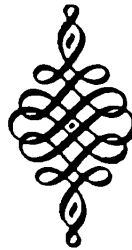




SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



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SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN

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SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY: TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

Presented by the Chairman, Cllr. Gordon Wilson at the Twenty-Second Annual General Meeting held in the Soldiers and Sailors' Restroom on Wednesday 24th March, 1982.

This meeting is the first whereat the Society members here present, attend in their dual roles as members of the Society and as "Friends of the Simon's Town Museum". This illustrates the closer integration of the Society and the Museum in their respective fields of work, resulting in benefits to both organisations. Later the members as "Friends" will elect their representative to the Museum's Board of Trustees.

1981 proved to be a busy and successful year. Two particularly important events occurred during the period.

Firstly, on 22nd February, 1981, the Society reached its milestone of 21 years of successful ever-growing endeavour. Then towards the end of the year the welcome and official news was received that the Residency is to be transferred by way of a donation into the name of the Museum, thus bringing to fruition a seven year period of negotiations with the Central Authority. I would be failing in my duty if I did not place on record our sincere appreciation to our Member of Parliament Mr. John Wiley, for his many high level approaches to Ministerial and Departmental Heads undertaken by him on our behalf over that period. We must also record our appreciation to the Department and its Minister for this wonderful gesture of immeasurable value to our Town. There now remains the daunting task of moving the Museum to the Residency later this year.

1. MEMBERSHIP The Society is continuing to attract members and it is a matter of some pride to your Executive to be able to record that the membership is approaching the 570 mark.

2. PUBLIC RELATIONS:

- (a) Tours: Tours of Our Town and Museum constitute a vastly expanding involvement for our committee members, notably for our worthy Honorary Secretary and Museum Curator. After our involvement with the Captour-Sponsored Steam Train Excursions at the beginning of the year when some 420 members of the public were shown over the Town, we had various bodies to handle, for instance parties from the Naval Swans, SAWAS, Simon van der Stel Foundation, ACVV of the Strand, Bergvleit Scottish Dancing Society, Caravan Park visitors, etc, as well as several smaller individual or small parties from overseas.

There is growing interest in our area and Museum by Schools. In some months 400 pupils arrive. Some school teachers have co-operated in producing useful questionnaires for their pupils whilst Committee members have visited Peninsula schools to give talks. There is increasing use of our records by local school pupils for the preparation of History themes. Several committee members have given illustrated talks to various outside bodies.

- (b) The Dilley Shop Window: The Society is grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Dilley for the continued use of their shop window for displaying photographs and memorabilia to publicise the Society, the Museum and their work.

3. HISTORICAL BUILDINGS AND PRECINCTS: Our Town Council has adopted the Society's proposal that our 'Historic Mile' of Main Street be declared an area of special aesthetic control in order to protect the facades of buildings from demolition, alteration or defacement by garish advertising. The Society has also supported the proposal by Mr. Robin Ellis and the Simon's Town Municipal Voters Association that the Mount Pleasant area should likewise be declared such an area of special aesthetic control to maintain the Victorian and Edwardian style of residences.

It is with regret we learn that the last of the Military Cantonments - the 'Pot Luck Quarters' imported from England as prefabricated dwellings to act as housing for Garrison Officers stationed here at the turn of the century, are being demolished. The Society was keen to retain one which had been offered to it but a survey showed the costs of dismantling and re-erection were beyond the Society's resources mindful of the very dilapidated condition of all the buildings concerned.

4. THE BULLETIN: Under the editorship of Mr. Gerry Read ably assisted by the Curator, Mrs. Rae Kramer, Mrs. Audrey Read and Mrs. Jill Grant the Bulletin continues to bring pleasure to members both as to content and presentation. Happily thanks to a most willing and industrious set of contributors there is no dearth of material.

5. THE SIMON'S TOWN CHRONICLE: The six-monthly newsletter produced during the year under review by Nigel Farquharson and Gerry Read endeavours to keep our members up to date on the Society's activities and progress. Mesdames Biggs, Grant and Barnes also put in a lot of hard work. I am now happy to report that Nigel Fawcett has taken over the main responsibility for its production.

6. FINANCES: As you are about to hear, the finances of the Society are healthy with a surplus of income over expenditure of over R700. Of course there are likely to be some demands on our funds once the Museum moves to the Residency as the Society, being the 'parent body' as it were, of the Museum and for which it strove for some seventeen years to bring into existence, must be committed to its progress and wellbeing, in financial aspects as well as the involvement of personal efforts of members.

7. MUNICIPALITY'S CENTENARY: Our Town Council, which, after all, was largely responsible for the establishment of this Society in 1960, celebrates its centenary of existence on the 25th January, 1983. The Council has decided to celebrate this event for a week from 28th February, 1983, coinciding with the first meeting of our Council in 1883. Our Society and the Museum will, in view of its very close relationship with the Municipality, involve itself fully with this great milestone. A full programme is being planned.

8. CITATION: Last year your Society introduced the presentation of a 'Citation' in recognition of outstanding service to the Society.

Your Committee has decided to make this award to our Hon. Auditor Mr. Eric Fry who has performed these duties since the Society's inception 22 years ago!

9. CONCLUSION: 1981 was a happy and productive year. Allow me on your behalf to convey our appreciation to my Vice-Chairman Gerry Read, our hardworking and totally dedicated Hon. Secretary/Treasurer Cdr. Dennis Kinkead-Weekes, who carries a heavy responsibility for the day to day running of the Society, Committee members Cherry and Dan Dilley, Nigel Farquharson, Margaret Cartwright, Gloria Hutchinson, Naval Representative Cdr. Mac Bisset and last but not least our Museum Curator Liz Biggs, for their year-long willingness to serve with dedication in the Society's work. In addition may I record our thanks to the Mayor, other Councillors and staff of the Town Council, the National Monuments Council, the S.A. Navy, the donors of relics and documents and contributions to our publications and the host of 'doers' who help the Society in many multi-faceted ways. Here I think of people such as Neville Barnes, Cdre. John Fairbairn, Elspeth Ballingall, Iris Hutchings, Malcolm Cobern, Jane-Eliza McColm, Nigel and Lonah Fawcett, who, with a number of others are always more than willing to contribute according to their talents to the work of the Society and the Museum. May 1982 prove as fruitful a year for the Society as each of its preceding twenty-two years.

This publication is for free circulation to members of the Society. The approval of the Committee must be obtained for the reproduction of the whole or part of any article appearing therein.

Exchange copies of other historical society publications will be welcomed. Spare copies are available and may be obtained from the Secretary at R1.00 per copy.

Articles in either English or Afrikaans dealing with matters of historical interest to Simon's Town and surrounding area will be considered for publication.

Subscription rates, payable in advance are:

Adults, per person R2,00 p.a.	Two adults sharing one magazine	R3,00
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Please address correspondence to: The Hon. Secretary, Simon's Town Historical Society, P.O. Box 56, Simon's Town 7995 (Tel: 86-1195)

LETTERS FROM FALSE BAY 1795 - 1798

written by CAPTAIN JOHN WILLIAM SPRANGER,RN,to his family

Editorial Note

The first two letters written in 1795 by Captain John William Spranger RN (as he was then) provide an interesting first-hand account of the landing of a detachment of British seamen from the naval squadron under the command of Admiral Elphinstone despatched to support the first British occupation of the Cape by a military contingent led by Major-General Craig. Reinforcements expected from St. Helena had not arrived and it was decided to press forward with the campaign without them. The sailors appear to have conducted themselves 'with a regularity which would not have discredited veteran troops and to have undergone great fatigue and hardships with a cheerful resignation' to quote Major-General Craig's report to the Colonial Secretary of the time, Henry Dundas.

The second two letters written in 1798 reveal another side to the story of the mutinies which took place in the Cape in October/November 1797 and add some spice to an otherwise somewhat prosaic record.

John William Spranger was born in Hart Lane, Bloomsbury, London on 5th November, 1768 and died on 9th February, 1822. He was the eldest son of John Spranger, Master of the Court of Chancery, and June Roughsedge. He died unmarried having attained the rank of Rear Admiral of The White. Of the five sons born to John and Jane Spranger three survived their childhood years i.e. John William, Jeffries (1774-1846) and Robert (1776-1850). Jeffries was called to the Bar in 1798 and became a Bencher Grays Inn and Master Court of Exchequer. He died unmarried. Robert married Sarah Maria White in 1869 and they had five sons, one of whom, Stephen (1813-1875), immigrated to South Africa and raised a family of seven. We are indebted to one of his great grand-daughters Mrs. Y. Courie of Rondebosch for her permission to publish these letters and a likeness in miniature form.

LETTER NO.1 - ADDRESSED TO MRS SPRANGER, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, per CAPTAIN HARDY.

Cape Town, September 20th, 1795.

My dearest Mother,

At such a distance and after so long an absence, I can easily anticipate from my own feeling how pleasant a visitor my friend Captain Hardy will be who delivers this, and will inform you of our success in taking this place, as well as of the fatigues and difficulties we have shared together in landing with a Batt.(alio) of 500 Seamen each in the new capacities of Soldiers and tho' of course we were not much au fait in a line so contrary to ours, I have the pleasure of adding that our conduct has rec'd the approbation of Genl. Craig and the Adml. under whose orders we have had the honour of serving ----- I also have the satisfaction of announcing to you the certain completion of our wishes in gaining the only step that was wanting. Hardy will relate to you the particulars of our campaign which I should have willingly done myself by letter, but I am just ordered away in the Rattlesnake and have hardly time to get these scrawls finished. In short I have so much to

acquaint you with and so small a time to write it in, that I must give up all hopes by this conveyance and only tell you what I know will be the most interesting -----I have not got my commission as I succeed my friend in the Williamstad a large Dutch Ship brought into the service -- I don't think I shall stay long in her, but as she will join(?) the Rank it is all very well ----Whilst I am writing this, I have heard of the probability of my staying here for another Night which enables me to send you further particulars, and if this should be the case shall certainly embrace it as I only consider this incoherent and miserable scrawl as introducing my friend to you who will most readily give you all the intelligence you can wish about me, as we have been inseparable since our landing and arriving here.

The East India Fleet got here a short time since and to my great astonishment and mortification not a letter was conveyed by them but tho' I most heartily regret the circumstance, I am well convinced there was no omission on your part, but fear they have miscarried or gone to India. Mr. Cotteril however was obliging enough to send word to the Camp that he had heard of your health and safety from his Brother a few days before he left England, which in some measure made up for the disappointment and reconciles me to the interval which I fear will intervene before any other intelligence can arrive at this distant quarter. Pray God when it does reach that it may be as satisfactory to me relating to all your health and prosperity, as I know this will be to you----I have had a great deal of hard work, but am not a bit the worse and indeed never recollect enjoying better in my life ----I cannot speak at all about our future prospects as much remains to be done here before we can proceed, but whither or how that time shall come I know not---- I trust our Prize Money will be something handsome as based on the value and importance of our Conquest, we now know of the Dutch plan and have detained several sail of them here some from Batavia are said to be very valuable. I hope we have gained our suit agst. the Bozman(?) and that the Prize Money is in my father's hands. How does his Picture go on, or rather I trust that before this the family group is finished, and who knows but before long I may steal a peep at it and give my opinion about the execution? tho' I can handsomely I----(page torn) shall, but don't flatter myself too much on so agreeable a subject. My paper and time unless I stay in the Bay tonight only allows me to send my best Duty and love to you All ---- May God Bless you and I remain your most Affectionate Son J. Spranger

LETTER NO.2 - ADDRESSED TO M. SPRANGER, Esq., LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON

Table Bay, Sept. 21st, 1795
Rattlesnake

Dear Father,

After a fatiguing Campaign of about six weeks, in which I must introduce myself to your acquaintance in the new capacity of Col. of a Batt. of 500 Seamen, I have the pleasure of announcing the honourable and fortunate conclusion of our Arms, by the final and total conquest of this rich and very valuable Town and Colony---- which both in its present state and future consequence must be considered as one of the most important acquisitions this country has ever made. I wrote in the utmost haste yesterday Evening to my Mother and should not have



CAPTAIN JOHN
WILLIAM SPRANGER
1768 - 1822

Monarch Estate
Sept 20th - 5

From the handsome Colonel
General Craig as well as my own ob-
servation of your activity & merit during the
military service I must beg permission
to express my truest thanks & best wishes for
the success to which you are so justly
entitled. I have the honour to be with great regard
your most obedt friend & servt 1794

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY CAPTAIN SPRANGER

been able to add this by way of supplement had the wind allowed my sailing as I am under immediate orders to sail with Men from the fleet in Symon's Bay, tho' I had hardly put my foot on board and my friend Hardy (who recently also a Colonel) was to sail in a ship for England instantly-----I shall not therefore enter into any particulars, as the history is much too long for any single letter and Capt. H. has promised to call on you the moment he arrives in England with the Dispatches, and will amply supply by word of mouth, my want of time in the epistolary way whilst everything about me as well as myself is in the utmost hurry and confusion----And happy am I to add, that not only the long wished for step is now ensured to me and will be in my possession in a day or two, but that my exertions have recd. the most flattering testimony of Gen. Craig and the Adml's approbation, which I need not say most amply recompenses me for Whatever trouble we experienced in a line of life so new and unexpected and performing as we did so arduous a task, nearly one half of a small army before the arrival of Gen. Clarke being composed of Seamen----Hardy goes home with the account of our success and I am to have a Commission for a Dutch Ship called Williamstadt which is to be converted into a Pool Ship and will make a very good one. Tho' I don't think I shall long remain in her as I fancy that by some changes which are likely to take place amongst us, the Sphynx a 20 gun ship may fall to my share ----However tho' this change is not great from this one to one of only Twenty Guns the Rank is of the utmost consequence and the way of gaining it still more agreeable I am sure to both you and me as I may without vanity pretend to have got this ship at least by my own exertions and services.

As to Prize Money, I can't say anything with certainty, but we shall get a Thousand Pds. I think at least-----several Dutch Ships are in our hands and the (?) stores, which by the capitulation are given to us, are of very considerable value----The East India Men who brought out Genl. Clark are still here and greatly was I mortified at not getting one single line from home, but import it to some unfortunate mistake, as I will know, you would not lose any opportunity of informing me of your health and welfare. I had however the happiness of hearing of both by Mr. Cotterill who is in the Exeter, which partly made up for the disappointment --- A breeze is just springing up and I must hasten to a conclusion and fear that I shall not be able to write another before the ship sails for England and must therefore again refer you to my good friend the Bearer, who knows perfectly well all my present views what will most likely happen to me, as well as relating this novel (torn page) services we have undergone together----I have many enquiries to make in my turn after you all, but know there is a chance of having them speedily ansd. and shall only conclude by begging my best duty and love to my Dr. Aunt and Brothers and assuring you that I am your most Dutiful and Aff. Son. J.W. Spranger.

The enclosed is a copy of the Adm.letter.

Monarch Table Bay
Sept.20th - 95

From the handsome testimony of Genl. Craig as well as my own observation of your activity and merit during the late fatiguing service I must beg permission to offer you my truest thanks and best wishes for your future success to which you are so justly entitled. I have the honour to be with regard Dr. Sir your most obedient Friend and Servt. G.H. Elphinstone.

LETTER NO. 3 -ADDRESSED TO MY. SPRANGER, Esq., LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

Rec'd 11th May, 1798

H.M. Ship Stately,
Table Bay
February 21st, 1798-

Dear Father,

In my last by a Ship which sailed a day or two ago and by which you will get my Bills for Two Thousand Pds. Sterling, I briefly acquainted you with the disagreeable circumstances of being forced out of the Crescent in order to accommodate Capt. Bristow (?), Adml. Pringle's Capt. without the smallest regard or attention to me and in direct opposition to my wishes as well as interests and that I am now an Acting Capt. in this Ship with the expectation of being hourly superseded by Sir H. Christian's Capt. from England-----The reasons which have induced me to go into the Stately on so precarious a tenure are too numerous and long to come within the compass of a letter and have therefore communicated them in confidence to my particular friend and late First Lieut. Mr. Lyman, who has promised to deliver them in person and whose gallantry and general merit, am I sorry to add as little attended to be Adml. P.----- and as likely to be as little rewarded (at least by him) as the services which he has performed in endeavouring at the risque (sic) of his life to suppress a lawless and groundless Mutiny and the glorious and noble example he set in the midst of doubt, fear and irresolution are praiseworthy and eminently essential to the welfare of the Service-----

To him therefore I refer you for complete information on every topic relating to the late affair, which I have in part already detailed in several letters by different conveyances and as I know you cannot be indifferent as to the part I have taken on so trying occasion in which my honour and character are so materially concerned and have the strongest reasons for wishing you to make yourself master of the subject by a perusal of the Trial of my People, I have requested Mr. Lyman to put you in a way of getting a copy of the minutes-----In them you will see glaring and flagitious guilt, without a reason and without excuse and which to me as a Disciplinarian and an Officer is still a gloomier part of the Picture, you will see in the sequel, all but one Villain escape unpunished ---the remainder having been this day pardoned by the Admiral. These and many other similar circumstances in which I am deeply interested and which my friend will explain to you are I acknowledge very unpleasant subjects, nor should I have dwelt on them so long had I not been forced by such unmerited treatment as I have lately experienced, to reflections which tho' harsh are true -----In short as a Public Man I cannot but condemn the little Spirit and exertion which has been shown by persons in the highest authority, whilst I must personally lament my own misfortunes in serving under the command of a Man who has paid little or no attention to the efforts of officers under him and is now rewarding me for the share (and I own I flatter myself no inconsiderable one) which I bore in being the first to suppress a Mutiny of almost unexampled atrocity, by seizing the Ringleaders when all was in tumult, confusion and dismay.

In one of your letters you accuse me of looking on the dark side of the Picture----- in this instance however I trust you will not think so, since you must allow for the injured feelings of a Man who is

sensible of deserving very different treatment to which he is now labouring under and which tho' it cannot redress it, compels him to transgress even the bounds of modesty by speaking for himself.

These, my dear Father and many other pressing considerations of honour and interest naturally induce me to wish you to get my case in being turned out of the Crescent in so unhandsome a manner by Admiral P.----laid before their Lordships, which I am confident when duly considered will not meet with their approbation and at all events pave the way for securing me a good Ship should the War continue, on my return-----

Adml. Christian has, as I before mentioned in my last, treated me with extreme attention and most fully saw and entered into the hardships of my situation, which however it was out of his power to prevent, and it is by his advice that I accepted of the Stately on the terms related as I otherwise should have returned home in a Merchant Man at a great expense-----but intend if nothing advantageous should fall out, getting home by the first stylish and proper mode which Sir Hugh has kindly promised to forward and point out to me.

The Stately is now ready and going to convey Lord Mornington part of the way to India, in a Track highly likely to prove a good one to us in the way of Prize(?) which will take up about 5 or 6 weeks and I then hope to take my departure for England in some way or other tho' at present I can't exactly tell how that, to me, most desirable event is to be brought about.

I have seen Sir.J. Anstruther and Lady and learn by them the pleasing news of your continuous of health, as well as of my Mother and All the circle in which I am most interested----Sir H.(?) is going on to India who I saw frequently during his stay here----having now filled two sheets of paper and intending to scrawl many more to the rest of the party I conclude by assuring how sincerely I remain---Your most Dutiful and Affect.Son---J.W. Spranger

LETTER NO. 4 - TO HIS BROTHER

Stately Feb. 21st, 1798
Table Bay.

My dear Brother,

My letter of this day to my Father will acquaint you with my change of Ship and how unfortunate I have been in being deprived of the opportunity of getting home on the Crescent, by the high hand of power, which is not the less felt because it was to be submitted to.

Many thanks for your kind letters which are come to hand, in one of them I see you are taking a deal of trouble for me about my sharing from the Cape ----and am extremely glad to find you have determined on laying my claim as Capt. of the Rattlesnake, which I(?) may be persisted in to the utmost----It will also be necessary to acquaint you that in consequence of my stating the business to Sir George, when I first heard of the intention of Mr. Todd and Jamay (?) to lay in so extraordinary and unhandsome a claim, he ordered their Discharge Tickets, which by

Capt.(sic) Elphinstone's mistake, had been given these Gentlemen on their taking charge of our Ships whilst we were landed, to be cancelled and wrote to the Pay Officer desiring it might be done--- this which was complied with accordingly. It therefore makes a strong part of the case that they were actually known as 1st and 2nd Lieuts of the Monarch at the time of the surrender of the Cape and were only sent as such by order of Sir George, who expressed the utmost surprise at hearing of their claim which he treated as the most groundless imaginable ---It would not be amiss to back (?) on him(Lord Keith) who will I am sure give you his sentiments on the occasion and his Brother or Mr. Jackson the joint Agent should be applied to officially on the occasion.

It must be remembered that if we are not to share as Sec.Officers almost Half of the Officers and Men in the Fleet will be placed in the same situation,as they were serving on shore under our command. Pray Sir Maude and consult with him as I would by no means give the point up and if Hardy is in England ask jointly for us both as he determines.

As this place affords no news, I must talk of (_____) and shall therefore enclose a letter sent by me to the Governor of Bombay, to claim my Batta Money, as it is called which (?) considerable is worth me trying after and get my Father to interest some friends in the direction to aid in the payment of it. The letter explains the grounds of the demand to which may be added that I conveyed one of their Ships to Bombay and brought a convoy of valuable Ships great part of the way back again to the Cape-----I wrote to Maude about it some time ago, but fearing accidents write again to you----I have also laid a claim for Batta, whilst we were cruising off the Isle of (?) which also should be enquired about.

Your letter has explained to me fully the nature of that Gentleman's conduct, if such gross and shameful duplicity entitles him to that appellation, by which I have lost so fine a frigate and am even now suffering as the Adml. could not have turned me out of the Crescent had I been regularly placed on her by the Admiralty----however if I was capable of ill-natured pleasure, I should certainly enjoy Murray's disappointment as he will lose the Ship by Adml. Pringle taking him to England and most likely be put to great expense and trouble.

I am happy to learn my friend Willoughby is well and has got a Son and Heir---he does not seem to have much by Prizes and tho' I shall in all probability return as rich as Croesus I don't complain much---What my Cape Prize Money will come to I can't guess from any Adml. I have ever seen, but trust it will help to round what little I may make here and enable me to enjoy myself on my return which I most anxiously look forward to---and expect after this cruise, which will last about five weeks, to take my departure----The trip I am now going on may very likely prove advantageous and console me for missing a rich Spaniard which on our return we found had passed the Cape at a great distance from me.

As you are by this a complete man of business I shall for future apply to you in all difficult cases. Robert, I hope is getting on as he is an idle fellow for not writing.

I do not know whether you can read this as I am at this moment writing in great difficulty owing to fall from my horse, which has sprained my right thumb dreadfully but being pressed for time am forced to scrawl on. If you see Blasket (?) on Icon (?) make my best Compl..The former by the bye is a proper person to ask for information about my Prize Money and I think is well inclined to serve me with his best advice.

As I mean to write to all the party and have given you a pretty good share I shall only add that I remain, Dr. Brother, Your Affec.Friend
J.W. Spranger.

COMMITTEE PORTFOLIOS

The following portfolios have been allocated to Committee members in order to spread the expected load in our exciting future.

Public Relations and Fund Raising	Mrs Dilley
Nature Conservation	Mr A Glover
Architectural Conservation	Mrs N Holderness
Museum	Mrs Biggs
Municipal Liaison	Cllr G Wilson
Tours by visitors to Simon's Town	Mrs Biggs and Secretary
Tours for Members	Mr G Read
Bulletin	Committee Chairman G Read
Martello Tower	Lt Cdr W Bisset
Photography	Mr M Cobern
Research	Miss M Cartwright

ERRATUM: Article on Lower North Battery Vol. X11 No. 1 page 36.
The information concerning the armament of Simon's Bay during the First World War should have read:
"is listed as three 9.2-inch guns and four 6-inch guns".

THE RESIDENCE OF C.M. LIND, RESIDENT MAGISTRATE

H.C. Willis

It is not at all clear where C.M. Lind resided; and indeed the same applies to many of the other Resident Magistrates and Justices of the Peace.

After the present Residency building, which used to comprise the Resident Magistrate's residence, offices and court room, had been purchased J.H. Brand, then Government Resident and the previous owner of the building, continued to reside there with his numerous family. It seems that when the existing building was converted to accommodate all the Government Offices in 1814, an additional second storey was added to provide living and bedrooms.

In December 1821 J.H. Brand was transferred to Cape Town as Wharf Master and the functions of the Government Resident were taken over by the Military Commandant, at the time Captain Henry Somerset. The Commandant lived in the "Commandant's House", now called "Oatlands" which is annexed to Rhodesia-by-the-Sea, recently acquired by the South African Navy for use as an Officers' Mess.

From 1st January 1828 the office of Government Resident was reduced to Resident Magistrate in the interests of economy. The post of Military Commandant had been abolished in the previous year. The newly appointed Resident Magistrate, Mr. J.P. Serrurier, resided in Cape Town and only attended at his office in Simon's Town on three days in each week. He found that the "Commuting" adversely affected his health and he resigned in December 1828.

C.M. Lind, Resident Magistrate at Swellendam, was hastily transferred to fill the vacancy in Simon's Town. He had been at one time 1st Clerk to the Government Resident, J.H. Brand, and Functionary for the Enregistrement of Slaves; he had also practised in Simon's Town as a Notary Public and owned a considerable amount of property in the town. He, of course, could not have the use of the Commandant's House, as it was occupied at this time by Lt. Colonel M.G. Blake, who was still apparently Senior Military Officer in Simon's Town, even though the post of Commandant had been abolished.

In a letter dated 18th June 1829, Colonel Blake mentions that Mr. Lind has vacated the Residency House. From this it seems probable that Mr. Lind had intended to reside in the Residency building but had been forced to move out owing to its deplorable state of disrepair, which made it unfit for human habitation. The second storey added in 1814 had been very badly built and by 1828 was literally falling in. It was removed and the whole building renovated. Although it continued to be used as an office building and a goal, no Magistrate or Justice of the Peace resided in the building until well after 1860; the holder of the office received an allowance of £50 per annum in addition to his salary for rent.

Where, then, did Mr. Lind take up his residence ?

Until some definite statement as to where he lived comes to light it seems reasonable to suppose that he moved into one of his own houses. As apparently it was big enough for dancing to take place in it, it was probably the house which later came to be known as the Drostdy House.

This house was situated at the top of the flight of steps between St. George's Hotel and Amlay's Criterion Butchery, opposite the middle of Jubilee Square; it was demolished in 1951 or thereabouts. At the Public Sale of the landed Property in the Estate of the late C.M. Lind, which took place on 23rd March, 1846, Lot No. 1, which was probably this house, was described as "A Dwelling House, comprising Wine rooms, with Pantries, Kitchen and Out-Rooms, Fowl House, etc, at present divided into Two Dwellings and occupied by Mr. G.N. Pedder (the Harbour Master) and Mr. G. Hodgson."



FANLIGHT OF THE DROSTDY REMOVED DURING DEMOLITION IN 1954

S.A. NAVAL PERSONNEL SECONDED TO THE ROYAL NAVY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939 - 1945

Lt.Cdr. W.M. Bisset

Cdr. H.R. Gordon-Cumming has written that in the early days of the Second World War large drafts of RNVR (SA) officers and ratings were taken by the few British Warships which called at Simon's Town and Durban to make up their war complements and that later on 'Union nationals took part in nearly every major naval operation and also performed all manner of obscure duties, from minesweeping in the Faroe Islands to nautical surveying up the West River in China. Even the explosion of one of the atomic bombs in Japan was witnessed by a South African prisoner of war - a young RNVR seaman who had served in HMS Exeter, sunk after the Battle of the Java Sea.' (1) This fascinating statement leaves the reader wanting to know the full story of our seconded naval personnel since it is clear that it is a particularly interesting and proud record of service.

Although South Africa's first naval volunteer unit, the Port Elizabeth Naval Volunteer Brigade, was raised in 1861 and our volunteer sailors served ashore during the South African War of 1899 - 1902, Zulu Rebellion of 1906 and the First World War 1914 - 1918 and although our sailors also served afloat in the Great War and acquitted themselves well, it was not until the Second World War that the most glorious deeds in our naval history were performed. Whilst the actions fought by our sailors in our own ships will inevitably mean more to South Africans than those fought in Royal Navy ships, it is important to notice that our volunteer sailors and wartime volunteers quickly learnt the ropes in the battleships, aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, submarines and the other ships in which they served.

It is clear that a full account of the service of our seconded naval personnel during the Second World War and the 78 members of the Union Defence Forces who were seconded to the Royal Marines would entail a very considerable amount of research in the SA Defence Force Archives and elsewhere. However some fascinating accounts of the actions in which some of our seconded personnel took part have been published and since some of these are in books in which one might not expect to find them and since some new archive material has come my way, this article has been written in the hope that it will facilitate the task of someone who is able to tackle the topic comprehensively.

This offering covers only South Africans seconded to the Royal Navy. Those South Africans who joined the RN, RNR, and RNVR direct merit in a separate article. The most important yardstick of the operational involvement of our seconded naval personnel is probably the Union of South Africa Roll of Honour 1939-45 which fortunately lists the ship or shore establishment in which those who lost their lives served. War in the Southern Oceans also provides some helpful information on this topic. Early in the Second World War 82 RNVR (SA) ratings, most of whom were seamen gunners, were drafted to the Armed Merchant Cruisers HMS Carnarvon Castle, Bulolo, Comorin and Esperance Bay. (2)

CPD H. Heynes, an RNVR (SA) rating who served in HMS Carnarvon Castle

during the action with the German raider Thor on 5 December 1940 has recorded that some of the 27 (28 according to Gordon-Cumming et al) injured and wounded were 'very badly burnt when cordite went up'. He adds that Cdre F.H. Pegram gave them 'high praise on the morning of 6 December'. CPO Haynes records that Carnarvon Castle scored '17 hits approximately and that Thor scored approximately 23 hits'. (3) In fact, the official history records that Carnarvon Castle scored no hits. (4) Captain S.W. Roskill, RN has written 'the big lightly-armed British ship was outranged and seriously damaged'. (5) Mr. D.A. James who was drafted as gun crew from RNVR (SA) Base at Durban to HMS Carnarvon Castle in September 1939 has written an account of the engagement with Thor which has been published in The Outspan.

Mid (now Cdre) E.W. Jupp and others of the RNVR (SA) served in HMS Asturias an Armed Merchant Cruiser. Cdre Jupp has described the pursuit and capture of the Vichy French ship Mendoza off Punta del Este in January 1941 in an article in the SA Yachting 1979 South Atlantic Race Brochure (6)

Although the loss of the Armed Merchant Cruiser HMS Cormorin was caused by a fire on board in the North Atlantic on 6 April and not by enemy action, the descriptions of her end leave one in no doubt that this was a terrible nightmare. Sir Peter Scott (Lt Cdr MBE, DSC, RNVR, during the Second World War) who was Executive Officer of HMS Broke the destroyer which effected the extremely hazardous rescue of most of the Cormorin survivors has written an enthralling account of this episode in Chapter 9 of his autobiography, The Eye of the Wind, entitled 'Fire at Sea'. (7) The book includes a photograph of a painting by the author of HMS Comorin sinking by the bows with HMS Broke standing by. Although lifeboats and rafts were successfully launched some lives were lost before the rescue ships could be reached and the mountainous waves (between fifty and sixty feet from trough to crest) made it seem impossible to go alongside Comorin. (8)

Sub Lt. R.M. Maud, who was then one of the RNVR (SA) ratings serving in this ship and was later commissioned, described his ordeal in a letter to his father part of which is published below with his kind permission:

" I was on the upper deck when a signal came through from the newly arrived destroyer. I was standing next to the Captain when the signalman gave him the message which said 'attempting to reach your stern'. I heard the Skipper say it couldn't be done. Nevertheless I decided to get as far aft as possible and if a chance presented itself I would jump for it. By this time it was totally dark and the ship roaring for all it was worth. Thank goodness the magazines were flooded.

The destroyer did crash alongside (thirty times). I jumped with Aubrey and a stoker on the second time she came near enough. When I landed safely I believe I said a silent prayer. Everyone said afterwards we were mad to do it. It was our only hope though and instinct told me the distance I could manage with a big enough spring. I could have jumped the first time only I was fouled with the sheepskin coat I had picked up to wear again as it was so cold.

Eventually-thank God, everyone had left our ship, not however without a

few fellows misjudging the jumping distance and falling between the two ships. One, only a fellow of seventeen, was picked up. One CPQ was going mad so our Commander socked him and he was thrown on board the destroyer. When we had all left our old ship the destroyer torpedoed her and she was left sinking. From crashing alongside so many times, the ship we were now on had stove in practically the whole of her port side with big holes in several parts of the fore deck.

For three days we were onboard this craft, crowded together on the starboard side. One was very lucky if room was found to sit down, if you did your feet would still get wet. Fellows, many of them had broken limbs. Water was rushing through the holes and every able-bodied man was kept busy for all he was worth, bailing the water out night and day to stop her from flooding. The foremost compartments were flooded altogether and shaws had to be rigged to stop the bulk heads giving in. No one had any sleep for these three nights and days except a few of the injured who were given hammocks.

Food was scarce but tins of ship's biscuits were opened which satisfied everyone. It reminded me at the time of Dad's bedtime stores 'Fire in the stokehold' - ships biscuits and water, etc.

Water was very short so we were unable to wash and a pretty sight we looked, when, with old clothes on, we marched up the street to a Naval Canteen when we landed, to get food and clothing. This was at Greenock. Many sympathetic remarks were passed by civilians who saw the sixty odd of us". (9)

In the Mediterranean the record of the ships in which our seconded sailors served was impressive. HMS Gloucester, a Southampton class cruiser, first visited Cape Town in April 1940 and RNVR (SA) sailors were drafted to the ship then.(10) While returning from picking up survivors from HMS Greyhound south of Kithera on 22 May 1941, the Gloucester was crippled by bombs from an enemy aircraft and later sank. 49 Officers and 673 ratings perished.(11) Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope has written of HMS Gloucester 'she had endured all things, and no ship worked harder or had more risky tasks. She had been hit by bombs more than any other vessel and had always come up smiling'. (12)

Even more tragic was the loss of HMS Neptune, a Leander Class cruiser, on 19 December, 1941. The ship first visited the Africa Station in 1937. After successively striking four mines some twenty miles east of Tripoli the ship capsized. Although Capt. R.C. O'Connor, RN, commanding the Neptune, had made the signal 'Keep Away' HMS Kandahar gallantly attempted to go to her aid until a mine blew off her stern. Capt. A.D. Nicholl, commanding HMS Penelope, then gave the order to return to Malta. Although many members of Neptune's ship's company got away from the sinking ship, only one of the sixteen who were still alive at breakdawn survived the four day ordeal on a raft which followed. (13)

Four South African-built whalers, Syvern, Kos XXI, Kos XXII, and Kos XXIII were commissioned as British anti-submarine vessels in the

Mediterranean. Two of these ships were commanded by seconded South African officers: HMS Syvern (Lt.A.R.J. Tilston,RNR, who took command when her captain was wounded) and HMS Kos XXI (Lt.Cdr. I.F.H. Wilson, RNVR (SA)). HMS Syvern survived an attack by enemy aircraft on 21 May 1941, in which her ammunition locker was ignited and another on 23 May 1941 in which she was hit by fourteen bombs. On 27 May 1941 Syvern and Kos XXII were discovered lying up beneath some cliffs and were bombed and sunk by enemy aircraft. The survivors trekked overland to Sphakia. (14) Lt. Tilston was later decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross and promoted temporary acting Lieutenant-Commander-

At 1340 hours on 5 April 1942 (Easter Sunday) Japanese dive bombers of Vice-Admiral Kondo's force sank two County class cruisers HMS Dorsetshire and HMS Cornwall which were steaming in company some 400 miles from Ceylon. The fascinating autobiography of Capt. Augustus Agar, VC, DSO, RN, Foot-prints in the Sea, contains a moving description of the loss of the Dorsetshire and some information concerning the South Africans who served in this ship. Although Capt. Agar states that there were 50 South Africans in the Dorsetshire (15) it is possible that some of them had joined the RN, RNR, or RNVR direct and were not seconded RNVR(SA) Personnel.

The illustrations in this book include some remarkable photographs of the sinking ship and survivors. For 30 hours after the Dorsetshire and Cornwall had gone down survivors waited in the water on overcrowded Carley Floats, wood, or in the case of the fortunate minority, in a motor boat or whaler. In shark and barracuda infested waters the feelings of the shocked and in some cases wounded survivors can be imagined. A seconded South African, Lt.Cdr.Geoffrey Berlyn, was one of the officers who swam between the groups of survivors of the Dorsetshire in the water to boost their morale.(16) Lt.K.G. Dimbleby has written a valuable account of the loss of the Cornwall in Hostilities Only which describes his wartime service career, much of which was spent as a RNVR (SA) rating in this ship.(17)

Sixteen seconded South Africans were lost in HMS Hermes, a 10,850 ton aircraft carrier, five in HMS Hollyhock, A Flower Class Corvette, on 9th April, 1942. Both ships had put to sea to evade a Japanese air attack but were spotted returning to Trincomalee. 'Forty bomb hits in ten minutes sank the Hermes'. Fortunately a nearby hospital ship rescued over 600 survivors from these two ships, HMS Vampire, and two tankers. (18)

Able Seaman E.H. Little's censored account of his service on secondment to the RN The Luck of HMS Dragon, describes his experiences in this singularly fortunate 'D' Class cruiser and includes an account of the torrid time he spent in HMS Edinburgh Castle, then a naval depot ship, in Freetown, where the temperature was well over 100 degrees in the shade. (19) The book contains a roll of the South Africans who served in HMS Dragon: Lt.(later Cdre.) J.J. Rice and 45 ratings.(20)

Two seconded South Africans were lost in HMS Edinburgh, a Southampton class cruiser, when two torpedoes from U-456 blew off her stern on 30 April, 1942, whilst she was covering convoy QP11 from Russia. The story

of her painfully slow attempt to reach Murmansk and her spirited engagement with three German destroyers in the Barents Sea in which she and her escorts Forester and Foresight succeeded in sinking one of her attackers makes enthralling reading. Fortunately the German destroyers overestimated the strength of the RN force and withdrew. Damage inflicted on the Edinburgh forced HMS Foresight to sink her but despite the heavy weather all save 2 officers and 56 ratings were rescued.(21)

The story of the seconded South Africans who served in X-craft has been told by Capt. W.R. Fell,CMG,CBE,DSC in The Sea our Shield (22) and by C.E.T. Warren and James Benson in Above Us The Waves(23).

Seconded South African Naval Forces personnel served in the Fleet Air Arm and two officers Lt.Cdr.F.C. Nottingham and Sub Lt.M.J. Macquet are numbered among the twenty-one seconded members of the Union Defence Forces entitled to the Air Crew Europe Star which was awarded for operational flying over Europe from British bases from 3 September 1939 to 5 June 1944. Lt.Cdr. Nottingham was seconded to the Royal Navy (Fleet Air Arm) on 1 May 1943 and was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross and mentioned in despatches.

The South African Roll of Honour for the Second World War, four statistical returns of SANF (V) personnel seconded to the Royal Navy for service in H.M. Ships kindly provided by Lt. W.A. Dorning of the Documentation Service, SADF, and information published in Volume III of The Navy List October 1945 (corrected to 29 September 1945) have made it possible to compile the two lists below. Since the return for November 1943 is so similar to that for the following months, it has not been used. The few ships listed in the November 1943 return which are not shown elsewhere have been included. Although no numbers are shown opposite their names, one seconded South African was serving in the ship or shore establishment in that month. Although this offering does not tell the full story, it does give some indication of the extent of the contribution made by South Africa's seconded naval personnel during the Second World War.

In a press statement released by the Director of the SA Naval Forces on 23 May 1945 it was disclosed that more than 2,000 of the 2,737 SANF personnel seconded to the Royal Navy were then serving in the Far East. Seconded SANF personnel had been 'represented in practically every naval action of the war and had acquired a wide experience that would prove of the utmost value to the South African Navy of the future.

From what has been written above we have seen that South African naval personnel seconded to the Royal Navy established an enviable reputation as sailors and naval airmen in all manner of ships during the Second World War. In doing so they helped write some important chapters in the history of the Royal Navy. They showed that they were as good as and sometimes better than the best sailors in the world and have made the South African Navy the heir to a glorious fighting tradition.

Endnotes

- (1) Lt.A.P.Burgers, A Short History of the SA Navy (roneoed)1967 p.64
- (2) L.C.F. 'Turner,H.R. Gordon-Cumming and J.E. Betzler; War In The Southern Oceans, Cape Town, 1961. p.17
- (3) Account of the Thor/Carnarvon Castle engagement by CPO H. Heynes.
- (4) L.C.F. Turner et al, op cit, p.52
- (5) Capt. S.W. Roskill, The War At Sea Vol. 1, London 1954,p.285
- (6) Cdre E.W. Jupp, SM, 'Cat-and-Mouse off Punta' in SA Yachting 1979 South Atlantic Race Brochure p.32 and 34.
- (7) Peter Scott, The Eye of the Wind, London 1961, p.341-356
- (8) Ibid
- (9) Letter from Sub/Lt R.M. Maud to his father dated 15 April 1941.
- (10) J.H. Marsh,South Africa and the War at Sea, Cape Town,p.32
- (11) Lt.Cdr. P.K. Kemp, Victory at Sea 1939-1945,London,1957,p.137
- (12) Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope, A Sailor's Odyssey,London, 1953, p.371
- (13) Ibid, p.432
- (14) The Mediterranean Fleet Greece to Tripoli: The Admiralty Account of Naval Operations: April 1941 to January 1943, p.37-38
- (15) Capt. A. Agar, Footprints in the Sea, Dublin 1959, p.282
- (16) Ibid, p.311
- (17) Lt. K.G. Dimpleby, Hostilities Only, Cape Town, 1944
- (18) Capt. S.W. Roskill, op cit, Vol II, Part 1, p.28
- (19) Able Seaman Eric H. Little, The Luck of HMS Dragon, Cape Town 1944, p.13
- (20) Ibid, p.93
- (21) David Thomas, With Ensigns Flying, London 1958, p. 130/131
- (22) Capt. W.R. Fell, The Sea Our Shield, London 1966.
- (23) C.E.T. Warren and James Benson, Above Us the Waves, London, 1953.
- (24) A severe space constraint permits the inclusion of only one statistical list i.e. 'South African Roll of Honour 1939-45 Ships In Which Seconded Naval Casualties Served. The second statistical list i.e. 'Seconded Naval Personnel During The Second World War 1943-45' is available for inspection at the Simon's Town Museum. It also appears in the SADF Journal Militaria of 12th January,1982.

SOUTH AFRICAN ROLL OF HONOUR 1939-1945 - (SHIPS IN WHICH SECONDED NAVAL CASUALTIES SERVED)

NAME	TYPE AND CLASS	DETAILS OF LOSS OR DAMAGE WHERE APPLICABLE	NO.	DATE LOST
HMS ADAMANT	Submarine Depot Ship		1	
HMS ADRIA	Base & accommodation ship		2	
HMS AFRIKANDER I	Parent ship Simon's Town		7	
HMS ALDENHAM	Hunt Class Destroyer	Mined in NE Adriatic	1	14.12.44
HMS ASSECAI	RN Gunnery School Pietermaritzburg		2	
HMS BARHAM	Queen Elizabeth class battleship	sunk by U-331 off Sollum	7	25.11.41
HMS BIRDLIP	Hills class trawler	sunk by U-547 off W. Africa	1	13. 6.44
HMS BIRMINGHAM	Southampton class cruiser		2	
HMS CANOPUS	Training establishment at Alexandria		1	
HMS CARNARVON CASTLE	Armed Merchant Cruiser and troopship		1	
s.s. CERAMIC	Passenger liner	sunk by U-515 west of Azores	1	6.12.42
HMS COPRA	Shore establishment U.K.			
HMS CORNWALL	Kent class cruiser	sunk by Japanese dive bombers in Indian Ocean	25	5. 4.42
HMS DAEDALUS	RN Air station U.K.		1	
HMS DORSETSHIRE	Norfolk class cruiser	ditto	16	5. 4.42
HMS DRAGON	'D' Class cruiser		1	
HMS DUNEDIN	'D' Class cruiser	sunk by U-124 between West Africa and Brazil	1	24.11.41
HMS DURBAN CASTLE	Troopship		1	
HMS EDINBURGH	Southampton class cruiser	Torpedoed by U-456 and German destroyers in Barents Sea & sunk by RN 2.5.42	2	30. 4.42

HMS EXPRESS	'E' Class destroyer	1	
s.s.EMPRESS OF CANADA	Passenger liner	1	13. 3.43
HMS ENCOUNTER	'E' Class destroyer	1	1. 3.42
	sunk by U-boat off W.Africa		
	sunk by surface craft in the Battle of the Java Sea		
HMS FALMOUTH	Falmouth class sloop	1	
HMS FIDELITY	Special Service vessel (Decoy 'Q' ship)	1	30.12.42
HMS GLOUCESTER	Southampton class cruiser	30	22. 5.41
HMS HECLA	Destroyer depot ship	4	12.11.42
HMS HERMES	aircraft carrier	16	9. 4.42
	sunk by Japanese aircraft off Ceylon		
HMS HIGHFLYER	Base at Trincomalee, Ceylon	1	
HMS HOLLYHOCK	Flower class corvette	5	9. 4.42
	sunk by Japanese aircraft east of Ceylon		
HMS HOMEFORD	Admiralty supply ship	1	
HMS JAGUAR	'J' class destroyer	1	26. 3.42
SSKHEDIVE ISMAIL	British troopship	1	12. 2.44
HMS KONGONI	Parent ship Durban	1	
HMS LACONIA	Troopship	1	12. 9.42
HMS LANDRAIL	RN Airstation Strabane	1	
HMS LANKA	RN Shore establishment Colombo	1	
ss LLANDILO		1	2.11.42
HMS MACAW	Minesweeping trawler	1	
HMS MALACAS	RN Air Station Wingfield	1	
HMS NEPTUNE	Leander class cruiser	18	19.12.41
	mined off Libyan coast		

NAME	TYPE AND CLASS	DETAILS OF LOSS OR DAMAGE WHERE APPLICABLE	NO.	DATE LOST
HMS NIGER	Halcyon class minesweeper	mined off Iceland	1	6. 7.42
HMS NORTHERN DUKE	Armed boarding vessel		1	
HMS ORION	Leander class cruiser		1	
HMS PEMBROKE IV	Parent Ship Chatham (Small Vessels Pool)		1	
HMS PHOEBE	Dido class cruiser		2	
HMS PRESIDENT III	Naval establishments London area		3	
HMS PRINCE CHARLES	Landing ship infantry (small)		1	
HMS RELENTLESS	'R' class destroyer		1	
HMS REPULSE	Repulse class battlecruiser	sunk by Japanese aircraft off east coast of Malaysia	1	10.12.41
HMS RULER	Scimitar class escort carrier		1	
HMS ST. ANGELO	Parent ship Malta		1	
HMS SAUNDERS	Combined Operations Base Canal Zone		1	
HMS SHAH	Smiler class escort carrier		1	
HMS SOTRA	Minesweeping trawler	Torpedoed and sunk by U-431 off Bardia	1	29. 1.42
HMS SYVERN	Anti-submarine whaler	Bombed and sunk by enemy aircraft off Crete	1	27. 5.41
HMS TEST	River class frigate		1	
HMS THORN	'T' class submarine	sunk by Italian TB 'Pegaso' off Tobruk	1	6. 8.42
HMS TITANIA	Submarine depot ship		1	

NAME	TYPE AND CLASS	DETAILS OF LOSS OR DAMAGE WHERE APPLICABLE	NO.	DATE LOST
HMS TRITON	'T' Class submarine	sunk by the Italian TB 'Clio' in the Adriatic	1	18.12.40
HMS VARBEL	Midget submarine Experimental Station, Isle of Bute		1	
HMS VICTORY I	Parent ship Portsmouth		1	
HMS WOOLWICH	Destroyer depot ship		1	
HM HDML NO. 1163	Harbour Defence Motor launch	Torpedoed probably by surface craft Mulat Island, NE Adriatic	1	5. 1.45
HM MGB NO. 91	Motor gunboat		1	
HM MTB NO. 29	Motor torpedo boat	Collided during action with E-boats in North sea and asnk	1	6.10.42
TOTAL			191	

NOTES:

The fate of HMS SOTRA is unclear. One Admiralty source dated 1956 gives the information shown. Another dated 1947 states that the ship was sunk by enemy aircraft off Bardia. The ship is shown as HMS SORTA on the Roll of Honour.

During the compilation of the above summary the following sources were consulted:
 Lenton, H.I. and Colledge, J.J.: Warships of World War II. 2nd Edition, London 1973.
 Young, John: A Dictionary of Ships of the Royal Navy of the Second World War, Cambridge, 1975.
 Ships of the Royal Navy Statement of Losses During the Second World War. Admiralty HMSO London 1947
 British Merchant Vessels Lost or Damaged By Enemy Action During Second World War. Admiralty HMSO, London 1947
 Ingpen, B.D.: South African Merchant Ships. Cape Town 1979
 Manning, I.D. and Walker, C.F.: British Warship Names. London 1957
 The Navy List. April 1947

Some of the above ships and shore establishments proved difficult or impossible to identify. The valuable help of the Naval Historical Branch of the British M.O.D. and R.N. Museum at Portsmouth is gratefully acknowledged.

THE CANADIAN CONNECTION WITH ST. HELENA

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Introduction: Leverett Herbert Price was born in Butternut Ridge (now Havelock), Kings County, New Brunswick on Valentine's Day, 1868. His parents, John Clifford Price and Mary Isabel Woodman, were descendants of United Empire Loyalists. Leverett's father was a Justice of the Peace and Commissioner for Taking Oaths. (1) Together, he and his wife raised eight boys and three girls. Young Price was known as Lev. He was a likeable, good natured boy who loved the outdoors and animals, in particular horses. As a consequence he became an excellent horseman. In later life he is fondly remembered as a big, solid man standing about six foot two with a very friendly, outgoing personality. This proved to be a particularly valuable quality when Leverett realized his ambition and became a medical doctor.

Price graduated from Bellevue Medical College, New York City in 1892. Out of a class of 117, Lev Price came fourth and received honourable mention. He was the only Canadian of several to receive such an honour - quite an accomplishment for a boy from a small town in Maritime Canada. Nor did he forget his home, because he returned to New Brunswick and established a practice with Dr. George B. Noyes at North Head, Grand Manan in the spring of 1892. Dr. Price eventually took over the practice when Dr. Noyes left the island. (2)

Off to War: On 11 October 1899 the London Times recorded that war between Great Britain and the Boer Republic of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State had officially been declared. For Queen and Empire, glory and national pride, the British people went joyfully, if not blindly, into war. Nearly everyone was eager to go, particularly since it was assumed the war would be all over within a few months. (3) Little did they know.

The enthusiasm spread to the British Colonies and Dominions scattered around the world - the Empire upon which the sun never set. Like many Canadians Lev Price was compelled, through a mixture of a desire for adventure and pure patriotism to volunteer his services for Monarch and country. Learning that the First Canadian Contingent was to be joined by a second group, Dr. Price travelled to Halifax to join up. He arrived to find the port city "gaily decked with bunting, noisy with shouts of the populace, and sonorous with the music of military bands". (4) To his disappointment he soon learned that the Canadian medical team had already been selected. Fortunately news of the availability of a doctor reached representatives of the British Army and arrangements were quickly made to engage Dr. Price on contract.

The Voyage: On 21 February, 1900, as the Elder Dempster Line's s.s. Milwaukee drew out from the wharf "thousands gathered to see her off broke into 'Auld Lang Syne' and 'Rule Britannia' while the loyal soldiers of the Queen replied from the crowded deck with 'God Save the Queen' ". (4) On board were the First Battalion Canadian Mounted Rifles; C Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery; and Dr. Price. The Milwaukee, Laurentian and Pomeranian (which had previously sailed from Halifax on 21 and 27 January respectively) transported the second Canadian Contingent

to South Africa.

The next day a letter arrived at the Halifax Post Office for Dr. Price and was back-stamped 'Halifax, Canada - 5FE-22-00'. Mailed two days earlier from Guelph, Ontario it was addressed simply 'c/o Milwaukee Boat, Halifax, N.S.'. A post office clerk added '1st Batt' in blue pencil and 'Cape Town' in purple to the front of the envelope and forwarded it.

Meanwhile, the first night and next day aboard the Milwaukee were spent steaming over placid seas. During the second night a storm came up and by the next morning the poorly ballasted ship was pitching and rolling in turbulent waters. The Milwaukee, a hastily converted mule-transport had been altered to accommodate 650 men. While relatively spartan, it was nevertheless quite comfortable. In conditions like these, however, seasickness ran rampant. Men and horses suffered, with several of the latter dying from various maladies right from the beginning of the trip.

By Sunday 25 February the storm subsided, in time for an impressive church service to be held on the upper deck. With improved travelling conditions the men were expected to follow a daily routine outlined in the published orders. They passed their spare time by reading, writing letters on specially printed letterhead, and joining in sing-songs and concerts. Mail was collected twice during the voyage but it was not forwarded until the ship reached Cape Town. It is known that Dr. Price wrote letters to his mother and sister while at sea but they were not among the papers retained by the family.

From the frigid North Atlantic the Milwaukee steamed into tropical heat. This was hard on the men but worse for the horses, whose numbers were further depleted as a result. When it was discovered that a horse had succumbed it was immediately raised from the stable by means of a steam winch and dropped overboard.

One of the most exciting days of the trip was St. Patrick's Day. Blessed with perfect weather a sports competition was organized. Great enthusiasm was displayed and rivalry between the men was vigorous but good natured. The men thoroughly enjoyed the voyage and it was a healthy, happy and harmonious group that engaged in final preparations for disembarking at Cape Town. Although the Milwaukee's route had taken it past Fogo Island (in the Cape Verde Group), Ascension and St. Helena, to the chagrin of the soldiers no stops were made. They had hoped to mail their letters and obtain news of the war. After a four week voyage the ship dropped anchor in Table Bay at 4.45pm Wednesday 21 March 1900. Due to the number of transports ahead of the vessel and, later, gale force winds common to the Cape, she was not able to dock until 7.00 am the next morning. (5) As his anxious compatriots rushed to set foot on African soil, eager to leave for battle, Lev Price learned that he was to remain with the Milwaukee.

The Assignment: The battle of Paardeberg had begun on 17 February, 1900. On 27 February, after nine days of intensive bombardment, Commandant-General Pieter Arnoldus Cronje sent word to Lord Roberts that he was finally ready to surrender. The sixty-five year old leader was one of the few Boers with an established military record. His



BOER PRISONERS ON BOARD S.S. ORIENT

defeat and capture was a devastating and demoralizing blow to his people and their cause. As a result of his part in the first Anglo-Boer War Cronje was known as the 'Lion of Potchefstroom'. At Paardeberg he was described by an observer as 'a great bundle of a man...great square shoulders, from which the heavy beard was thrust forward so that he seemed humped; a heavy face,shapeless with unkempt, grey-tinged,black hair; lowering under heavy brows, from under which small, cunning,foxy eyes peered.

Cronje and his captured army were taken by train to Cape Town. Upon arrival in the capital of the Cape Colony, Cronje accompanied by his wife and nephew, was placed on board the British cruiser HMS Doris. They were given the flag officer's stateroom, a luxury to which they were unaccustomed. His men were put in prisoner-of-war camps at Green Point and Bellevue,Simon's Town, or on ships in Simon's Bay (3). Many prisoners made attempts to escape. The British had several prisoner-of-war camps in South Africa as well as in Ceylon and Bermuda, but they had become overcrowded and difficult to guard. It was decided to establish another camp on the tiny South Atlantic island of St. Helena (where Napoleon had been kept from 15 October 1815 until his death on 5 May 1821). A total of 514 prisoners, including Cronje and his wife, were the first to be sent to St. Helena on board the Milwaukee. Dr.Price's professional expertise was put to use almost immediately treating his fellow passengers, some of whom had never seen a doctor in their lives. Dr. Price embarked on what he later referred to as one of his most exciting experiences.

The Final Voyage: Dr. Price left Cape Town without receiving the letter which had missed him in Halifax by one day. It arrived at the 'Field Post Office,B.O. - British Army S. Africa -MY - 24.00' on the Queen's birthday, weeks after the Milwaukee had steamed out of Simon's Bay for St. Helena.

The following letter (unedited) was written by Dr. Price and gives his impressions of the voyage and his fellow passengers, and describes his activities:

"s.s. Milwaukee, near St. Helena Apr 9th 1900

Dear Mother, I wrote you a short note before leaving Simon's Bay and promised to write you more after I got to sea, but am afraid I will have to make even this short. I have been as busy as I could be ever since I left have hardly had time to smoke I have 4 cases of measles 2 of Typhoid one of erysipilas and was up all night last night with Col. Leefe who had two epileptic fits. Also a naval officer from the Niobe a 1st Class Cruiser our escort who has been in bed ever since he came on board with gastritis,but thank fortune they are all getting better. Besides all this I have been giving pills or diarrhoea mixture to about 25 or thirty dutchmen, everyday extracting teeth and god knows what else. Col.Leefe and all of the English officers are fine they are gentlemen every one of them and treat me as one of themselves. They are different men I can tell you to those darn Canadian rats we brought out with us I hope every darn officer. we brought out with two or three exceptions will die of fever and not have the honour of having their guts (will not say brains for they havnt any) blown out.

I hope Snowdy wrote you as soon as she got my cable and that you know long before this where I am. I am not one bit sorry I came I wouldnt have missed this trip and all connected with it for anything. I havnt any idea how long I will be in St. Helena but hope for some time, would like to hold this job for atleast one year and do hope I can save some money. We will be in St. Helena tomorrow morning about 7 o'clock and will send this letter to Halifax with Capt. Webster as he expects he will sail as soon as he can get clear of his unwelcome passengers. I will close nowas it is after 11 o'clock and I must be up at daylight to get a glimpse of the land as we come in sight. Your letters will be forwarded to me from Cape Town but of course write in future to St. Helena.. With love to all Lev.
P.S. Conje gave me a Transvaal Sovereign with Kings head on it and a stamp."

Dr. Price refers to performing tooth extractions, one of which was done on Cronje. The Boer General gave Price the tooth, which he kept and carried as a souvenir. It is reported to be in the New Brunswick Museum, St. John. N.B. "Snowdy" is a nickname given by Dr. Price to his girl-friend and future wife- Alice Maude Snowden.

Conclusion: The letter which 'missed the boat' at Halifax and again at Cape Town finally found its way to St. Helena on 3 June, long after the Milwaukee arrived about mid-April. The letter had been written by Miss Snowden. It can be readily observed that Dr. Price was so excited to receive the letter that he just ripped open the envelope, tearing off half the stamp and the right side of the envelope in the process. Regardless of its condition, a very interesting example of Boer War/Prisoner of War postal history has survived.

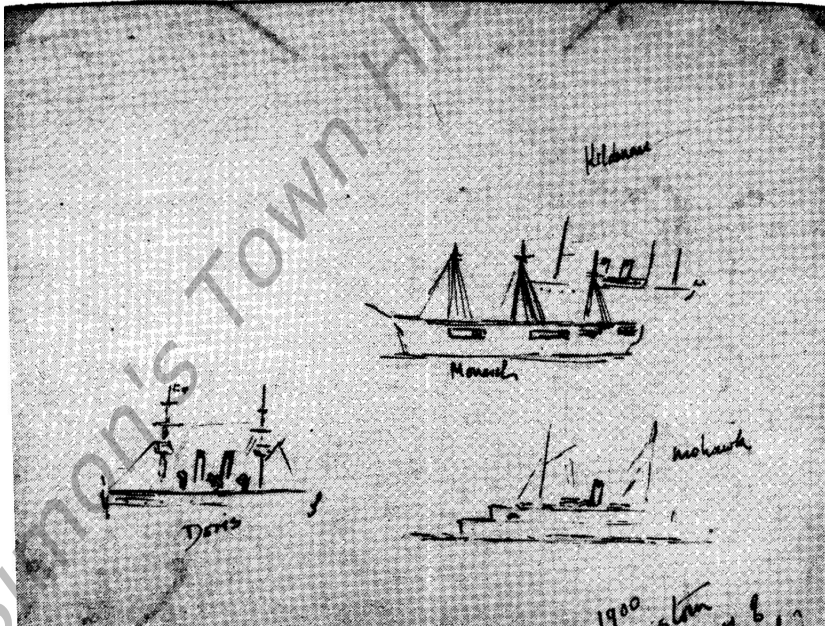
When I found this cover it was immediately obvious that it was an item of Boer War postal history, but the St. Helena forwarding mark sparked my curiosity. Researching this quickly turned into researching the story of Dr. Price. Over the past six years I have met and been in correspondence with a large and extremely helpful group of people including members of Dr. Price's family and historians and philatelists in Great Britain and South Africa. The response I received from individuals and institutions in South Africa has been particularly gratifying and I am most grateful to all those who have assisted me.

As is my practice I have written this article as a prelude to a more comprehensive booklet, planned for future publication concerning D. Price and his career, particularly while he was on St. Helena. It will include the Island's postal history during the Boer War period. If readers have any information they think may be of use to me, particularly letters and references to or about Dr. Price, please write to me care of the Editor.

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- (1) The Descendants of Edmund and June (Webb) Price by Gerald Keith, St. John, N.B., 1975
- (2) Canadian Medical Association Journal, Ottawa, April 1933.
- (3) The Great Anglo-Boer War, Byron Farwell, Fitzhenry & Whiteside Ltd., Don Mills, 1976.

- (4) Canada's Son on Kopje and Veldy, T.G. Marguis, Canada's Sons Publishing Co., Toronto, 1900.
- (5) History of the Canadian Mounted Rifles During the Boer War, Hugh Robertson, Unpublished, Ottawa.
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THE EARLY CHURCH COMMUNITY IN KALK BAY

R.R. Langham-Carter

As explained in my article 'The Church Complex In Kalk Bay' Vol XI No.3 January 1981 of this Bulletin, the earliest Anglican church buildings in Kalk Bay were erected in 1845. The first inhabitants of the hamlet had been fishermen and whaling men and a few farmers. But from about this date Cape Town residents began to erect seaside cottages and some of them joined in the chapel services. A deputy postmaster, responsible to the postmaster in Simon's Town, was appointed in 1843 and James Melville began a service of horse buses for passengers and mails from Wynberg four years later. William Gillman opened his Kalk Bay Hotel in April 1851 and two individuals who would play a big part in local affairs paid their holiday visits to the village around this time. The first of these men was probably Lt. Col. Henry Aston of the Bombay Native Infantry. He had married a daughter of Abraham Faure who had bought land here for a seaside cottage as early as June 1842. The Astons probably occupied it on their furloughs from India and, when Henry made plans for his retirement, he bought a large area opposite the chapel on 12th April 1853, building his house on it then or soon after. He returned to Bombay to finalize his retirement, reached the Cape again in May 1854 and settled in at Kalk Bay. A keen churchman, Aston became the chapel's first warden in the same year. He also served as its treasurer and its earliest accounts (which are still preserved in the parish muniments) are in his hand.

Bishop Gray. An even more significant person had begun to spend part of his summers here with his family from about 1851. This was Robert Gray who had arrived at the Cape as its first Anglican bishop in 1848. Liking the place, Gray had bought a house here on 8th August 1855 and conducted services whenever he was in residence. But this was only for a few weeks each year and it was probably Gray who arranged for clergy to minister here at other times, no doubt in consultation with Edward Judge the colonial chaplain of Simon's Town, to whose parish Kalk Bay belonged. The first of these temporary clergy seems to have been Henry Thomas, a chaplain from India spending a leave in Wynberg, who held services from November 1854 till February 1855. Over the next few years a number of men officiated and the signatures of each of them and the record of the services they held are still to be seen in the parish archives.

An interesting character ministered here from June 1857 to February 1858. This was Hermann Hirsch, a German Jew, who had been converted and ordained and who held the post of missionary at Simon's Town. All the others came from the Cape Town side. To bring them the congregation hired a horse from Gillman for five shillings a day or a buggy for seven and sixpence. When neither the bishop nor any of his family were in residence the visitors were welcome to sleep in Bishop's Cottage. But quite often a priest would ride down early on a Sunday morning, hold morning and afternoon services, teach the children in the Sunday school and return home at night.

One of these latter strenuous folk was Henry Master White, the first Principal of Diocesan College, extracts from whose journal were published in the magazine of St. Saviour's Church, Claremont, in 1941. On several occasions White mentions that he called in on that well known character, the owner of Farmer Peck's Inn at Muizenberg. Henry Peck was now seriously ill and White was able to attend him till shortly before his

death on 6th July 1857. All these clergy would have held their services in English but at times a catechist was available who could teach the fishermen's children in Dutch and take services in that language. When a fisherman died he was buried in the cemetery on the hillside, the remains of which can still be seen at the northern end of Quarterdeck Road. The few Capetonians who died in Kalk Bay were buried either in Simon's Town or in a Cape Town graveyard.

During the winters there were few visitors and often no priest and no services. But when a service could be held it attracted a congregation of about fifty. The fishermen were poor and there were still not many Cape Town visitors with means. Nevertheless the congregation usually managed to pay its way. By March 1857 there was a shortage of prayer books and the chapel flooring was so full of holes that kneeling was impossible. Mrs. Aston, however, collected the required £40 which included a donation from Lady Grey the Cape Governor's wife who stayed several times at Bishop's Cottage. New floor planks were laid down and prayer books purchased from the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge. At about the same time the Indian Mutiny had broken out. Judge (who had relatives in India) appealed for funds to relieve the sufferers and Kalk Bay was able to make a contribution which Aston sent on to Simon's Town.

The coming of the three ladies

The community, however, were about to lose their two principal benefactors for Robert Gray's wife died in 1871 and he himself in the year following. Henry Aston had evidently planned to leave in 1866. He had taken a lively interest in the False Bay fishermen and, as the Argus reported on 20th March 1866, eighty of them sent a petition to the Government. They stated that 'for a number of years Colonel Aston has with little intermission lived amongst us as our friend and benefactor, sympathising with us in our troubles and giving us and our families advice and medicine when we were sick'. They asked that Kalk Bay should be re-named Aston Bay in his memory. This did not take place, however, and Aston did not leave then. As late as 16th February 1869 he had apparently no intention of going as he bought some more land on that date. But he began to sell off his properties in the next year, making his final sale on 29th November 1870. He settled in London and died there in 1888.

Fortunately for the village, valuable help was at hand in the form of three ladies from England, the two Miss Humphreys and Miss Pocklington, and it was they who built Holy Trinity Church at their own cost in 1874.

I hope to relate the next stage in the parish's development in a later number of the Bulletin.

SIMON'S TOWN'S FIRST RECORDED BAPTISM ?

by Margaret Cairns

In the baptismal records of the Dutch Reformed Church for the period 1743-1756 is an entry of some interest for Simon's Town. Inserted with some difficulty in the margin of the normal entries for 22.6.1749 is the following entry:-

'In de Simons Baay is door de Eerw. J.W. Wigersma een soontje genaamt Gerrit Rynderts (gedoopt) de ouders waren Christiaan Molenaar en Geertruyda Cranenburgh, op getuigen Gerrit Rynderts Vos en Dirk Westerhof'

The persons mentioned in this entry have presented problems of identification, only one of them, Dirk Westerhof who was a bookkeeper in the Company's service in Table Valley, seems to have had any connection with the Cape. The assumption that, in all likelihood, the others were passengers on a ship or ships anchored in Simon's Bay appears to be a reasonable one.

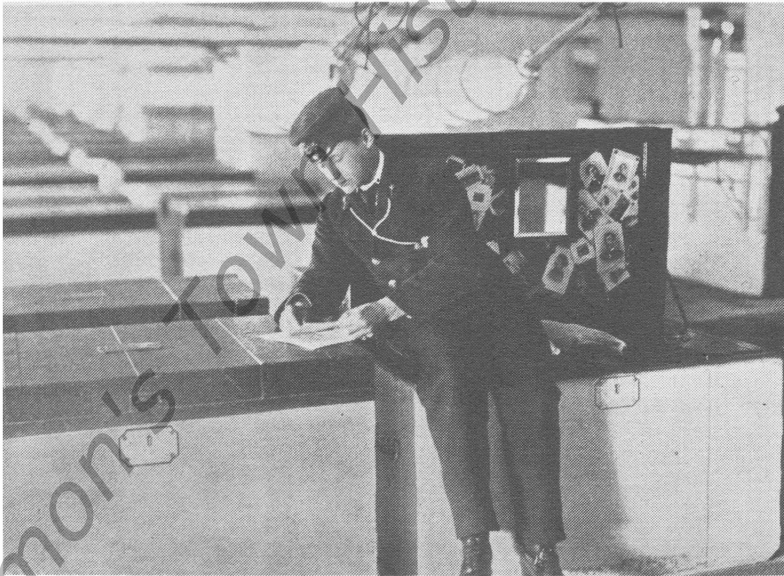
The Rev. H.C. Hopkins, Archivist of the Dutch Reformed Church Cape Town has kindly provided the information that the officiating minister, Johannes Wibranti Wigersma was en route from his native Vriesland to a post in the Netherlands East Indies and that he had died on board ship 'within sight of Batavia' in 1749. A second account mentions the death date as 1748 but this is obviously an error. Neither report gives the name of the vessel.

The Journal of the Cape for 1749 (V.C.26,Cape Archives) reveals that in June of that year the Cape was experiencing its typical winter weather with gales and heavy rain and that, as was then the custom, Simon's Bay played its part as offering a safer refuge than did Table Bay for shipping en route to and from the East. Between the 2nd and 17th June no fewer than seven ships were anchored in the roadstead on their voyages to the Indies. The names of those on board are not supplied only the fact that there were 106 sick persons on the several ships and that 274 had died during the outward trip of the fleet from Holland. The Rev. Mr. Hopkins has suggested that possibly the infant passenger, Gerrit Reynderts Molenaar was ill enough to have made baptism desirable.

The journal points out that the small settlement at Simon's Town provisioned the ships thus making necessary the presence of a company financial official, Dirk Westerhof. The sick too probably received attention possibly such as Antoni Visser is recorded as having furnished some ten to twelve years previously. Justinus Blas, the postholder at Simon's Bay at the date of the baptism, was no doubt responsible for the overall attention that the little fleet was given.

On which of the listed ships the Rev. J.W. Wigersma was a passenger has not been established but by July 3rd the Huys te Manpad, Elswout, Diemer, Spanderswout and Hartcamp had sufficiently recovered to set sail for Batavia with the Sparrenryk following three days later. The seventh ship the Haarlem was destined for Ceylon.

fore the little fleet completed the voyage the name of the Rev. J. gersma was added to those who had not survived the trip from the pe to Batavia. The fate of the first child recorded as having en baptised at Simon's Town is unknown.



A CADET WITH HIS SEA CHEST.

SOME ROYAL NAVY SEA CHESTS

Lt.Cdr. W.M. Bisset S.A.N.

The recent donation of the sea chest which belonged to Cadet Douglas Raymond Dumbleton, RN, to the Maritime Museum at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town and a fascinating article by Mr. Robert Gieve in The Field, have prompted the present writer to compile the following short offering (1). Cadet Dumbleton was 13 years old when he joined HMS Britannia in 1882. He later abandoned his naval career and qualified as a mining engineer at the Camborne School of Mines. After gold mining at Belingwe and service during the South African War of 1899-1902, Mr. Dumbleton died of malaria on 26th June 1904.

Cadet Dumbleton's sea chest is of special interest because it still contains its washbasin, soap tray, toothbrush (?) tray, half pint pewter mug, two wooden trays and a printed instruction sheet pasted on the inside of the lid which lists nineteen regulations concerning 'Care of Cadets' clothing, etc'. The notice bears the name N. Bowden-Smith, who was captain of HMS Britannia from 1883-1886 and later promoted to flag rank. There is clear evidence of what some of the missing items were: panels divide the bottom of the chest into three compartments and screw holes indicate the size of the adjustable mirror on the inside of the lid. A metal fitting inside the lid may have held a candle sconce. There were two metal food (?) dishes in the sea chest but these may have been added later. The exterior of the lid was painted black and the rest of the sea chest was painted white. The inside was not painted. Six small holes in the middle of the top of the lid probably mark the spot from which the nameplate has been removed. The lock is in the middle of the front of the sea chest near the lid. A serial number (8556) has been stamped on the top of the inside rim of the sea chest on the right hand side.

Two photographs of two cadets seated on their open sea chests in HMS Britannia reveal that each pinned photographs of his parents to the inside of the lid. (2). Cadets were trained in HMS Britannia from 1863-1905 and thereafter ashore at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. A photograph of Rodney Dormitory at Osborne circa 1907 shows a sea chest at the foot of each cadet's bed. The sea chests appear to be similar to Cadet Dumbleton's except for a painted thin black band at the base of the sides. HRH the Duke of Windsor wrote in 'A King's Story' - 'the orbit of my living shrank to a hard iron bed and a black-and-white sea chest with three compartments in which to keep my clothes, a tray and a private till'. (4)

Gieves designed and manufactured sea chests from about 1903. Mr. Robert Gieve has described one of these and it differs somewhat from the 1883 pattern. The fittings were brass and there were clips for a dirk, telescope, parallel rulers and an adjustable mirror on the inside of the lid. The lift-out trays included a security box and a compartment containing a tooth glass and a soap tray. There was a painted black band all round the base of the chest. In 1910 the cost of such a chest was £5.10s.

Captain Augustus Agar, VC, DSO, RN has written of his thankfulness that his sea chest had preceded him when he joined HMS Prince of Wales in October, 1905. The "Sub" on duty informed him that because the ship was undergoing a refit, he was the junior midshipman and the gunroom was

rather full he could have his meals either on top of his sea chest or in the school-place. (5) Captain Agar has not recorded which he chose but it is possible that this was not the first time such a suggestion had been made.

An anonymous RN midshipman whose letters were edited and published by his mother in 'From Dartmouth to the Dardanelles - A Midshipman's Log' had much to say about his sea chest. His first term at Dartmouth commenced on 7 May 1914 after two years at Osborne. He joined late and before going to sleep on his first night he tiptoed round the chests adjoining his bed to read the nameplates of his immediate neighbours. When mobilisation orders were received on 1 August 1914, the sea chests were packed in frantic haste, banged closed making a noise like pistol shots and 'dragged and pushed' by perspiring cadets 'through doors and passages with sublime disregard to the damage to both'. Thereafter they were loaded into lorries, brewers' drays and other vehicles and hurriedly conveyed to the pier, where they were ferried across the river in the steamer MEW to Kingswear Station. This task took two hours.

He records that at Chatham Barracks he and his friends were 'considerably annoyed' to learn that they would not be permitted to take their sea chests to sea. Instead, they were issued with canvas kitbags which proved most inadequate for a long period of active service in cold and tropical climates. (7) Sea chests took up too much space and were a fire hazard and this is doubtless why they were not used afloat during the Great War. A less expensive double-decker chest was issued after the war by the Admiralty and used at Dartmouth and possibly in the training cruiser as well. (8)

Although some of the South African cadets and midshipmen who served in the Royal Navy once had their own sea chests, Cadet Dumbleton's which came from the family home, Oakhurst near George, may be the only one to have been brought to this country. Those who admire this fascinating exhibit should not forget that the time the 'young gentleman' to whom it belonged spent in HMS Britannia was spartan and often very hectic.

Endnotes

- (1) Robert Gieve, 'A Midshipman's Chest' in *The Field*, 5 April, 1979 page 600.
- (2) The Army and Navy Illustrated 14 January, 1898.
- (3) The Duke of Windsor His Life and Times Described and Illustrated, London p.18
- (4) HRH The Duke of Windsor, A King's Story, London, 1951, p.61
- (5) Captain A. Agar, Footprints in the Sea, Dublin, 1959, p.21
- (6) Edited by his Mother, From Dartmouth to the Dardanelles, A Midshipman's Log, London, 1916, p.25
- (7) *Ibid*, p.31
- (8) Robert Gieve, op cit.

THE STORY OF A DOOR

George E. Reindorp

Nearly one hundred years ago in 1851 the Commodore-in-Charge, Simon's Town courteously informed the local Churchwardens that the Royal Navy would no longer require to make use of the Parish Church for Divine Worship. The Mast-House in the Dockyard had occasionally been used for this purpose since 1801 and now that a Chaplain had been appointed to the Dockyard the 'sail-loft' which was now its modern name, would serve the Navy for a church. Sailmakers on weekdays, congregations on Sundays. This continued until about twelve years ago when part of the sail-loft was set apart as H.M. Dockyard Church for the worship of God.

After VJ-day came, it was felt that the end of the Second World War should be somehow commemorated in the Dockyard Church. And it was decided that a really fine door would be most appropriate, since many might pass by, see, remember those who died, and be thankful.

Plans were begun. Then someone had an idea that the old beams supporting the roof of the ancient Mast-House were of solid stinkwood. Investigations were made. It was true. And so these beams were extracted and found to measure 27ft x 11in. x 11 in. They are being used to make a pair of stinkwood doors, Norman in design, the craftsmanship of which will be a not unworthy thank-offering for peace and memorial to those who died that we might live.

Though the beams from which the doors are made are ancient, almost 200 years old, the inscription on them is modern. Adapted from that specially written by Admiral Hopwood for a memorial to the Dover Patrol, it reads.

"And when your children ask,
Who made these doors?, answer ye them and say,
Who made the seas His path walked there
With some that held it, so His servants passed that way"

(The writer was one time Naval Padre and the above is an extract from the "Thank You Britain" Programme, Simon's Town November 1945)

NOTE:

After being demobilised the writer was Rector of St. Johns, Westminster, Provost of Southwark Cathedral, Bishop of Guildford and latterly Bishop of Exeter.

STOKE POGES, THOMAS GRAY AND SEAFORTH

A.F. Moore

Thomas Gray, the melancholy and reserved Cambridge don whose students delighted in playing pranks on him, would have been forgotten long ago had he not attained considerable eminence in English literature. Certainly the atmosphere of an ivy-mantled tower and of the narrow cell attracted him, but the 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' was born within him and not within the precincts of the ancient Stoke Poges Parish Church of St. Giles or in its pleasant and attractive grounds.

Tradition tells us that the poem was penned under an ancient yew tree that still stands opposite the south-west door of the Church, but we may be sure that it was in the seclusion of his study where, indeed, he spent intermittent years revising and polishing his best remembered poem, that Gray's emotional experiences were translated into verse.

Most visitors to Stoke Poges are drawn by a desire to visit the poet's grave immediately under the east window of the Hastings chapel, where he lies buried besides the remains of his mother, but without his name on the headstone, for space did not allow of this.

The South African, however, especially one from the Cape Peninsula and, in particular, a resident of Simon's Town, will find an additional and sympathetic interest. As one comes out of the Porch leading from the South Aisle, the visitor is in the direct line of a broad, rectangular tombstone of greater breadth than height. Most appropriately, it is entirely canopied by and, hence, under a large yew tree's shade. On the side of the stone facing the Porch are the words of the epitaph:

BY HER OWN PARTICULAR DESIRE
IN THIS RETIRED SPOT, AND BENEATH THIS STONE,
ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF
JEMIMA K: M: HARINGTON
WIFE OF CAPTN: THOMAS : T: HARINGTON
OF SEAFORTH CAPE OF GOOD HOPE,
DAUGHTER OF THE LATE MAJOR DOUGLAS OF WINDSOR
AND NIECE OF THE LATE EARL OF SEAFORTH,
WHO DIED IN LONDON MARCH 8TH 1820
AGED 42 YEARS.

On the far side of the stone and, hence, seldom seen, appears this tribute:

IF TWENTY YEARS EXPERIENCE
OF ALL THAT IS FAITHFUL AND AFFECTIONATE IN A WIFE,
TENDER AND CAREFUL IN A PARENT,
AND AMIABLE, USEFUL AND SINCERE IN A FRIEND
CAN GIVE OF FEMALE WORTH SUFFICIENT PROOF,
SHE WHO SLEEPS BELOW
WAS ONE OF THE BEST OF WOMEN.
WHO LIKE HER HUSBAND CAN ATTEST IT ?
THAT CHARACTER WAS TRULY HERS.
THIS TRIBUTE AND THE HEART-FELT GRIEF THAT PLACED IT HERE
ARE ALL MY OWN.

T : T : H.

The melancholy poet whose name does not appear above his grave, but whose prominent storied urn, inscribed with stanzas from his Elegy, is visible not many metres away; and the affectionate wife who forms part of our history and heritage, are buried not far apart in the quiet beauty of Stoke Poges Churchyard that drew them both in other days; and it is most probable that she lies under the very tree whose shade the poet used to seek.

Footnote: It is not surprising that Thomas Talbot Harington, a master mariner of the E.I.C., whose brother Henry Hawes Harington, an official in the Bengal Civil Service, and sister-in-law had visited the Cape on several occasions between 1797 and 1813, should have decided to come here, too, and establish himself as a trader in his own right.

He and his family arrived in Simon's Bay on 26 May 1814 and, in company with Henry Hawes, (not to be confused with his brother who, in fact, followed suit), established himself as a merchant at 3 Berg Street, Cape Town (the present St. George's Street). By the end of 1816 he had moved his business to the Keisergracht (Adderley Street) and opened up at Simon's Town as well, at which latter place he bought a considerable area of ground and named it after his wife's uncle, the Earl of Seaforth.

Two years after the death of his wife, Harington disposed of his assets at the Cape and left for Calcutta.

IN MEMORIAM

DR R F M IMMELMAN 1905-1982

The Society loses one of its founder members and Vice-President on the death of Dr Immelman.

In an address on the scope and nature of a local Historical Society to the members of the newly formed STHS on 20 April 1960, he recommended that the results of the Society's work be disseminated as widely as possible. This challenge was taken up and the STHS Bulletin was first published in January 1961. At a later date, May 1966, he advocated the founding of a Museum in Simon's Town as, in his words, "Simon's Town needs an historical Museum." The Society has laid the foundation of one. (Bulletin Vol IV No 3, p 81). Ten years later the Simon's Town Museum became a reality.

Dr Immelman was born in Somerset West and obtained the MA (German) at UCT. He started the UCT Library School in 1939 and in 1940 became University Librarian, retiring in 1970. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Potchefstroom in 1974 for his outstanding contribution to librarianship.

Dr Immelman spent much of his time encouraging people to present books, manuscripts and local history material to libraries, historical societies and Museums.

We extend our sincere sympathy to his family.

IN MEMORIAM

REV J R M GIBSON

Rev Gibson, who was Resident Minister of the Methodist Church in Simon's Town 1976-1980, died in May 1982. He endeared himself to all he met while in Simon's Town and was a champion for the continued independent existence of the Methodist Church in Simon's Town.

Our deepest sympathy goes to his family.

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