Lord Runciman of Shroton). The Coronation had been planned for 26 June but on the eve of the festivities the King had to undergo an appendix operation - serious in those days - so the Coronation was postponed until 9 August. The suit which William wore to the Coronation is now in the Simon's Town Museum. It consists of black velvet tail coat and knee breeches, a white silk waistcoat and a black velvet bicorne hat. The ensemble was completed with black buckled shoes, white stockings, a white shirt and white gloves. All the garments are adorned with the most elegant marquise buttons and buckles. The Dress Sword is quite beautiful, slender and light; the hilt and scabbard are also decorated with marquise; the hat has ornamental chainwork with marquise holders. (The Invitation to the Coronation is preserved in the Museum, together with a photograph of William taken in London, dressed in this suit). William was a slender, upright figure of a man, small boned and of medium height.

In May 1902 William was presented with a silver cigarette case engraved: 'To William Runciman, Esq., M.L.A., from the Staff and Pupils of Simon's Town High School'. Also in 1902 work on the East Dockyard was started by the firm of Sir John Jackson Ltd and this work was to continue until 1908. Assistant to Sir John Jackson on this and on previous locations, was a Mr. Mason, originally from Lancashire. William's elder son, Gardner, fell in love with & married Mr. Mason's daughter Lily in about 1906.

Meanwhile in 1903 William was re-elected to the Legislative Assembly, defeating no less an opponent than the formidable Carl Jeppe. In the next year William piloted two Bills through Parliament. These were the Kalk Bay Electric Lighting Scheme and the Cape Flats Railway Extensions bill. William was also Chairman of the Government Commission brought into being to investigate shipping losses along the Peninsula shores. As a result of this Commission's recommendations, the lighthouse was built at Slangkop.

"When the School Board bill was introduced in 1905 Mr. Runciman was a member of the Select Committee whose report resulted in the passing of the Act that brought the School Board into existence in South Africa, and thus at one stroke advanced the cause of education by at least a quarter of a century. Mr. Runciman sat on the first School Board, together with the Hon. J.W. Jagger (the present Minister for Railways). He is now Chairman of that body and has been a real live member since its inception. His contributions to debates on educational matters invariably threw a bright and intelligent light on many controversial subjects that arose."

So wrote Capt. I.D. Difford for the Cape Times in July 1923 in a resumé of William's life up to that time.

In 1906 the entry in 'Men of the Times' said:

'Mr. William Runciman, M.L.A., has long been identified with the progress and development of Simon's Town. During the twenty-seven years that he resided there he has put his whole heart into the work of making Simon's Town the prosperous place it is to-day....In the compass of a short article it would be impossible to indicate in detail the inestimable value of his many services.....He has been Mayor several times and has brought to bear upon the problems which have come before the Council for solution, energy resource and ability far above the average....Mr. Runciman has been the representative of Simon's Town in the Cape Legislative Assembly for the past six years....He is a strong supporter of the Progressive Party and in debate has won for himself a reputation of a clear and incisive speaker. He takes a particular interest in educational matters and has proved a decided acquisition to the Legislature. His broad sympathies, courtesy and transparent sincerity are admired by political opponents as much as by political friends.'

William had always worked towards a Federation of States in South Africa and the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 was an achievement in which he felt he had a small part. He was proud to receive the Commemorative Medal to mark that historical event. The Command reads:

Government House
Cape Town
28 November 1910

Sir

It was the most earnest wish of His Majesty King Edward VII to commemorate the Union of the South African Colonies by presenting a medal to those who have rendered special service in connection with the establishment of the Union, or with the opening of the first Union Parliament. Up to the time of his lamented death, His Majesty showed the keenest interest in the institution of this medal, as a record from Himself personally of the great victory of Peace and Unity.

I have it in command from His Majesty King George to transmit to you the silver medal, enclosed herewith, in commemoration of the establishment of the Union, and of the auspicious opening of the first Parliament by Field-Marshal His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught.

Believe me, Yours faithfully
GLADSTONE.

TO: W. RUNCIMAN, ESQ."

William was present at the opening of the first session of the Union Parliament.

In 1913 William, again as Mayor, performed the opening ceremony of the Plumstead High School. The silver key which opened the door is in the

Simon's Town Museum. There, also, is a silver Presentation Box: 'With sincere appreciation from the Peninsula Division Women's Unionist Association, Cape Town 1916'.

In 1917 there was another Presentation. This time it was in the form of a Public Testimonial which was 'a mark of the general appreciation in which this pillar of South Africa is generally held. There has been no public work of any value within the past thirty years in which he has not played a prominent and useful part'.

The Navy had always played an important role in William's life. He entertained the Navy on many occasions and so it was not surprising that his daughter Peggy should form an attachment with a Naval Officer. Lt. George Wilson (born in Dublin Ireland - 16 December 1894) had served on H.M.S. Glasgow at the battle of Coronel, at Falkland Isles and Juan Fernandez before the ship was sent to Simon's Town for refit. Lt. Wilson left the Glasgow and returned to Britain, seeing further service in the Battleship Thunderer and in submarines. In 1919 William took his daughter to Britain where she married George Wilson on 26 July in St. Margaret's, Westminster.

William returned to South Africa in the company of his second son, Maj. A.W. Runciman (Bobby), M.C. who was newly demobbed after seeing extensive service in France with the Royal Engineers.

In the early 1920's William's son-in-law Cdr. George Wilson retired from the Navy. He fancied farming in the Queens Town area and William invested in two farms there, 'Fordyce' and 'Combleigh'. George and Peggy were given the use of the farms but their venture did not last long as George Wilson succumbed to pneumonia in February 1927. After George's death, William's elder son Gardner evinced a desire to farm and so he took over the properties in Queens Town. But he was totally inexperienced in farming and suffered severe stock losses right from the start. William kept a tight hold on the purse strings for Gardner's farming expenses and feelings ran high as the farm losses went from bad to worse. William blamed his son and the end came with a final break between father and son - one that was never healed. In his Will, William disinherited his elder son and Gardner never spoke to or about his father again. The farms which had cost £23 per morgen were finally sold in the depression years of the 1930's for £4 per morgen.

In 1925 William served his last term of office as Mayor of Simon's Town. In 1926 he resigned from the Council and so ended a period of unbroken service of forty-three years. He had seen the town grow from a rather primitive village into a thriving, pleasant town where the residents were well cared-for and he had had a great deal to do with this growth to prosperity.

This delightful story, published in the Cape Argus on 19 April 1936 bears out his long association with the administration of the town:

"Mr. William Runciman held an extraordinary record as Mayor of the town. When, ten years ago, Vice Admiral Fitz-Maurice arrived to command the

Africa Station, he was formally welcomed by Mr. William Runciman. Replying to his welcome, the Admiral said: "When I first came to Simon's Town as a midshipman in the Raleigh in 1880 I found Mr. Runciman Mayor of Simon's Town. When as a Commander I returned to Simon's Town in 1900 I found Mr. Runciman Mayor of Simon's Town. Now I come back as Admiral and I find...." The crowd snatching the words from his lips, shouted: "Mr. William Runciman, Mayor of Simon's Town! "

William never 'retired' from his business interests. Each day he would walk down to his office and spend a few hours there. His partner Mr. Louis D.D. Miller, was the active member and the administrative head of the firm.

William was a great lover of music. He had been to Italy and numbered Henrico Caruso and Galli Curci amongst his personal friends, and he was very fond of their singing. He had a gramophone - the old fashioned type with a big horn above the turntable - on which he played his records. He would spend happy evenings in his rather stuffy study listening to music and it was his pleasure to entertain his daughter-in-law, Bobby's wife Kathleen, to a musical recital. Other evenings were spent by the whole family, when at 'Highlands', in the Drawing Room singing to Peggy's accompaniment on William's baby grand piano.

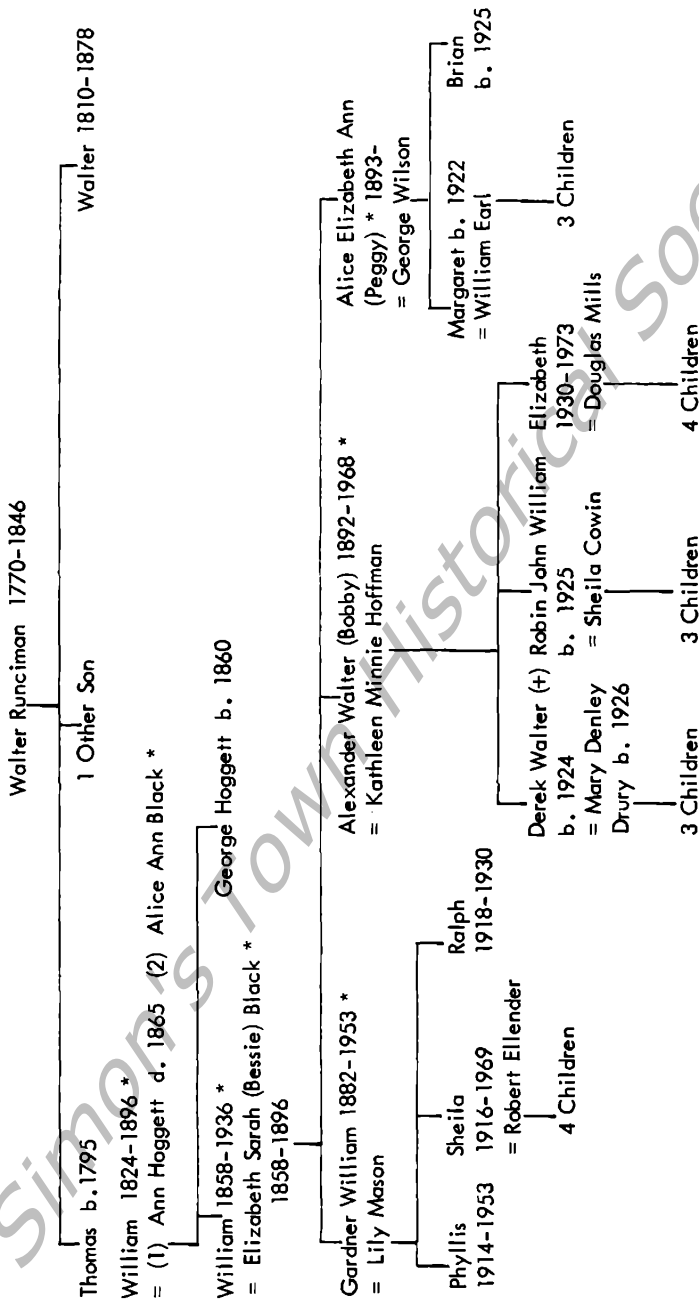
William's home functioned smoothly with a few well-trained retainers under his stepmother's supervision and later under his daughter, Peggy's when she came to live at 'Highlands' as a widow with two small children. His two sons had always spent their holidays with their father (until the estrangement between William and Gardner). William had always taken an interest in his eight grandchildren. Not a casual man in any relationship, he nevertheless, liked to tease them and pull their hair and although he was called 'Gumpy' by them all it was not a rollicking association.

William was a very precise man - by nature and in appearance. He was of the 'old school' by his children and grandchildren's standards: a true Victorian - upright, righteous, courteous, rather formal and very proud of his Scots ancestry. Some people considered him self-opinionated and autocratic.

Throughout his life William was very keen on walking. He went anywhere on the Peninsula. He loved wild flowers and in later years, when climbing the hills behind Simon's Town became too much for him, he had a preference for being driven by car to the higher slopes. A favourite spot was off the road that crossed the Peninsula where, opposite the present Nature Reserve, there was an area that was relatively flat for easier walking and where wild flowers abounded.

William Runciman died on 15 April 1936 after a short illness and just four days after his seventy-eighth birthday. His funeral was in St. Francis' Church and he was buried in the Old Simon's Town Cemetery beside his wife Bessie. His epitaph reads:

RUNCIMAN FAMILY



* Appear in photograph
(+) Author of article



THE RUNCKMAN FAMILY circa 1895

"Exercise Loving Kindness, Judgement and Righteousness in the Earth"

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William's Will was specific in that he had very decided ideas about the disposal of his estate. Here are some of his instructions:

Bequests were to his two granddaughters (Gardner's children) and to his domestic servants and chauffeur.

'I desire my collection of very old books shall be classified and sold as I can see no purpose in keeping valuables such as these unused'.

His old Relics, various Presentations and Souvenirs and old pictures were to be divided between his daughter Alice (Peggy) and his son Alexander (Bobby) by mutual agreement. The household furniture, his car and Library were left to his daughter. She was also given discretion as to the disposal of his home 'Highlands'.

The land adjoining the Victoria Reservoir with four cottages thereon was to be sub-divided into lots and sold 'regard being had in forming the sub-division to preserve, as far as possible, the old fir trees on the land'. A plot of land adjoining the above was to be given to the Rovers of the Boy Scouts Association of Simon's Town provided it was used to no other purpose.

His two-thirds share of property at Forest Hill was to be offered to the Municipality and if not accepted by them, to be sold in accordance with the plan for the estate of the late A.N. Black (his father-in-law) predecessor in title.

Properties in Seaforth and Paradise Road should not be disposed of without consultation with his friend and partner Mr. L.D.D. Miller. His interest in the firm of Wm. Runciman Ltd was not to be disposed of without consultation with his partner.

Usufruct went to his daughter for the remainder of her natural life with conditions should she re-marry, and the estate should be realised at her death and the proceeds divided between her two children (or their descendants) and his son Alexander (or his descendants) in equal shares.

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EXTRACTS FROM OBITUARY NOTICES IN THE CAPE TIMES, THE CAPE ARGUS BOTH DATED 17 APRIL 1936, AND OTHER SOURCES.

'The death of Mr. Runciman, the first member of Parliament for the South Peninsula Division in the Union House of Assembly and for thirty years Mayor of Simon's Town occurred yesterday afternoon.' (1)

'With his death there is broken a link with the old days of Simon's Town when the Africa Station was a busy community on its own, with a brisk shipping trade and a small whaling industry, where, as Mr. Runciman was fond of saying: 'If you want a breath of British atmosphere

you will find it at Simon's Town.' Naval men all over the world will join in regretting his passing, for, as Mayor of 'Snookie' for so many years, he knew all the Commanders-in-Chief and the Staffs of the Africa Station since the beginning of the century. (2)

As Mayor he did much to promote excellent relations between the Naval and Civil sections, and, when a member of the Cape House of Assembly, he strongly favoured a more adequate recognition by the Cape Colony of its obligations to the Imperial Navy. Mr. Runciman's life was one of almost continuous public service....From the time of his first election to the Town Council in 1883, he was regarded in every sense as the leading man of the civil community of the town. He later founded the firm of Messrs. William Runciman and Company and took a leading share in the commercial spheres of life at Simon's Town. Mr. Runciman early manifested an interest in public affairs. He had a thoroughly sound grip of political questions and, having made a special study of educational matters, always stood for an enlightened and popular system of elementary education. (1)

In whatever he undertakes, politically or otherwise, he brings to bear moderation and sound common sense and has rightly earned the reputation of being uncommonly level headed. (4)

He represented Simon's Town in the Cape Parliament and afterwards in the Assembly of the Union for seventeen years and though he did not often contribute to debate, he was recognised in both Houses as being a moderate and discerning man, with broad views and a very high sense of public duty. ...But he was indefatigable in his conception of the duties which he considered that any man with the necessary leisure should undertake for the public weal. Thus for years in succession he undertook the thankless task of serving on the Cape School Board and was one of the most assiduous workers in the interests of Education in the Cape Peninsula. (3)

Mr. Runciman was not only an enthusiastic member of the Cape School Board up to his retirement last year, but he also took a great interest in hospital matters. For many years he was the Simon's Town Representative of the Union-Castle Company and other shipping lines and held local consular appointments for certain European countries. He was also a director of the Colonial Orphan Chamber; represented Simon's Town at the coronation of King Edward VII and was the recipient of the King George Jubilee Medal. (1)

He was a man of the utmost public spirit and of conspicuous rectitude in his public and private relations and the news of his death will be received with regret among the older generation who knew and admired his work. (3)

(1) Cape Times Obituary - 17 April 1936

(2) Cape Argus Obituary - 17 April 1936

(3) Cape Times Article on William Runciman - 17 April 1936

(4) Prominent Men of the Cape Colony

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 Simon's Town Historical Society Bulletin
 South Africa August 1919

UNPUBLISHED

Personal Notes made by William Runciman
 Birthday Book kept by Elizabeth Sarah Runciman
 Personal list of ships served in by Capt. Wm Runciman
 Presentation Photograph Album 1901, Family Albums
 Personal Interviews

 This is another extract from Notes for a lecture made by William Runciman in 1933.

'It would be remiss not to record an episode in shipbuilding which created great interest throughout the Peninsula. A Mr. J.R. Black conceived the idea of building a ship entirely by himself. He argued that if Noah could build an ark, he (Black) could build a ship. He started a schooner of about 100 tons burthen, a herculean task only to be understood and appreciated by those acquainted with the art of shipbuilding - to lay the keel, then the huge timbers bent to shape, then the planking also bent to shape forward and aft, the wood made pliable by means of steam troughs, and put in place by the use of block tackles, the driving and fastening of huge copper bolts to secure the stem and stern posts and timbers; an impossible task to an ordinary individual, his strength of body and indomitable perseverance was unique. Often I have seen him emerging from the shed with blood flowing from his face and head, caused it may have been by a fall from the scaffolding. His simple cure was, after washing off the blood, to cover up the wound with a mixture of tar and pitch.

The result of his great task was pathetic; he apparently never thought or estimated the time it would take to complete the task, or that before then he would be an old man unfit for work. He was engaged on the work for fifteen years and reached the stage when she would have been launched, but she was old and the keel and timbers were decayed.

He was not conscious of the tragedy and kept pottering about until Caron claimed him as a passenger on another boat to cross the Styx. The schooner was a beautiful model of ship architecture; and her end was completed by the ship breakers. I think it is fitting that Mr. Black's name should be perpetuated in the history of the town.'

BRIEF RECORD OF THE RESIDENCY BUILDING, SIMON'S TOWN

(Negotiations for the acquisition of the Residency as a permanent home for the Simon's Town Museum are almost completed and so a brief record follows in order to give members an idea of the history of the building.)

SYNOPSIS OF THE RECORD OF THE RESIDENCY

- 1772 Built as a residence for the Governor, when visiting Simon's Town.
- 1791 Sold to Gideon Rossouw.
- 1798 Bought by Doctor William Pattison, as agent for the Commissioners of Sick and Wounded Seamen, for use as a Naval Hospital.
- 1803, Dec Sold to Thomas Maxwell.
- 1804, Jan Bought by Isaac Strombom, merchant of Cape Town. Additional living rooms, store rooms and stables built on site of St. Francis Church.
- 1810 Bought by the Government Resident, J.H. Brand, as a residence.
- 1814 Bought by the Colonial Government to accommodate the various Government Offices, viz. - The Customs House and King's Warehouse, the Post Office, the Port Captain/Harbour Master's Office and living quarters for himself and his Boat's Crew, the Prison and living quarters for the Gaoler and Police Constables, an office and living accommodation for the Government Resident.
- 1822 J.H. Brand was succeeded as Government Resident by Captain Henry Somerset, the Military Commandant, and living accommodation for the Resident was no longer required in the Residency.
An upper storey with a flat roof, containing four rooms, was added.
- 1824 The Harbour Master's office and living rooms were taken over as a Court Room for the newly established Court of Resident and Heemraden.
- 1832 The upper storey was removed and the whole building re-roofed. The out-buildings on the site of St. Francis Church were demolished.
At about this time, or earlier, the Post Office was moved elsewhere.
- 1847 The Sub-Collector of Customs, F.B. Pinney, took over the duties of Resident Justice of the Peace, when Colonel M.G. Blake was granted twelve months sick leave, and was confirmed in the post a year later when the latter went on pension. It is probable that Mr. Pinney was using the upper floor of the Customs Department in the east wing of the building as living quarters, which the holder of the combined offices has continued to do ever since.
The Post Office was re-established in the building, the post-mistress being the wife of the Chief Constable.
- 1861 On the death of the Chief Constable, the Post Office was moved out.
- 1939 The Prison, Police Offices and living quarters were moved to the new Police Station building.

LOWER NORTH BATTERY- DEFENDED PORT OF SIMON'S TOWN

by Lt Cdr W.M. Bisset SAN, Staff Officer, S.A. Naval Museums

In 1975 Mr. H.C. Willis suggested to the present writer that the S.A. Navy should mount a bronze plaque similar to those commissioned by the Simon's Town Historical Society and displayed on certain historical buildings in the town at Lower North Battery to make people more aware of its long and fascinating history. Although a number of the Simon's Town Fort Record Books have been traced, that for Lower North Battery still cannot be found and important gaps in our knowledge of the battery's history remain. Until these can be filled it is felt that it would be unwise to mount the plaque. Nonetheless, much valuable information has been traced and it is important that this should be placed on record.

The predecessor of Lower North Battery, Zoutman Battery, was built on the orders of Commissioner-General A.J. Sluysken in 1793 by Captain Louis Michel Thibault who complained that he was ordered to do so 'always according to niggardly plans and with economy'. (1) The battery was armed with four 24-pounder guns. On 1 July 1795 the Dutch garrison at Simon's Town spiked their guns and withdrew to Muizenberg. Fortunately for the British Forces the guns were 'very imperfectly' spiked. (2) After the Dutch surrender, Major-General J.H. Craig immediately set about improving the defences of the Cape, however the Dutch armament of the North Battery, as the battery now became known, was not changed.

In a letter to Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of State for War and Colonies dated 20 March 1806 Lieutenant-General Sir David Baird, the Acting Governor of the Cape Colony, wrote that he had considered it advisable to repair the batteries in Table Bay and Simon's Bay as far as possible. Since those in Simon's Bay had been completely destroyed he added that this would be 'attended with some expense'. (3)

A plan of Simon's Bay dated September 1806 shows a 'permanent battery containing 5 guns and one 13-inch mortar on the North Point of Simon's Bay'. On 31 October 1809 the permanent North Battery was armed with three English iron 18-pounders and two English iron 12-pounders (4). By 1 December 1810 the armament of the battery had been changed to five English iron 18-pounders. (5)

By 1 December 1811 one of the 12 1/2 inch mortars had been moved from the South Battery to the North Battery. (6) On 30 April 1813 the North Battery was armed with three English iron 18-pounders and one Dutch brass 12 1/2 inch mortar. The ordnance for the two batteries in Simon's Town was supplied with 813 rounds of ammunition in a permanent Dutch magazine mounted on wood platforms in good order'. (7)

On 1 August 1820 iron gun carriages from the Simon's Town batteries were landed from the SIR GEORGE OSBORNE, a transport. (8) In 1830 a sudden crisis necessitated the dispatch of the Cape Squadron to Mauritius and

highlighted the unprotected state of the Simon's Bay naval base. Commodore C.M. Schomberg described the North or infilling Battery as 'being in ruins, and in a state of abandonment'. The Governor of the Cape Colony, Lieutenant-General Sir Lowry Cole, immediately took steps to improve the Simon's Town defences and these included the renovation of the North Battery. (9)

On the morning of 5 March 1861 a committee of officers assembled at Simon's Town to 'bring forward a project for the defence of the Cape Peninsula'. The committee recommended that the North Battery be 'entirely reconstructed' and issued with six 32-pounders. According to Appendix No 2 of this report the existing armament of the battery was six 8-pounders. (10)

In 1867 the Cape Town and Simon's Town defences were armed with 92 smooth bore guns. (11) In the Annual Report of the Board of Ordnance for 1867 the works at Simon's Town were described as being in 'bad condition and quite unfit to resist the projectiles at present in use'. The batteries were fully armed with 19 pieces of smooth bore ordnance in serviceable condition. Twenty-four smooth bore guns were held in reserve by the Store Department. The report states that there were no 6-pounder Armstrong guns at Simon's Town and that the artillery force was inadequate.

The Report for the following year describes the fortifications of the Cape as 'insufficient for defence in the present state of artillery science'. The North Battery, Simon's Town is listed as one of the two batteries which were not 'fully armed'. There were 31 smooth-bore guns at Simon's Town manned by an inadequate force of gunners. By 1881 there were 12 Rifled Muzzle Loading guns, 2 smooth-bore guns converted to R.M.L. and 66 smooth-bores at Cape Town and Simon's Town. (12) In May 1883 the defence of Simon's Bay consisted of four batteries armed with 10 rifled and 8 smooth-bore guns. (13)

In a letter to the Deputy Adjutant-General in South Africa dated 10 March 1883, the Officer Commanding Royal Artillery in South Africa, Lieutenant-Colonel A.A. Stewart, mentioned the unprotected state of the North Battery at Simon's Town and the insecure state of the cartridge and shell stores there which required gates at the entrances of the passages leading to the issuing hatches and lamp recesses.

Regulations stipulated that each rifled gun should be provided with 100 rounds of ammunition ready made up for immediate use with a proportion of filled shells and at the North Battery this had been done. Because insufficient magazine accommodation or cartridge and shell stores which were insecure, this had not been done elsewhere in the District. A further important weakness which applied to all the Simon's Town batteries mentioned by Colonel Stewart was that they were 'commanded from the hills in rear which are accessible to landing parties from the opposite coast'. In 1885-1886 the battery was extensively rebuilt and re-armed with rifled guns. (14)

In January 1906 Field Marshal HRH The Duke of Connaught, the Inspector-General of the Forces, inspected the Simon's Town defences. The Duke was accompanied by General Hildyard, the General Officer Commanding the Forces in South Africa and Generals Maxwell and E.S. Brook. After arriving at Simon's Town by train, the Duke inspected a Guard of Honour at the station and then he and his mounted entourage cantered up to the Lower North Battery where No.4 Company of the Cape Garrison Artillery under Captain Black and Lieutenant Adams were manning the battery of 4.7 inch guns. The volunteers then engaged a target towed by a tug and 'taking everything into consideration, acquitted themselves excellently' (15)

In 1908 there were two fighting lights near Lower North Battery. Major-General J.C. Dalton, Inspector, Royal Garrison Artillery 1906-1910, reported that he saw them working on the night of 27 February 1908 and that they were 'not very satisfactory' since there was no directing station, no communication between the Battery Commander and the lights and the projectors had to be traversed by hand. (16)

Records in the S.A. Defence Force Archives reveal that Lower North Battery was manned by 16 men of the Royal Engineers in 1911 and that it was used as a drill and practice battery. During the First World War the Simon's Town defences were manned by Number 84 and 97 Companies of the Royal Garrison Artillery and the Cape Garrison Artillery. Number 97 Company RGA sailed for Europe in May 1916.

The armament of Simon's Bay is listed as three 9.2-inch guns. (17) During the First World War two 6-pounder Hotchkiss Q.F. guns mounted on cone pedestals were 'constantly moved between Queen's Battery and Lower North Battery and were finally taken in for storage at Main Barracks in November 1925'. (18)

On 1 December 1921 Lower North Battery was transferred to the Government of the Union of South Africa in terms of Act No.33 of 1922. Brigadier Maurice de Villiers has recorded that the two Quick Firing 4.7-inch guns which had previously been mounted there had been dismantled and that the battery was on loan to the Royal Navy as a torpedo warhead store. (19)

During the years when Lower North was the unarmed Lights Station for the northern batteries at Simon's Town, it was known as Lower North Emplacement. The Fortress Manning reports are a most important source of information concerning the history of the Cape Peninsula Defences.

On 14 April 1927, the Staff Officer "Q" of No 1 Military District wrote that the 'bad state of the projectors in the Lower North Emplacement rendered that pair of lights of little or no value'. Two new 90cm mirrors for the projectors were urgently required. In a letter to the Chief of the General Staff dated 30 June 1928, the Officer Commanding No 1 Military District wrote that the Lower North Lights did not cover the

Examination Anchorage and that it would therefore be necessary to retain the lights at Queen's Battery also. He added that the acquisition of new mirrors could be delayed if necessary.

In his report on the Manning of the Cape Peninsula Defences in March 1929, the Officer Commanding SA Permanent Garrison Artillery, Lieutenant-Colonel B.C. Judd, OBE, records that the Defence Electric Light Emplacements at Lower North were manned by the Cape Fortress Engineers who were quartered at Main Barracks, Simon's Town from 18-27 March 1929.

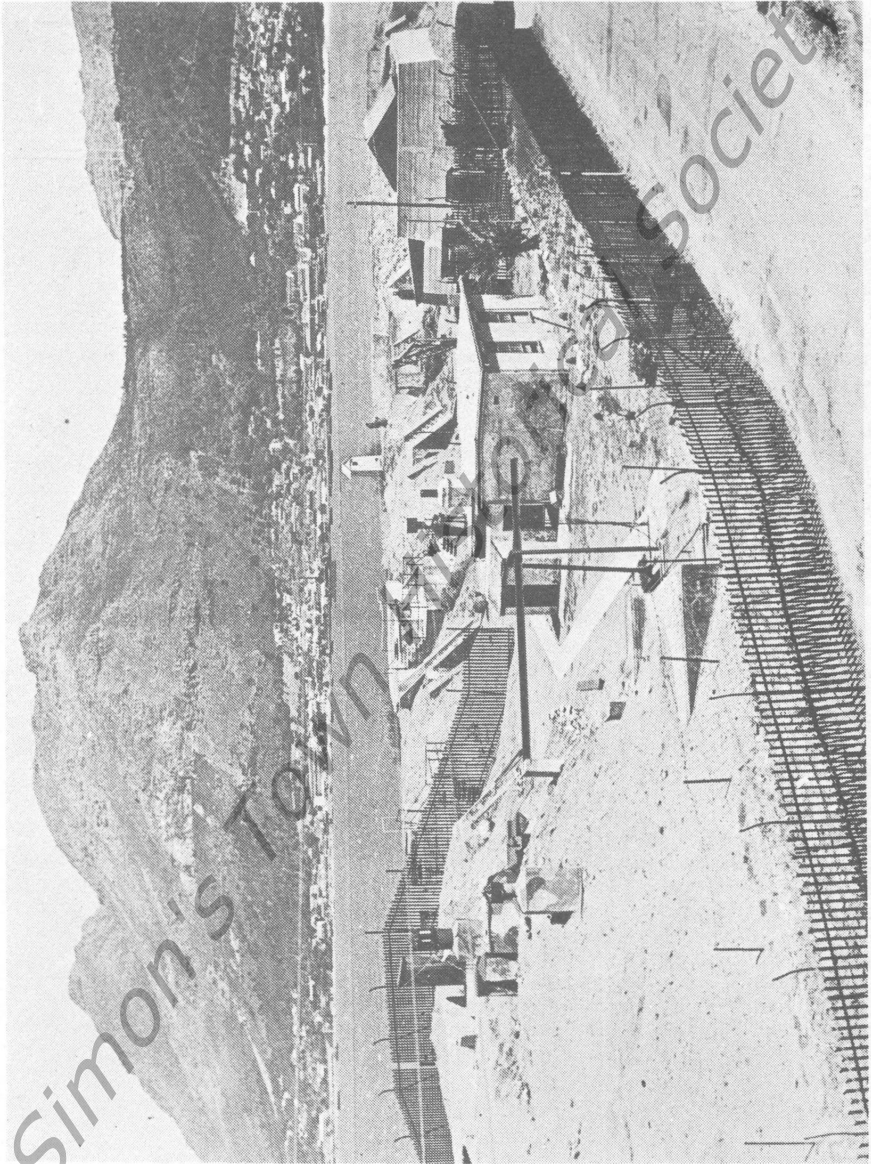
Colonel Judd reported that the two mirrors in one of the Lower North Emplacements were 'indifferent' and recommended that they be resilvered at Chatham Dockyard. The mirrors were despatched to H.M. Dockyard Devonport in HMS LOWESTOFT and returned in HMS Carlisle on 19 December 1929. However after use in one all-night run in March 1930 it was found that the silvering on both had begun to peel and an offer to resilver the mirrors by the Plate Glass Beveling and Silvering Co. Ltd in Cape Town free of charge was accepted. Tests on one of the mirrors resilvered by the Company were carried out under severe conditions at Mouille Point and proved satisfactory with the exception of the edges which had been backed with a protective paint.

In 1928 the only Dockyard Police outstation was at Lower North Battery. Here one constable would perform guard duty for a month at a time. Since no transport to the battery was provided, three days time off in lieu of travelling were granted. (20)

Colonel D.E. Peddle most kindly provided some notes concerning the battery. Early in 1939 there were two coast artillery searchlights in the battery which were used in conjunction with the two QF 6-inch guns at Middle North Battery. In about November 1939 a Quick Firing 4.7-inch gun was mounted and two Quick Firing 12-pounder 12 cwt guns were added later on. (The British 12-pounder was used to counter a light close defence threat from 1894 to 1957).

However an official return of the present and proposed allotment of coast defence guns and defence electric lights dated 16 April 1940 indicates that the then present allotment for Lower North Battery was one 12-pounder. The 'Most Secret' order of battle of the Cape Fortress confirms that the Lower North Battery was later armed with one 12-pounder and one 4.7-inch gun. The Simon's Bay Fire Commander was Lieutenant-Colonel J.C. Moolman MC, 2 Heavy Battery, SA Artillery. The remarks concerning the guns on another document are 'mounted in reserve, NOT manned'. The Cape Fortress Location List dated 4 August 1944 reveals that Lower North Battery was then being used by the Royal Navy.

An inventory of ordnance dated circa 1952 reveals that the registered numbers of the two 12-pounders at Lower North Battery were 2439 and 2440.



LOWER NORTH BATTERY circa 1946 (by courtesy of the South African Navy)

In 1957 these two guns and two others (6439 and 2441) were moved to Upper North Battery and they were still there in April 1981. They are visible from the Main Road. In 1955 the SA Corps of Marines was disbanded and in 1957 the SA Navy's Gunnery School moved from Salisbury Island in Durban to Simon's Town. In 1962 Lower North Battery was re-armed and became the Gunnery School's firing range. Although the battery has been rebuilt and disarmed from time to time, it has the distinction of being the oldest fortification in South Africa which is still armed.

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3. G.M. Theal, (Ed), Records of the Cape Colony 1793-1827 Vol V, p.380.
4. Report of the State of the Forts and Batteries and Field Ordnance comprising the Ordnance Establishment in the Colony of Good Hope dated 31 October 1809.
5. Ibid dated 1 December 1810.
6. Ibid dated 1 December 1811.
7. Ibid dated 30 April 1813.
8. H.C. Willis, op cit, p.130.
9. Ibid, p.131.
10. Report of Committee on Coast Defence 1861.
11. Colonel K.W. Maurice-Jones, The History of Coast Artillery in the British Army, London 1959, p.170.
12. Ibid.
13. Letter from Lt. Col. A.A. Stewart, Commanding Royal Artillery, South Africa, to Deputy Adjutant-General Cape Town dated 11 May, 1883.
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15. Undated press cutting in HMS CRESCENT press cutting book circa January 1906.
16. Report by the Inspector of Royal Garrison Artillery on his Inspection of the Royal Garrison Artillery, Cape Colony District 1908, p.8
17. Colonel K.W. Maurice-Jones op cit, p.190.
18. Queen's Battery Fort Record Book. (Army Book 360).
19. M.V. (Brigadier M. de Villiers), 'Those were the days' in Commando August 1953, p.41.
20. S.A. Navy News Vol.1, No.7, December 1966, p.16.

IN MEMORIAM

MAUD MARION GOODE ("GOODIE") 1904 - 1981

A well-known resident of Simon's Town, Maud Marion Goode, died at her home at Boulders on Thursday 19 November 1981. Goodie emigrated to South Africa shortly after the Second World War and went to Johannesburg where she was a Pharmacist at the Victoria Hospital. She came to Simon's Town in the 1950s and worked at the Hillside Pharmacy in Fish Hoek for many years.

Goodie was a member of the Simon's Town Historical Society Committee from 1962 until 1966 and always showed an interest in the activities of both the Society and the Museum.

BOOK REVIEWS

BRITISH RESIDENTS AT THE CAPE 1795 - 1819 : Biographical records of 4 800 pioneers by Peter Philip. Cape Town, David Philip, 1981. Price R19,95.

Mr Philip is, in this work, placing on record the history of the early British residents at the Cape prior to the advent of the 1820 Settlers. He investigated a multiplicity of sources ranging from the African Court Calendars to the letters of Lady Anne Barnard and from these has compiled a list of names many of whom would have otherwise been lost to researchers.

Soldiers, sailors and Public servants all receive entries as this work is not confined to those who stayed in South Africa but includes all who were involved in the establishment of British rule at the Cape. Special emphasis is given to the lesser known residents rather than to those whose names appear in other general reference works. Thus one reads about figures familiar to the history of Simon's Town such as John Osmond, William Anderson and Edward Miller and also those officials stationed at Simon's Town during their term of office.

SIMON'S TOWN - PRESENT TENSE by Gordon Wilson and illustrated by Beverley De Meyer. Simon's Town, Gordon Wilson, 1981. Price R7,50 (plus 50 cents for postage & packing). Obtainable from the Simon's Town Museum, P O Box 31, Simon's Town.

A light-hearted collection of stories using Simon's Town as their setting and the inhabitants of the town as the characters, written by the Chairman of the Simon's Town Historical Society in the style of Damon Runyon that of the historic present tense.