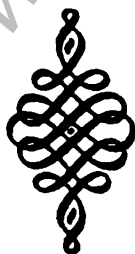




**SIMON'S TOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

BULLETIN



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Articles dealing with matters of historical interest to Simon's Town and the surrounding area will be considered for publication.

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Please address correspondence to: The Hon. Secretary, Simon's Town Historical Society, P.O.Box 56, Simon's Town, 7995. (Telephone: 86-1195)

EDITORIAL

The main thrust of this edition is again directed towards Naval affairs. Some painstaking research by Peter Humphries has served to remind us of the extraordinary story of the wreck of HMS SYBILLE at Lamberts Bay in January 1901 and the somewhat bizarre Court Martial that followed in which, inter alia, her Captain acted as Prosecuting Officer. However, all's well that ends well it seems. The officer who was temporarily in command of HMS SYBILLE when she ran ashore, in spite of a severe reprimand and loss of two years seniority, finally retired from the Royal Navy with the rank of Rear-Admiral!

This edition also highlights a Simon's Town connection with a very different Navy - the Imperial Russian Navy - and even the presence in Simon's Town of a Russian settler! Incidentally as this volume reaches its readers it is almost eighty years to the day since the Imperial Russian Fleet rounded the Cape on its way to a modern Trafalgar and a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Japanese Navy in the Sea of Japan on 21st May 1905. They lost over thirty ships - the Japanese lost three torpedo boats! It marked the rise of Japanese Naval Power which was only halted at the Battle of Midway Atoll in June 1942 and finally turned back at the Battle of Leyte Gulf towards the end of October 1944.

A menace much closer to home and ever present for those who live round the shore of False Bay is described in Vice-Chairman Gordon Wilson's article on "Shark Attacks". Readers will be interested to know that this article has provided the basis for several talks to learned societies and schools which have been very well received.

The 22nd February 1985 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Inaugural Meeting of the Simon's Town Historical Society and this provides perhaps an appropriate opportunity to make another appeal for assistance from as many Members as possible to support the activities of an increasingly hard-pressed Museum Staff. Since the Museum re-opened in its 'new' premises at The Residency, the numbers of visitors and particularly tour parties from schools, sister societies, etc. have increased so dramatically that the position has now been reached that the Museum staff are simply not able to meet all the requests they receive for assistance, advice and service. The Curator will be advising the Society in due course exactly what is required but it is already apparent that many more Tour Guides are going to be needed together with a considerable number of volunteers to man the Information Bureau over peak periods during the School Holidays etc. etc.

Although the report on the centenary of the Simon's Town Public Library is very short the Editor would like to thank Mrs. Joy Cobern for the three months research she undertook in an effort to find out the names of the Librarians who have been in charge through the years. The material for research was provided by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum.

The Editorial Committee would like to take this opportunity to wish all readers of the Bulletin - particularly those who take the trouble to tell us of our mistakes - a very Happy and Successful New Year and please do not forget we are always on the look out for new material.

HMS SYBILLE - WRECKED AT LAMBERT'S BAY 16 JANUARY 1901

Cape Argus, Thursday, January 17, 1901 - From Simon's Town:

"The inhabitants were startled last night at 10 o'clock by the report of a gun from HMS DORIS and it was subsequently learnt that it was a recall for her men on shore, and that the ship was proceeding to sea. She left at 4.30. The report is being circulated that HMS SYBILLE is ashore at Saldahna Bay and that the Doris has gone to her assistance. This report, however, lacks confirmation."

"The report of the wreck of HMS SYBILLE has since been confirmed. All on board were saved."

"Further information states that the wreck occurred whilst Captain Hugh Williams was on shore. The whole of the Naval Brigade were safely landed."

"HMS SYBILLE is a twin screw cruiser of the second class, 3,400 tons, 1hp 7,000 ND (9,000FD). She was commissioned at Portsmouth on October 9, 1900 and her officers were:-

Captain: Hugh P. Williams; Lt. Hubert H. Holland (N), Herbert Cayley, Andrew I.M. Sorel and Gerald C. Pigou; Staff Surgeon: Percy E. Maitland; Paymaster: Henry Constantine; Chief Engineer: Wm.P. Chapman; Sub-Lt. Alfred G.A. Street; Assistant Engineers: Wm. Dawson and Thomas E. Hughes; Gunners (T) James J. Tapper, Wm.R. Jowett and Henry Hoggett; carpenter: William Pebworth."

Cape Argus, Friday, January 18, 1901 - From Simon's Town:

"The report of the disaster to the SYBILLE proves only too true. The TARTAR has just arrived, and brings the information that the SYBILLE went ashore in Lambert's Bay, to the north of Saldahna Bay about 4 o'clock yesterday morning. Fortunately only one life was lost, and that occurred when the ship struck a rock, a man being crushed by the impact. The TARTAR and the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE came upon the scene together, the former coming from the West Coast and the latter from Table Bay with stores for the ill-fated ship.

Before the ships appeared, a line had been carried ashore in preparation to land the crew in case it became necessary, but on the arrival of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE the crew were transferred to her and the TARTAR came on here. It is stated that the captain and several of the men were ashore at the time in connection with the invasion of the Colony. No particulars have yet been ascertained as to the cause of the ship going ashore, but it is surmised it was due to the exceedingly stormy weather which prevailed."

Cape Argus, Saturday, January 19, 1901 - Leading article:

"There remains no doubt that the wrecked cruiser SYBILLE is beyond hope of salvage and will probably go to pieces in the breakers lashed into fury by the heavy weather prevailing along the coast. It will remain for the Court of Inquiry which will of course take place, to determine the causes of the disaster. Meanwhile there is much cause for thankfulness that there was so little loss of life. Clearly the whole ship's complement was in the utmost peril for a time."

Cape Argus, Tuesday, January 22, 1901 - From Simon's Town:

"It has been officially ascertained that the SYBILLE will become a total wreck, but it is hoped with favourable weather to save the guns. She now lies about 400 yards from the shore, with her bottom torn out and exposed to the sea. At the time of the accident the first and navigating lieutenants, and a sub-lieutenant, were on board, but the captain with the junior lieutenants, were with the naval brigade on shore. When the gale commenced the ship got up anchor and

proceeded to sea for safety, and it was in returning to the anchorage early next morning that the accident occurred by the ship striking on a rock. It was at this moment that the seaman lost his life by being washed by a heavy sea from one side of the ship against a heavy gun on the other side, sustaining internal injuries from which he succumbed. The body was buried on shore.

The portion of the coast where the wreck lies cannot be called a bay, as it is exposed to the full force of the wind. On Saturday morning the DORIS and CITY OF CAMBRIDGE had to get under way and proceed to sea to escape the violence of the wind and seas breaking towards the shore. The DORIS could not get near the SYBILLE by several miles, so the Admiral and Flag Lieutenant landed and rode around to the wreck on horseback.

As a court of inquiry or court martial will be held on the loss of the ship, it will not be fair to the officers on board to attempt to attach blame to any particular officer for the accident."

"HMS DORIS with the Naval Commander-in-Chief on board, arrived at Simon's Town at 7.30 this morning from the scene of the wreck of HMS SYBILLE."

Cape Times Weekly Edition, January 23, 1901

"The terrible gale, some effects of which were felt in Cape Town on the night of 15th instant, seems to have been far-reaching in its effects. At a late hour on Wednesday night information was received in Simon's Town that HMS SYBILLE had gone ashore in Saldahna Bay and the firing of a gun from the flagship DORIS recalling the men on board, created no little consternation in the quiet town. It eventually proved that HMS TARTAR had arrived from Saldahna with the news of the wreck, and early next morning the DORIS left to render what assistance might be possible.

There appears to be only too good grounds for supposing that the SYBILLE is likely to become a total wreck. The position in which she lies is a terribly exposed one, and it is evident that but for the appearance on the scene of HMS TARTAR (Captain Travers) and Transport No. 15, the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, an appalling disaster, involving possibly great loss of life, might have occurred, recalling in fact the circumstances attending the loss of HMS SERPENT, which was wrecked on the coast of Spain some years ago. As it is the loss of the cruiser has involved the loss of one life only, that of an ordinary seaman named Jones, who was crushed to death against the ship by the force of the sea.

The scene of the disaster, it appears, was a spot three miles south of Lambert's Bay, roughly 180 miles from Cape Town. The SYBILLE, a 20-knot cruiser, in her second commission, had arrived from Home on Saturday last to relieve the BAROSSA on the Cape of Good Hope Station, her commander being Captain Hugh P. Williams. On arrival at Simon's Town she was at once coaled with all possible despatch, and again put to sea on Monday afternoon, proceeding up the coast to Lambert's Bay where she dropped anchor. Here the captain went ashore, and almost immediately the weather began to show signs of becoming bad. The north-westerly wind which had prevailed during the voyage up the coast increased almost to a gale, and the officer in command judged it prudent to heave up the anchor and put to sea. This was accordingly done, and in the teeth of a furious gale the SYBILLE steamed out of the bay, the weather coming on exceedingly thick, so that it was difficult to see even a ship's length ahead. The ship had not proceeded far before she struck heavily on the rocks to the south of the bay, and remained fast, the seas breaking over her."

Cape Times Weekly Edition, January 23, 1901: Leader Article from Cape Times Saturday January 19, 1901:

"The loss of Her Majesty's ship SYBILLE is an unfortunate chapter in Cape naval history. We fear it must be taken for granted that the ship will become a total wreck, in view of the exceedingly exposed position in which she lies, and the phenomenal severity of the weather during the past day or two, which, indeed, has resembled that to which we are accustomed during the extreme winter months rather than the height of summer.

"It is a fortunate circumstance that out of the ship's company of three hundred odd, the loss of life should have been so small, for, with the exception of one seaman, who unhappily crushed to death by the violence of the sea, the crew escaped unhurt, although with little more than the clothes they wore.

"The circumstances of the wreck are somewhat peculiar. Lambert's Bay has by no means a sound reputation as an anchorage, especially for vessels of any size, and, with the wind and sea rising rapidly, the officer in charge of the SYBILLE, which was anchored in the Bay, appears to have deemed it advisable to put to sea rather than run the risk of dragging his anchors.

"Unfortunately in the attempt to get clear of the bay the SYBILLE took the treacherous rocks to the southward, where she struck hard and fast, and, from all accounts, it appears that her ship's company, who made no fewer than four unsuccessful attempts to get a line on shore, were in the most imminent peril till the arrival of the TARTAR and the transport CITY OF CAMBRIDGE. Had the two latter vessels not sighted the ill-fated warship, which they did in the very early hours of the morning, it is not difficult to imagine that a terrible disaster might have had to be recorded, for the plight of the wrecked vessel on an exposed and desolate part of the coast with a heavy sea rolling in must indeed have been an evil one.

"Doubtless the full details in connection with the unfortunate occurrence will not be available until the return of the flagship from the scene, but we make no doubt that when the particulars are forthcoming, it will be found that the crew of the SYBILLE displayed the traditional heroism of British seamen in the face of death and disaster, whilst much sympathy will also be felt for the vessel's commander, who, having gone ashore in the execution of his duties, was an unhappy spectator of the wreck of the gallant ship which had been entrusted to his care."

Cape Times Weekly Edition, January 23, 1901:

"The flagship, HMS DORIS, with Rear-Admiral R.H. Harris and staff on board, arrived in Simon's Town from the coast yesterday morning, and brings the latest details as to the position and state of the wrecked cruiser SYBILLE. It appears, from official information, that on the night of the 15th instant, the SYBILLE was lying at anchor in Lambert's Bay, and was compelled by stress of weather to put to sea.

"Captain Williams and about fifty of the crew were ashore at the time. Lambert's Bay being utilised as a military base, and the presence of the detachment on shore being necessitated by this circumstance.

"At ten o'clock at night the SYBILLE steamed out of the bay, which by the way, affords virtually no protection to shipping, and is an exceedingly bad anchorage. The cruiser safely reached the open sea, and about two o'clock in the morning, the weather moderating somewhat, the vessel put about, and proceeded to steam back to the bay.

"The night was dark and the weather thick, and the southerly set of the current had carried the ship some three miles to the southward. Presumably this circumstance was unknown to those in charge of the ship, for the doomed vessel

came on and struck heavily on an ugly reef to the southward of the bay, where she remained hard and fast, all efforts to back her off proving fruitless. Shortly after the vessel had struck, HMS TARTAR and the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, transport, arrived on the scene on their way south. A furious sea was then washing over the stranded cruiser, and the crew had taken refuge in the rigging and on the forebridge.

'In the meantime Captain Williams had come off to the wreck in a tug from Lambert's Bay, and with the greatest difficulty he eventually succeeded in getting an endless rope line on board the SYBILLE, by means of which the whole of the crew were eventually taken off.

"Throughout the trying work of saving the lives of the ship's company discipline was admirably preserved on board, and the behaviour of one and all was in accordance with the highest traditions of the Royal Navy, notwithstanding the terrible position of the cruiser, swept as she was from stem to stern by the furious sea.

"The men were taken off the ship in the following order: first boat, the invalids; second boat, the servants; third boat, the day men ('idlers' in service language); fourth boat, the stokers; fifth boat, the seamen; and finally the officers, who were the last to leave the wreck. The rescue of the crew was a task which naturally occupied a considerable time. The ship struck at 4.30 in the morning, and the whole of the ship's company had not been got off the wreck until two o'clock in the afternoon. The only life lost was that of W.H. Jones, a young ordinary seaman, nineteen years of age, who was swept across the deck by a heavy sea, and crushed to death against a 4.7-inch gun. The whole of the crew, on being saved from the wreck, were placed on board the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, and taken to Lambert's Bay, where they remain.

"On the news of the disaster reaching the naval headquarters at Simon's Town, Rear-Admiral Sir R.H. Harris and his staff at once left for the scene of the wreck. The DORIS got under way at four o'clock on Thursday morning and arrived off the coast where the SYBILLE stranded on the same afternoon. After standing in so as to enable the Admiral to view the SYBILLE and her position from the sea, the flagship steamed into Lambert's Bay. On the following day the Admiral drove round to the point where the cruiser was lying, and, it is understood, arrived at the conclusion that it was impossible to do anything to save the ship, which by this time had been carried by the force of the sea from two to three hundred yards further inshore along the reef. The under part of the ship was consequently torn to pieces on the rocks, the lower portion being completely awash, and the water inside the hull rising and falling with the tide.

"She is now lying broadside on to the shore almost on an even keel, but, of course, all hopes of saving the ship have been definitely abandoned, and efforts will now be made to save the guns, of which the SYBILLE carried two 6-inch and six 4.7, in addition to the smaller weapons. The salvage of the guns will, however, depend naturally upon the weather, which should at any rate, under ordinary circumstances at this time of the year, remain fine. Meanwhile the TARTAR and the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE remain on the spot.

"The Court Martial on the loss of the SYBILLE, which will be held on board one of the warships at Simon's Town, will, it is expected, take place in the course of three weeks to a month. In the absence of the captain on shore, the SYBILLE was in charge of the first lieutenant, Mr. H.H. Holland, the navigating lieutenant, Mr. H. Cayley, being also on board. At the time when the vessel struck the officer of the watch, who was in charge of the deck, was Sub-Lt. A.G.A. Street.

THE TERPSICHORE TO REPLACE THE SYBILLE: It was reported from London on January

22 (Reuter) that the second class cruiser TERPSICHORE, at present stationed at Chatham, is being commissioned to replace the SYBILLE, wrecked at Lambert's Bay.

Cape Argus, Tuesday February 5, 1901 - From Simon's Town:

"The transport CITY OF CAMBRIDGE arrived here during the night from the scene of the wreck of the ill-fated SYBILLE. The men and ships engaged in salvage operations have succeeded in saving all the guns with the exception of one. All the torpedoes have been saved and other valuable stores. The divers are still at work recovering stores and machinery.

"The CITY OF CAMBRIDGE brought up the guns, torpedoes, and other stores, and it is expected she will take them to England as she has been recalled from the wreck to convey troops Home. This transport will be replaced at the wreck by the HARLECH CASTLE.

"The third class cruiser BLANCHE arrived from England on Sunday."

Cape Times, Tuesday February 26, 1901 - Leading article:

"The loss of a King's ship is a serious matter indeed, and whether the untoward event is due to pure misfortune on the one hand, or to gross carelessness on the other, the consequences to those in authority immediately responsible cannot well be other than extremely grave. The sentences passed yesterday on board the MONARCH on the responsible officers of HMS SYBILLE, perhaps, may be justly described as lenient, under all the circumstances of the case, although they will doubtless seem sufficiently harsh to the officers of the ill-fated cruiser, who during the last two days have been standing their trial for the loss of their ship....

"But, in all the mass of evidence called for by the prosecution and for the defence, no sound explanation was forthcoming as to how it came to pass that the SYBILLE, after steaming out of Lambert's Bay to avoid what has been described as an uncomfortable anchorage, came to turn about and steam on to a reef lying some four miles south of the Bay. Other vessels lying in Lambert's Bay have frequently been compelled to put to sea in bad weather, and, as a matter of fact, the flag-ship, during her recent visit to the scene of the wreck, was compelled to heave up her anchors on one occasion and put to sea for the night.

"The action of the first lieutenant of the SYBILLE in deciding to put to sea in view of the bad weather was, in fact, endorsed by his own captain, but still there was absolutely nothing in evidence to show how it happened that the SYBILLE came to take the rocks. In calling evidence for their defence the prisoners appear to have devoted their attention mainly to showing that after the disaster every possible step was taken to save life, and that order and discipline were maintained on board. And it is beyond dispute that in the hour of disaster the officers and men of the cruiser worthily upheld the traditions of the British Navy, and faced a perilous and threatening situation with a bold front.

"The salvage operations, too, appear to have been conducted with uncommon skill and courage, and the Court did not hesitate, in its findings, to mark its sense of the admirable manner in which the operations were conducted, whilst the testimony of the captain of the SYBILLE, the prosecutor in the Court Martial, was markedly eulogistic of the services rendered by his officers in this respect. After the ship struck no effort was spared; this is abundantly clear from the evidence, and was indeed admitted by the Court itself. But it is impossible to get away from the fact that all possible vigilance was scarcely exercised on board the cruiser in the early hours of that January morning, when in thick, squally weather she was approaching the land at a speed of five knots.

"Perhaps the most damaging testimony adduced by the prosecution was that of the Staff-Commander of the DORIS, who had been directed to work out the course of

the doomed vessel and who showed that not only was the SYBILLE some six miles to the southward out of her course, but that the officers in charge had apparently overlooked the difference in the speed of the ship occasioned by steaming against and with the sea. The evidence offered yesterday by the prisoners in their defence was mainly directed to showing that no efforts were spared in the first instance to save life, and, secondly to save the ship after she struck, whilst special stress was laid on a statement made by the master of the transport CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, to the effect that on the night of the wreck of the SYBILLE he himself had experienced a current setting towards the land, which he estimated at from three to five knots. Still, the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE managed to keep clear of the rocks, and this circumstance did not naturally lend any very material assistance to the officers standing their trial.

"So many technical questions call for consideration in a trial of this character that it would seem almost superfluous for a landsman to venture an opinion on the subject, but we are bound to confess that, reviewing the evidence as placed before the Court Martial, it is extremely difficult to see how the officers composing the Court could have come to any other decision than they did and we take it that the sentences which the Court saw fit to pass will not, at any rate in naval circles, be condemned on the score of undue severity."

Cape Times Weekly Edition, February 27, 1901:

HMS SAPPHO, a sistership to the SYBILLE, has arrived at Simon's Town from Monte Video, and will temporarily take the place of the latter vessel on the station.

Cape Times Weekly Edition, February 27, 1901: COURT MARTIAL AT SIMON'S TOWN:

"The trial of the officers of HMS SYBILLE for the loss of their ship at a point four miles south of Lambert's Bay, on the morning of 16th January, was commenced at Simon's Town on Saturday. In accordance with the rules of the service, which prescribe that Courts Martial must be held on board one of His Majesty's ships of war, the Court assembled on board the MONARCH, the port guardship, at half-past nine, and sat throughout the day with a brief interval for luncheon, until just on six o'clock, when the case for the prosecution had been concluded.

"In the course of the day a considerable number of witnesses were examined, the method of procedure being as follows: the witness, having first been sworn in, was examined by the prosecutor, who put a series of questions, and on this examination the prisoners were allowed to cross-examine. This being concluded, the witness was examined by the Court itself, and, on this further examination, the prisoners again had the right to cross-examine, so that it will be seen that, if not particularly expeditious, the mode of procedure is at any rate a very thorough one.

"In the present instance, the prisoners were the following officers of the SYBILLE, viz. Lt. Holland (1st Lt.), Lt. Cayley (Navigating Officer), Sub-Lt. Street and Chief Gunner Tapper. They were accommodated at a table placed a short distance from that at which members of the Court sat, and immediately behind them, throughout the trial, stood a petty officer with a drawn cutlass. In the course of the hearing, the prisoners took considerable advantage of their right of cross-examination, Lieutenants Holland and Cayley cross-examined several of the witnesses freely.

"The Court was composed as follows: Captain Prothero, CB (Flag Captain) President; Captain C.H. Bailey (HMS MONARCH); Captain W.L. Grant (HMS DORIS); Lieutenant Henderson (HMS MONARCH); and Lt. Fitzmaurice (HMS DORIS), with Captain H. P. Williams (HMS SYBILLE) as prosecutor, and Mr. Charles Woolley (Secretary to the Admiral) as Judge Advocate. The prisoners' swords were handed in and laid on

the table before the members of the Court.

" THE EVIDENCE: Frank Herbert, quartermaster of the Sybille, examined by the prosecutor, stated that he had the first watch on the night of 15th January. The ship got under way between half-past ten and a quarter to eleven, at which time the first lieutenant, the navigating officer, and Mr. Street, the officer of the watch, were on deck. There was a moderate breeze, but a heavy swell. The course shaped was north 43 west by the standard, and north 33 west by the steering. The ship was going at a speed of 35 revolutions. He was relieved at 12 o'clock, at which time the weather had undergone no material change. He would not be certain what speed the ship was going.

"By the President: He could tell by the indicator on the bridge how many revolutions the ship was going, but he could not see the indicator because it was too far behind him. There were leadsmen in both chains.

"William Charles Marsh, able seaman, stated that on the night of the 15th January he was at the wheel from 10 to 12. He could not say what speed the ship was going when she left.

"Walter Henry Wells said he had the first watch on the night of the 15th. The ship left harbour at a quarter-to-eleven, and was going 35 revolutions at a quarter-past-eleven.

"By the prisoners: The ship was going at half speed before that time.

"COURSE OF THE SYBILLE: Edward Benjamin Hudson, quartermaster, said he had the middle watch on the night of the 15th. The course was N 33 W when he came on deck by the binnacle. The standard course was N 46 W. The course was altered at 2.30 to S 46 E by the standard, the ship turning to port. There was a strong wind and sea when he came on deck. The first lieutenant left the deck about 20 minutes to three. He did not see the navigating officer on deck during the middle watch. At four o'clock the wind had increased to squalls and rain, but there was no fog, and beyond the darkness and rain squalls, the weather was not thick at all.

"By the prisoners: It was about 20 minutes to three when the first lieutenant left the deck.

"By the Court: The sea was running on the starboard bow. No soundings were taken during the watch with the deep sea lead. The leadsmen were in the chains, but he did not hear them call any soundings. He did not see the officer of the watch examine the chart when he came on deck. He could see the charthouse but he did not see anybody in the charthouse during his watch. The officer of the watch was on the bridge all the time, and came to the binnacle at times to see that the course was right, but he did not verify the binnacle by the standard compass. The ship steered steadily in an ordinary sea. The navigating officer left no instructions as to being called. When the course was altered the speed of the engines was not reduced. The speed of the ship by the hand log before the course was altered was 4.6. Thirty-five revolutions should give the ship a speed of about five knots. The course was altered by the order of the first lieutenant. The log was hove at 2 o'clock by special order of the officer of the watch, and not at the other hours, because he received no orders. The patent log was not over at the time.

"By the President: He was aware that the patent log was defective. He had never had a direct order that the hand log was to be hove every two hours when the patent log was over.

"THE CRASH ON THE ROCKS: John Geoffrey Denny, quartermaster, said he had the morning watch on the morning of January 16. Mr. Street was the officer of the watch. He did not see any other officers on deck at 4 o'clock nor from that time until the ship struck. The leadsmen called soundings about 4.35, when "deep eleven" from the starboard chains was called. He heard no soundings from

the port chains. Witness could see no land nor breakers at the time. The weather between four and four-thirty was very squally, with rain falling, and just before she struck it was very thick owing to the darkness and rain. When soundings were called, the officer of the watch sent down and told the navigating officer. He also stopped the starboard engine, went full speed ahead with the port engine, and gave the order "hard-a-port", but the ship struck about 7 minutes after soundings were called. He first saw the first lieutenant on deck after the ship struck, the navigating officer came on the bridge about the same time as the first lieutenant. The former gave the order to get the collision mat out, but no orders were given with regard to the engines or helm. Mr. Street stopped the engines in the first place after the ship struck. The order was then given to go full speed astern with both engines by Mr. Street. He also gave the orders to stop them. Mr. Cayley again gave the order to go full speed astern after he came on the bridge.

By the Prisoners: The telegraph was rung full speed astern the first time by Mr. Street, and the second time by Mr. Cayley. When the ship struck, both telegraphs were put full speed astern. Mr. Street gave the order to stop, and about two minutes elapsed before the order to go full speed astern was given. The engines were going astern for about a minute. The navigating officer gave the order to go full speed astern when he came on the bridge, and the engines again went astern for about a minute and a half.

By the Court: He heard no other soundings being called except 11 fathoms 7 minutes before the ship struck. There was a leadsman in the weather chains, and the lead was hove from the ends of the fore bridge. The ship bumped and came round about a point, but in his opinion she only struck once and stuck fast. The look-out man reported neither land nor breakers. The engines were going at a speed of 35 revolutions, and were slowed down during witness's watch. Soundings were taken from the port after gangway after the ship struck, and there was found to be about 2 1/2 fathoms, and from the port chains they obtained two fathoms. Soundings were not taken from the stern on account of the state of the sea. The course was not altered while witness was on deck, except just before the ship struck. There was no attempt made to get the collision mat over the side, but one of the hands came on the bridge and reported that the mat was ready. The boats were uncovered, and the galley was turned out, but nothing was done in regard to the anchors. The ship's company were engaged in trying to get a line ashore. The seas were breaking over the quarter. The attempt to get a hawser on shore was unsuccessful. A small grass line was attached to a breaker, the breaker was put over the bow, and the line was paid out, but the breaker did not get ashore. This was tried three or four times without success. It was not possible to see ahead immediately after she struck. Breakers were first visible about ten minutes after the ship struck. Some oil was brought up, but witness did not see it used to smooth the sea. He did not remember any order being given to close the watertight doors. There were about thirty seamen in a watch on board the SYBILLE, and on the morning in question there were about twenty-five.

By the President: He did not hear the collision bell ring, but he heard the first lieutenant give the order to get the mat out.

THE LEADSMEN'S EVIDENCE: Richard Maddy, able seaman, said he was the leadsman in the port chains on the 16th January. He came on duty at four o'clock, and obtained soundings mark 10, between 4.25 and 4.30. He obtained no other soundings.

By the Court: After getting soundings of ten fathoms, he did not get another cast of the lead. He did not heave the lead again because the ship had struck. The lead was then just ready for a cast. He did not notice the ship turning after he had called out ten fathoms. The ship struck two or three minutes after he got soundings.

Frank Roach, able seaman, said he was leadsman in the starboard chains on 16th January. He obtained soundings "deep 11" twenty minutes after he came on deck. He got no other soundings. The next time he hove the lead he did not exactly pick up any soundings, but he reported the water shallow. He attempted to heave

again, but hove the lead on to the forecastle. In all he hove the lead five times.

By the Court: He received no answer when he informed the officer of the watch that the ship was getting into shallow water, but he was cautioned by the officer of the watch to heave as quickly as he could. The soundings in the chains when the ship struck were "half-five".

Alfred McCall, able seaman, leadsman in the starboard chains from three to four a.m. said he was relieved by the last witness at four. Witness obtained no soundings and was using the line tied up at 20 fathoms. The officer of the watch did not speak to him about obtaining soundings.

George Wells, able seaman, leadsman in the port chains from three to four a.m. said that he was relieved by Maddy about 4.15. He obtained no soundings while in the chains, and was using seventeen fathoms of line. The officer of the morning watch told him to keep the lead going, as the ship was getting near the shore. He heard no soundings whatever called before that order.

IN THE ENGINE ROOM: Arthur Charles Delbridge, engine room artificer, said he was on duty in the port engine room on the morning when the ship struck. He came on watch at 4 a.m. at which time the ship was going at 35 revolutions. The first change of speed was full ahead at 4.28 and the port engine went full ahead for about two minutes. The ship struck and the order was given full speed astern, the engines going full speed astern for two minutes. They were then ordered to be stopped, and the ship floated again, and they went half speed ahead for a minute and a half. The telegraph then went to full speed astern, and the engines again went astern for two minutes, when they were stopped by order from the deck. No further orders were received and that was the last movement of the main engines.

By the Court: His impression was that the ship floated again after she struck. She appeared quite steady, as if she had gone over the first shoal. The ship struck forward, and witness felt the rocks go by under the engine room, but he did not feel the screws grinding against the bottom. There was no water in the engine room when witness left it, but an hour later there was apparently six feet of water in the engine room. He received no orders to close the watertight doors, but when the vessel first struck, all the engine room and stokehold doors were closed. The usual signal to the engine room in case of collision was made by bugle; the voice-tube from the bridge to the engine room was not used for that purpose, as far as he knew. He did not hear the bugle on this occasion, and did not know who gave the order to leave the engine room, but he had an idea that it was the chief engineer. As he left the engine room hatch, an enormous sea struck the ship, and witness went to the poop for safety. The men were trying to save themselves and were getting into the highest parts of the ship. An order was piped with regard to getting out planks and spars, whilst the crew were climbing into the rigging. He considered that proper order was being maintained on deck, considering that the ship was in great danger.

Cross-examined by the prisoners, witness admitted that he was rather upset when the ship struck.

At this stage the Court adjourned for lunch.

SOUNDING THE WELLS: On resuming, Oswald Powell, engine room artificer, said he was on watch in the starboard engine room on the morning of the 16th January. He came on duty at four a.m. at which time the engines were making 35 revolutions. About 4.26 the order was given from the deck to stop, and the next order "Full speed astern" was given about two minutes afterwards. Another two minutes the order "Half-speed ahead" was given again and a minute and a half later "Full speed astern" was given. The next and final order was "stop". Witness saw the senior engineer in the engine room about 4.30 but he did not give any orders. Witness left the engine room when it was shouted down through the engine room

hatch "All hands from below". He could not say who shouted, but he believed it was the Chief Engineer's voice. There was between two and three feet of water in the engine room when he left.

By the Court: The engine room register was left on the desk and, so far as he knew, was never recovered. Witness first felt the ship strike the bottom at the after part of the starboard engine room. He considered that the ship slid ahead after that, and she was lifted considerably by the stern after she first struck. The ship struck a second time under the after stokehold on the starboard side. The engines were then going half-speed ahead. It was dark when witness got on deck and he heard the first lieutenant tell the men to be steady and to carry on.

William Pebworth, carpenter, said he sounded the wells about eight minutes after the ship struck. In the well by the electrical store room there was 12 feet; in the other wells the water varied from 13 to 8 feet. In the well in the steerage there was 14 feet. He sounded the wells on his own responsibility and reported the result to the first lieutenant. The carpenters at this time were employed in rigging pumps, by order of the first lieutenant but on account of the heavy seas this was found impossible.

By the President: He was thrown out of his bunk by the shock of the ship striking the rocks. The carpenters endeavoured to rig pumps and witness lent a hand, but a heavy sea swept over the ship and washed them all away. When he came out of his cabin he found the watertight doors closed and clipped.

By the Court: When it was found that it was impossible to rig the pumps he was ordered to get some oil and the ship's company, he believed, were preparing to fire the distress guns and endeavoured to clear away a boat. The first lieutenant was giving his orders and the navigating officer was giving a hand to get out the sailing pinnace. Eventually the ship's company were taken off in boats and were put on aboard the tug LUNA. Perfect order prevailed on board the SYBILLE and until the crew re-embarked on board the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

SIX MILES OUT OF HER COURSE: Staff-Commander Sabine of HMS DORIS produced a chart showing the course of the SYBILLE. He stated that on the morning of January 16 it would have been daylight at Lambert's Bay about five o'clock. The ship had apparently set to southward more than six miles off her course and if she had not been swept to the south she would have reached land sooner than she actually did. No allowance appeared to have been made for the difference in steaming against the sea and steaming with it.

By the President: The ship's reckoning gave her the same speed steaming with the sea as steaming against it. The officers appeared to have overlooked the matter. He did not think there was anything like sufficient allowance made; the ship's speed appeared to have been incorrectly ascertained whilst steaming against the sea. The westerly swell would have set the vessel half a knot an hour towards the land.

William Dawson, assistant engineer, said he was asleep when the ship grounded. He made his way at once to the port engine room, and when the watertight doors were shut he crossed over to the starboard engine room. He gave orders to have all the watertight doors shut. The order to leave the engine room came down from the bridge by the starboard voice-pipe. About seven o'clock the engine room was full of water.

By the Court: The engine room hatches were properly battened down after the ship struck. On the first occasion when the men came back to salve, the hatches were intact, but on the second day two of the cowl and two of the engine room covers had been carried away, and the engine room door was broken. He did not consider that even after a liberal distribution of oil would it have been possible to lower a boat and send a line ashore. There was nothing but broken water and surf between the ship and the shore. Good order was maintained on board the SYBILLE and orders were obeyed.

THE CHIEF ENGINEER: William Pole Chapman, chief engineer of the SYBILLE, said he was in his cabin when the ship struck. He went into the engine room and found that the watertight doors were being closed and the engines were going full-speed astern. On going into the starboard engine room he was told that the orders from the deck were for all hands to come up. He could not say who gave the order to leave the engine room and stokehold. Witness went up to the bridge to see the first lieutenant in regard to the steam in the boilers. The latter said something to the effect that it was all up and witness suggested blowing off steam in order to avoid an explosion. The first lieutenant agreed to this course and the safety valves were worked from the main deck. In the witness's opinion, everything possible was done to save the ship after she had gone ashore.

James Emmanuel Warburton, chief stoker of the morning watch, said the water came through the after stokehold shortly after the ship had struck. No. 3 boiler was displaced and when witness subsequently visited the ship as a diver during salvage operations, the boiler had been further displaced, and more stokehold plates had been shifted.

By the Court: There were two distinct bumps when the ship struck and during the interval it appeared as if the ship was forging ahead.

George Beggs, leading stoker, gave similar evidence as to the damage caused in the stokehold, and added that the water was rising rapidly. At half-past five when he left the stokehold the lower fire had been put out by water. Witness sent a man up on deck to see what was wrong and he came back saying that the order to leave the stokehold had been given half an hour before.

EVIDENCE OF THE CAPTAIN: Captain H.P. Williams, called by the Court, said that he was at the scene of the wreck of the SYBILLE about 2 1/2 hours after she struck. There was very little wind, but there had been heavy squalls during the night and there was a heavy surf breaking on the reef on which the ship grounded, so much so that the water went right over the funnels. The sea went down considerably during the forenoon, otherwise no boat could have approached the ship, even on the lee side. Witness noticed through the glass that the hoods of the funnels had been displaced before the men left the ship. The boats on the weather side were washed away; the second cutter on the port side was launched and capsized. The pinnace and the galley were the only boats remaining. The pinnace was turned out later in the day and brought the last batch of men from the ship. The galley was brought away when the men went back to the ship for the purpose of saving valuable stores. He considered that the officers and men did their utmost to save the ship. The ship was bumping fore and aft and every well had from 8 to 14 feet of water in it. Knowing this, he thought the first lieutenant acted with great promptitude in ordering the men up from below and in making preparations for the men to save themselves. The first lieutenant was, up to that time, quite unaware that witness was in the tug and the only ships which could have rendered assistance were about a mile off. Although later inquiries showed that the water in the port engine room and the after stokehold did not rise as rapidly as might have been expected from the condition of the wells, yet in witness's opinion, the state of the weather justified the officer in charge in taking the men off, even though the engine room and stokehold took an hour and a half to fill.

THE SALVAGE WORK: On witness's arrival at the wreck on the day the ship was lost they brought away the Maxims, rifles and pistols and the money which was on board. They returned to Lambert's Bay in the evening and from that time until the day when the transport left with the SYBILLE's crew, the first lieutenant, with Lieutenant Xayley and the senior engineer, took charge of a working party which left Lambert's Bay in the tug at four o'clock every day. Notwithstanding bad weather and continual thick fog all guns, mountings, and bed plates, including two six-inch guns, were by their skill recovered and placed two at a time in a small lighter and towed to Lambert's Bay. The difficulty in hoisting out

the heavy six-inch guns was very great, each gun weighing at least seven tons, and the getting out of the bed plates was, he considered, a very fine piece of work, and reflected credit on Mr. Dawson and the stokers. In addition to that, all anchors, cables, all torpedoes, tubes with mountings and fittings, were successfully salvaged. The whole contents of the gunner's storeroom were also saved, as well as a large amount of machinery. An attempt was made also to recover the ammunition by the divers, but it was only partially successful owing to the smallness of the hatches preventing the divers from getting below. These operations would have continued still longer, so as to save everything worth salvaging, but the Commander-in-Chief had directed them to return and to allow the BLANCHE to finish off the work remaining. He thought Lt. Holland and Lt. Cayley had a most difficult piece of salvage work to deal with, which under the conditions prevailing, could not have been better executed. From the diver's reports and from the system of closing doors which had been adopted in the ship he felt morally sure that everything possible was done to prevent the water from passing from one watertight compartment to another. During his visits to the ship careful observation had been made in almost every compartment. He considered that the ship had not moved since the first time he saw her on the rocks, but had remained firmly fixed, and therefore little damage had been done since the first day. He was quite sure even if oil had been used, that it would not have been possible to have launched a boat from the ship so as to convey a line ashore. He signalled to the first lieutenant from the tug that he wished the men to stick to the ship, as he felt sure the vessel would hold together and he considered that the action taken by the first lieutenant was the wisest that could possibly have been adopted.

This closed the case for the prosecution and the Court adjourned.

THE FINDING OF THE COURT - SENTENCES PRONOUNCED: The trial of Lt. Holland (first lieutenant), Lt. Cayley (navigating officer), Sub-Lieutenant Street and Chief Gunner James Tapper, for the loss of HMS SYBILLE, at a point four miles south of Lambert's Bay, on the morning of January 16, was resumed on Monday morning on board HMS MONARCH, port guard ship, at Simon's Town. The Court assembled at half past nine and proceeded to hear evidence called by the prisoners in their defence. This was concluded by noon, and after deliberating for about three-quarters of an hour, the prisoners and witnesses were ordered back into court, and the sentences were pronounced. The composition of the Court was, of course, precisely the same as on Saturday when the proceedings commenced.

EVIDENCE FOR THE DEFENCE: William Rose Jowitt, gunner of the SYBILLE, examined by Lt. Holland said that when the ship struck he was thrown out of his bunk by the force of the shock. He went forward immediately and found the men closing the watertight doors and cleared away the galley. Witness was ordered by Lt. Holland to clear away the first 4.7 gun which he did and fired eight rounds from it. Meanwhile the pinnacle and the galley were being cleared away and an attempt was made to communicate with the shore. Witness, with some details of stokers and marines, filled all breakers with water, and placed them on the forebridge and from that time until they were taken off by the crew did nothing much but get out of the way of the heavy seas which were breaking over the ship. He considered the ship's company behaved very well indeed. The watertight doors of the SYBILLE were classified under four letters, two of these being tightly closed before going to sea. After the ship struck witness was ordered by Lt. Holland to take some hands and get as much oil as he could and take it on the poop, so that it might be thrown over the lee side to facilitate launching the boats.

Cross-examined by the prosecutor, witness said he could not say if watertight doors between the after torpedo room and the steerage were closed when he came up on deck.

Wm Pebworth, carpenter of the SYBILLE stated that after he had reported the amount of water forward and aft, he was ordered by the first lieutenant to proceed to get some oil. The orders given to the ship's company were carried out very satisfactorily. He heard the order given to carry on smoking and this appeared to give the men more confidence. Asked as to the classification of watertight doors on board the SYBILLE, witness stated that the doors were divided into three classes and detailed the arrangements made in regard to each class.

By the prosecutor: When he turned out on the morning of the 16th, the watertight doors between the after torpedo room and the steerage were closed.

William Dawson, assistant engineer said that the order to close watertight doors was passed from the bridge to the engine room by means of the voice-pipe. The doors of the steerage were closed when witness turned in after going to sea. When he came on deck after the ship struck, he saw the carpenter trying to rig pumps and the men were trying to turn out the galley. He went into the engine room and found the port engines going astern and preparations were being made to close the watertight doors. The ship appeared to drive over the rocks and float again. His attention was called to the water coming through the inner bottom and he saw that the bilge pumps were working on the bilge. The order was given from the bridge for all hands to come up from below. The port engines must have been going ahead at the same time that the starboard engines were going astern. Witness reported to the first lieutenant that there were several cases of oil on board.

The President: I think the Court is quite satisfied that the oil was intended to be used.

DANGERS OF THE ENGINE ROOM: Witness (continuing his evidence) said that in his opinion it was dangerous to remain below in the engine room when the men were ordered up. The ship had a considerable list to starboard and he momentarily expected to see the engines lifted off their beds any moment. A steam pipe might have broken and the men below would have had no chance of escape. Witness heard the master of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE (Captain Warden) make the statement that he considered that on the night of the 15th January there was at least a three-knot current setting on to the coast.

By the Prosecutor: The statement as to the current was volunteered by the Captain of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE. Witness made an attempt to reach the stokehold after the ship struck in order to ease the safety valves but found it impossible owing to the seas breaking over the ship.

William Pole Chapman, Chief Engineer, said that when he was in the engine room with Mr. Dawson the port engines were going ahead slow. Witness considered that it was dangerous to remain below in the engine room when the men were ordered out, as the ship was bumping heavily. When on deck he heard orders given for non-swimmers to fall in on the forecastle and afterwards oil was got up. The captain of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE subsequently stated that on the night of the 15th he experienced a current which he judged from three to five knots. He added that when he stopped his engines, steaming out from the land, he was set back by the current.

By the President: He should say that the captain of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE was about 50 years of age. He was not a man who would be likely to make a statement of that kind without considering that he had had good grounds for it. As far as witness could tell the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE was carefully navigated and the officers appeared to think highly of the captain. So far as witness was competent to judge, he would say that the master of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE was a very capable man.

By the Court: He believed the engines of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE were stopped for about half an hour. He could give no idea of what distance the CITY OF

CAMBRIDGE drifted during that time. He did not visit the stokeholds after the ship struck; it was reported to him on leaving the bridge, after seeing the first lieutenant, that the stokeholds were clear. The stokeholds in view of the possibility of bursting pipes, were quite as dangerous to the men below as the engine room.

MAINTENANCE OF DISCIPLINE: Staff Surgeon Maitland said that he considered from experience that order was maintained and the men obeyed orders properly from the time the ship struck until the crew left the vessel.

Paymaster Constantine corroborated the evidence of the previous witness. He added that Captain Warden, of the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, had told him that on the night of the wreck of the SYBILLE, he had experienced a set towards land of between three and five knots, adding that he was prepared to give evidence to that effect if required.

By the Prosecutor: He considered that Captain Warden was not the man to make a statement of that sort lightly.

Lt. Frank Roe, No. 29 Torpedo Boat gave similar evidence as to the statement of Captain Warden in regard to the current setting on to the coast.

By the Court: The CITY OF CAMBRIDGE proceeded to sea from Lambert's Bay in the middle watch on the 16th January. No.60 Torpedo Boat was off Saldahna Bay on the morning of the 16th. He saw nothing of the TARTAR.

HEAVING THE LOG: Edward Benjamin Hudson, quartermaster, examined by Lt. Cayley, said that the custom of the ship was to heave the hand log every two hours when the cherub log was out, and when the log was not over, every hour. There was considerable difficulty in heaving the log when the SYBILLE was towing the torpedo boat, and the log was carried away any number of times.

The President said that had nothing to do with the case; there was no torpedo boat in tow at the time of the disaster.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS RECALLED: Captain H.P. Williams of the SYBILLE stated in answer to Lt. Holland that he estimated that the effect of the wind and sea would not reduce the ship's speed by more than a quarter of a knot, that was to say, supposing that the weather remained the same as when he saw the SYBILLE in the evening. The SYBILLE was an excellent steamer and rarely lost her speed when not plunging heavily. In the present instance, so far as witness could judge from the shore, there was a long swell outside the bay, but no sea at all.

Lt. Holland: Had you been in my place, and the carpenter had reported to you the amount of water we had in the ship, would you have ordered the men up from below?

Witness: I think I should have behaved exactly as you did. Continuing his evidence, Captain Williams said that during the whole time that the ship had been in commission, which was about three months, including the long passage from England, touching at almost every port on the way, and anchoring under all conditions, exercising the men at every opportunity, he had always found Lt. Holland a most hard-working, loyal and zealous officer whom he felt he could thoroughly trust during his absence, and who, as previous experience had shown, had always carried out absolutely the orders left with him. On the occasion of the accident, Lt. Holland was the last to leave the ship, and had the presence of mind to bring away the private signals, and by his example inspired the men on the ship with confidence, so much so indeed, that he did not think any other officer of his age could have brought off some 250 men in such good order and under such trying conditions. The salvage work afterwards was carried out entirely by Lt. Holland and Lt. Cayley and he thought that considering the weather experienced, the salvage of so much heavy gear in such a surf by a young ship's company was almost unique. He was certain that Lt. Cayley had

studied the sailing directions at all the ports visited. Lt. Cayley had never been anxious to make land before daylight, and the only fault witness had had to find with him was that he was over cautious in approaching the land. He had always found Lt. Cayley a most careful officer, who never spared himself, taking observations at all hours and by so doing, being able to verify the ship's position almost hourly. All witness's orders in regard to navigation had been exactly carried out. Speaking of Sub-Lt. Street, Captain Williams said he had kept regular watch since leaving England, and witness had never had cause to complain, although it was Lt. Street's first voyage as a watch-keeper. He considered Lt. Street was, for his age, an excellent officer of the watch. Captain Williams spoke in high terms of the work accomplished by Lt. Street during the salvage operations.

SPEED OF THE "SYBILLE" :

By the Court: He considered that the difference in the speed of the SYBILLE due to wind and sea would be about a quarter of a knot. There was a heavy swell but no sea. No doubt with a following sea the ship would go faster, but to what extent he was unable to judge, as apparently the weather at Lambert's Bay and a little way down the coast was not the same. It was reported to him that the CITY OF CAMBRIDGE weighed anchor at four o'clock. All charts on board the SYBILLE were kept in the chart-house drawer and the chart on which they were working was always on the table. Every facility was given to all officers to verify the position of the ship at all times.

Re-examined by the Prisoners: Although not in the ship, he was fairly convinced that there was no sea that night, knowing that a bluejacket's opinion as to sea was hardly reliable, and mainly influenced by the amount of the ship's rolling.

By the Court: The berth which had been taken by the SYBILLE at Lambert's Bay, close in shore, in order to protect the landing party, was by no means a comfortable one, owing to the heavy rollers coming in. He considered Lieutenant Holland, in deciding to put to sea, exercised a wise discretion. The CITY OF CAMBRIDGE was lying a half mile further out, and the MAGPIE had the only berth in the harbour over which the sea was not breaking. Both vessels he believed spent a very uncomfortable night.

This closed the case for the defence and the Court was immediately cleared.

THE SENTENCES: After an interval of three-quarters of an hour, the Court was re-opened and the President called upon the Judge-Advocate to read the sentences. The court found the charge against the prisoners to be proved, and passed sentence as follows:

LT. HOLLAND: to forfeit two year's seniority, to be dismissed from HMS SYBILLE and to be severely reprimanded.

LT. CAYLEY (Navigating Officer): to forfeit two year's seniority, to be dismissed from HMS SYBILLE and to be severely reprimanded.

SUB-LT. STREET: to be dismissed from HMS SYBILLE and severely reprimanded.

GUNNER JAMES TAPPER: to forfeit six calendar months' seniority, to be dismissed from HMS SYBILLE and severely reprimanded.

The Court added that it was of opinion that every possible effort was made to save the ship after she first struck and that good order and discipline were maintained under difficult circumstances. A reference was also made to the satisfactory manner in which the salvage operations were carried out.

This closed the proceedings: the prisoners were immediately marched out and the Court dissolved.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION - HMS SYBILLE

Peter Humphries

SYBILLE was first commissioned at Devonport on 8/1/1895 for the Mediterranean Station. Her first captain was Captain Gerald W. Russell, RN. She served until returning to Devonport in 1898 when she paid off on 18/3/1898. She was out of commission from then until she was commissioned for the Cape Station in October 1900.

Of the Officers and other ranks court-martialled:

LT. HUBERT HENRY HOLLAND was promoted Commander on 30/6/1910, Captain on 16/9/1915 and Read Admiral on the retired list on 8/8/1926. He died on 19/8/1957 (born on 3/3/1873). At the time of the Armistice he was commanding HMS GODETIA, a mine-sweeping sloop, similar to the SAN's PROTEA.

LT. HERBERT CAYLEY resigned his commission shortly after the court-martial and no further details are known.

GUNNER JAMES JOHN TAPPER whose seniority dated from 15/6/1886, was pensioned in early 1904. There is no record of his having served during the 1st World War.

SUB.LT. ALFRED GEORGE AMBROSE STREET was promoted Lieutenant on 31/12/1901 but resigned his commission on 21/1/1908. He returned to the Navy at the outbreak of War in 1914 and was a LT. COMMANDER at HMS BRITANNIA and HMS VICTORY - P/T Duties. He was promoted Commander on 11/11/1918 and placed on the retired list in 1919. It is possible he served in some shore station during the 2nd World War as he last appears on the retired list of the Navy List in 1967. He most probably died about then or shortly after.

HMS SYBILLE was one of a class of 21 2nd Class cruisers. HRH The Duke of York (King George V) commanded the MELAMPUS of this class and the BRILLIANT, SIRIUS, THETIS, INTREPID and IPMIGENIA were used as block ships, the SIRIUS at Ostend and the others at Zeebrugge on 23/4/1918. RAINBOW was a depot ship in the Royal Canadian Navy and SPARTAN was in the RN Harbour Service until 1931, the longest lasting of the 21 cruisers. Their class name was APOLLO, the name ship being converted for minelaying in 1909 and sold for breaking up in 1920. We show below a photograph of HMS DORIS 1898 at Simon's Town which was of similar construction.



HMS AFRIKANDER

John G. Louw's article in Vol.XIII No. 2 July 1984 prompted some readers to enquire why an explanation regarding the composition of her plaque had been omitted as for considerable periods HMS AFRIKANDER was little more than a room in some dockyard office pinpointed by the location of this plaque. The plaque bearing the name HMS AFRIKANDER comprises three white flowers which are *Gladiolus Colvillii* a hybrid which bears loose spikes of narrow-petalled, 2", hooded flowers in the late spring, the best known 'Alba' and the 'Bride', both of which bear pure white flowers. These flowers, indigenous to the Cape, are locally known as Afrikanders.

Editor.



CAPE TOWN GAZETTE & AFRICAN ADVERTISER - NO. 689 - 18TH MARCH, 1819

"TO BE DISPOSED OF BY PUBLIC SALE ON Tuesday 6th April a neat newly built SYDNEY COTTAGE situated in Simon's Town, consisting of 6 rooms with kitchen and convenient Out Houses to which is attached 242 sq. roods of excellent garden ground, well calculated for the residence of a genteel family or a person wishing to keep a Billiard Table and Skittle Ground, where they may have the advantage of rearing stock, the whole being well supplied with water all the year round. The premises to be viewed and the proprietor is willing to treat for the same by private Contract; Part of the Purchase Money may remain on Interest, under good surety. R. LEWIS "

Does any Member know which property this might be? - The Editor.

DETAINED IN SIMON'S BAY

Fleet Lieutenant Vasilii Mihailovich Golovnin the captain of the Russian Imperial Sloop DIANA was on a voyage from Kronstadt in Russia via Cape Horn to Kamchatka in the Kamchatka Peninsula on the Pacific Coast of Russia.

Golovnin was born on 20th April 1776 on his family's estate Gulyнки and was orphaned at the age of nine. He entered the Naval Cadet College at Kronstadt in 1788. While still a cadet, in 1790 he took part in a naval battle against a Swedish squadron. In 1792 he graduated from college as the second-best pupil, being under age, was compelled to stay at the "Corpus" (Naval school) for another year. During this year he began to study foreign languages, history and some science. In 1793 he was promoted to midshipman. In 1795 he was sent to Sweden, from there he went for some time to England, where he took private lessons from famous teachers in mathematics, astronomy and navigation. In 1802 he was sent by the Russian Admiralty to England in a group of twelve young naval officers to study the organization and management of the Royal Navy. In 1803 - 1806 he served as a volunteer in the Royal Navy and sailed under command of famous admirals such as Nelson, Collingwood and Cornwall. He took part in naval battles and was recognised for his valour in action. He returned via Sweden and Finland to Russia in 1806 and the report he compiled on the English Navy was used by the Russian Navy for over 25 years.

The sloop DIANA was built under Golovnin's supervision to undertake geographical and hydrographical research in the Pacific Ocean, to survey the coasts of Kamchatka, Russian America and the Kurile Islands. Golovnin, then a Lieutenant, was entrusted with this expedition which earned him the reputation of being the first Russian to make a round-the-world voyage in a Russian-built ship.

In July 1807 he left Kronstadt and arrived in Portsmouth in England. Despite the private treaty between Czar Alexander I and Napoleon, the British allowed him to continue his voyage. Via the Island of St. Catherine (belonging to Brazil) he proceeded to Cape Horn. After experiencing a great storm there, he decided to call at the Cape of Good Hope for fresh water and provisions. During his period at sea war had broken out between England and Russia and in his ignorance of this event he sailed into Simon's Bay on 3rd May 1808, where he and his ship were detained while it was further decided at a higher level how to cope with this matter.

The escape of the Russian sloop from Simon's Bay on 28th May 1809 made sensational news all over the world. Golovnin continued his voyage via the New Hebrides to Kamchatka. In 1811 he was ordered in the DIANA to proceed to Japan. Here he and two other officers were taken prisoner. He was liberated from Japanese captivity by his friends in October 1813. He married in 1820. In 1821 he was made Assistant Director of the Naval College at Kronstadt. Despite heavy administrative duties he found time to continue with scientific research, writing about his second great journey which had taken place in the sloop KAMCHATKA, which had for its object the circumnavigation of the globe by a Russian ship; translating an English work on shipwrecks, to which he added accounts of Russian shipwrecks and also wrote treatises on naval law and tactics. In 1823 he was appointed Intendant-General of the Russian Navy, building over 200 war ships and the first 10 Russian steamships. His report about many irregularities in naval administration remained unpublished till 1861.

Golovnin was made a Vice-Admiral in 1830 and died at the age of 55 on 12th July 1831 during a cholera epidemic in St. Petersburg.

PERIOD AT SIMON'S BAY

"We entered between Roman Rock and Noah's Ark, the usual entrance to Simon's Bay. Wishing to show the courtesy observed in the far seas by the warships of all civilised naval countries, I sent Lieutenant Ricord to the Commander of the English Squadron to find out whether he would answer our salute with an equal number of guns. Almost simultaneously Captain Corbett, commander of the frigate NEREIDE approached the sloop. I knew him from the time of my service in the English fleet when he was my commander in the frigate SEA-HORSE. Upon learning that we belonged to the Imperial Russian fleet (the calm weather did not permit them to make out our flag earlier), he immediately made for the Commander's vessel without coming alongside our sloop and enquired whence we had come and whence we were going. I understood this behaviour of his as a desire not to break the quarantine rules of English ports. A moment later a lieutenant from the Commander's ship arrived and after finding out where we had come from and where we were going to, left us. Meanwhile we arrived at the anchorage situated between the batteries of the roadstead and not further than a rifle-shot from the Commander's ship. Then the frigate loosening her ropes, hoisted sail and approached us, and at the same time armed rowing-boats from all the warships in the roadstead came to the sloop. The lieutenant from the Commander's ship announced to me that as there was a war on between Russia and England, the frigate had weighed anchor and that he had been sent to capture the sloop as a lawful prize. However, having heard from me of the aim of our voyage and of the passport accorded to us by the English Government, he immediately ordered his men to return to their boats and despatched an officer with the news to Captain Corbett's frigate. Captain Rowley (commanding HMS RAISONABLE) the commander of the local squadron, whose vessel flew a Commodore's pendant, was in Cape Town, the capital of the colony, at a distance of 35 verst (1 verst = 3,500 English Feet). He immediately ordered all the English boats to withdraw and freed Lt. Ricord, instructing him to inform me that he would at once send a courier to the Commodore with a report on the affair and that he would await the latter's decision; at the same time he informed me that although he was not sending a guard to the sloop, he would stand ready with his frigate prepared to get under sail throughout the night, in case we should make an attempt to get away, and in addition he ordered the Master-Attendant to moor the sloop between the English men-of-war and the coast.

"On the following day I had dinner with Captain Corbett and he told me frankly that as he is not the commander-in-chief, he does not know how to act in our case, but in his opinion the Commander cannot allow us to continue our voyage until such time as he receives permission from England.but in order to distinguish that the sloop has not been made a prize and still belongs to His Imperial Majesty of Russia, the pendant remains with us, though we may not raise our flag."

"No reply came from England. The local authorities attempted with the help of a man living in Simon's Town who came originally from Riga and knew Russian well, to translate the instructions given to Golovnin before he left Kronstadt. However, the man's Russian was insufficient for this process and they were thwarted. The officers meantime were allowed to retain their swords and generally all the crew enjoyed freedom accorded in English ports to nationals of neutral states.

"During our so-called arrest, all the activities of the crew consisted of repairs to the tackle and small repairs about the sloop, regular inspection of the anchors, loosening of the ropes and lowering of the masts and sail-yards in strong winds, and putting things again in good order. When the weather was calm we mustered the crew for exercises and executed other

small, meaningless tasks, necessary for warships during a prolonged stay of several months in port. The transport ABUNDANCE left for England on May 24th with a report from Commodore Rowley about the detention of our sloop.

"On May 26th we took our chronometers and instruments for astronomical observations to a room which had been specially rented on the mainland. This room was meant to serve us as a home should any of us be prevented from returning to the sloop on account of strong winds which occurred here frequently. The situation of the room was entirely suited to its purpose, being on the second floor, with windows facing directly north, i.e. towards the sun, and at the same time with a wide view of the stars at night. Though built of stone and two stories high, the house was so badly built however, that it trembled when doors were slammed and, standing as it did on the seashore on soft ground, it vibrated from the constant passing of waggons so that it was impossible to instal an instrument for observing the passage of the stars through the meridian. Even when using an artificial horizon, one had to wait for an interval when no doors were being slammed and when no one was passing along the beach. We soon had misfortune with our instrument: I had taken the altitude of the sun and had inspected the divisions on my sextant arc near the window when I inadvertently upset with my arm the spirit level with which we adjusted the instrument horizontally and which we had forgotten to remove. The glass tube broke and the spirit spilt. In the whole of the Colony there was no tradesman able to repair it or make a new part. After this, we had to adjust the chronometers, mostly to the corresponding altitude. As soon as the English heard we had a special place for astronomical observations, many of the captains of the East-Indiamen asked me to accept their chronometers for checking and were very satisfied and grateful for our work. For this they should thank the navigator Mr. Chlebnikow who directed our little observatory with constant care. The navigator's assistant, Novicky, and pupil Srednij, were very diligent and able people, aided him.

"The commander-in-chief who had been appointed to the Cape of Good Hope station, Vice-Admiral Bertie, arrived in Simon's Bay on 2nd August." Note: This was Sir Albemarle Bertie (1755-1824) - became Vice-Admiral on 24th April, 1808 and was promoted Admiral on 4th June, 1814. "Lengthy discussions were held with Vice-Admiral Bertie both in Simon's Town and Cape Town, and whilst in Cape Town I visited Lord Caledon, Lt. General Henry George Grey (Chief of the Army), Brig. Gen. Frederick Augustus Wetherall Commandant of the Town, and the Fiscal W.S. van Ryneveld."

".....On December 3rd the sloop RACE-HORSE arrived in Table Bay with a convoy. They had left England on September 17th. Vice-Admiral Bertie informed me by letter that he had not received any instructions concerning us by her, though it was known that the ABUNDANCE had arrived in England on 13th August; at a personal meeting he told me that not only had he not received instructions about us, but no answer to a report from Commodore Rowley that our sloop had been detained, adding that he did not know the reasons for this silence.

"We made full preparations for departure, before the arrival of the boat from England, which was supposed to bring us news of a decision in our case. All this time, the English made no attempt to prevent us making all these preparations. Having made up my mind to be quite ready to leave for the open seas as soon as I got permission to do so, I made a contract with a merchant in Simon's Town to cater and deliver provisions through the customs; and when I had almost everything on board, I received the visit of an officer from Admiral Bertie on 23rd December informing me that the Admiral demanded of me, having heard of my intention to leave, a written promise that I would remain in the Bay until a decree from England

arrived. In addition, the officer said that if I did not do so, the Admiral had ordered that the officers and men should be taken ashore as prisoners and the sloop kept under English guard. These two situations could hardly be compared, in one of which we would have had to remain in a hostile port, so without hesitation I chose the better of the two alternatives. Having given my word not to leave the Cape without the permission of the English Government, there remained nothing for me to do but solemnly keep my promise until the war ceased. To this end, I had the sloop moved to the safest place in the bay and took every precaution to keep it in good order and fit to continue the voyage. But the upkeep of the officers and the feeding of the crew presented great difficulties. I had a letter of credit from Mr. Greig on Canton for 5,000 piastres, but in the Cape no one would accept it. Neither did anyone want to give me money for bills offered by me on the Russian Admiralty Treasury saying that on the Continent all commercial and even letter connections were interrupted and that consequently it was unknown whether my bills would be permitted into Russia. In this critical state of affairs, the English merchant Home (no doubt this refers to H. Home and Co., Market Square, Cape Town) advised me to request the necessary subsidies from Vice-Admiral Bertie." As Admiral Bertie would not co-operate in this respect poor Lt. Golovnin was forced to cut the officers' ration of food to bring them into line with what he allowed the lower ranks. He sought to sell some of his ship's less essential supplies to support the ship's company. However, his appeal to the Governor to do this was rejected.

".....I decided to take the first opportunity to deliver the ship's company entrusted to me from the exigencies threatening us. But so that the facts of the position in which we found ourselves and the reasons which forced me to such actions would become known in England and to the British government as they really were, and not as Vice-Admiral Bertie might decide to present them, I employed the following method. I wrote him a letter explaining our position and pointing out the cause, which he himself was responsible for, of our having to leave the Cape without waiting for the decision of the English government. I enclosed copies of this letter in letters of thanks to various persons, Dutchmen as well as Englishmen, who had earned my gratitude through their kindness to us, who had helped us where they could, and who had shown us friendliness. I was convinced that through them my affair would become known in England in its true light, even if Vice-Admiral Bertie were to conceal my letter to him.

"I planned to escape from the Bay and sail straight for Kamchatka. Not having a single friendly port at our disposal belonging to Europeans, we could only count on help from the savage islands of the Pacific Ocean. On the orders of Vice-Admiral Bertie, the sloop was moored to two anchors in the corner of the bay farthest from the exit, at a distance of 1 or 1 1/2 cables from the RAISONABLE, in which the Admiral had his flag, and placed in such a way that with a north-westerly wind (the only wind with which we could have got away), she was directly astern of us. Many government transports and merchant vessels were stationed at a distance from one another of 1 or 1 1/2 cables. We should have had to pass them all. At the request of the Vice-Admiral, all our sails were unbent and the top-masts housed.there was a shortage of sea biscuits of which I could give a ration of no more than 1 lb per person; of fresh provisions we had none, nor did we have vegetables. In order not to arouse the suspicions of the enemy, I did not allow stocks of fresh food to be taken in even for the officers' table. I took this last precaution also for the future - I wanted, when at sea and short of food, everyone on the sloop, beginning with the commander and ending with the last man, to receive the same rations and to eat out of the same food-kettle. Under such unfavourable conditions, I made the decision to proceed on a long voyage in seas far

away from any European settlement.....Our chronometers were in Mr. Sertyn's house, the same man who used to deliver bread to the sloop. (Mr. Sertyn's house in the present Palace Barracks). Of the three chronometers, I left ashore the one which had proved to be the least dependable during our voyage, and with this we compared the chronometers belonging to the English, pretending that it was our best, so that they could suspect nothing, seeing our best chronometer always on the shore."

Not wishing to have it thought that they had made an escape to avoid paying their debts to local tradesmen, Golovnin wrote letters to Sertyn, and de Witt (the butcher), enclosing them with a letter to Commodore Rowley and placed it in the box of the chronometer kept in their observatory and as the chronometer keys were always in Golovnin's care, he had no reason to worry that the letters would be opened before his departure.

"For a long time there was no favourable wind..... At last on 28th May a strong north-west wind appeared. On the Vice-Admiral's ship the sails were not bent, and the other war-ships, superior in strength to the DIANA were not ready to leave for sea, and though we knew from signals given from the mountains that to the south-east two ships, manoeuvring towards the Bay, were seen, and that they could have been war-ships or even frigates, they obviously would not be able to approach the entry before night. As our state of affairs justified any risk, after having prepared and stepped up the storm stay-sails at dusk, I ordered the anchor cables to be severed at half-past six p.m. whilst a strong squall with rain and overcast skies set in and we departed under the storm stay-sails. We had hardly time to move, when a nearby ship signalled with a speaking trumpet to the Vice-Admiral's ship that we had hoisted sails. What measures they took to stop us I do not know. All this time we maintained a deep silence in the sloop.

"As soon as we had passed all the vessels and crossed into the passage, we immediately began to hoist the top masts and bend the sails. The officers, marines, petty officers and men, all without exception worked the top mast and yard-sails. With great pleasure I recall that within two hours, notwithstanding the strong wind, rain and dark of the night, they succeeded in bending the fore and main top-sails, in setting them up, hoisting the top-gallant masts to their places, lifting the top-gallant yards and setting up the top-sails; lifting the studding-sail-booms to their places, threading through all the studding-sail rigging and preparing the studding-sails so that, should the wind permit it, we would be able at once to set all the sails. By 10 o'clock in the evening we were in the open ocean. And so ended our detention, or rather, arrest in the Cape of Good Hope."

Sadly a fortnight before they left they lost their assistant purser EGOR ILJIN from a burst ulcer. They had intended to honour his grave with a stone and had it ready, but did not have time to put it up. It was therefore agreed by all to leave this stone in the church of Petropavlovsk Bay, with an inscription explaining why a monument was erected in Kamchatka for a corpse buried in the Cape of Good Hope.

The above text is taken from "Detained in Simon's Bay" by V.M. Golovnin, translated from the Russian by Mrs. Lisa Millner and published by Friends of The South African Library, Cape Town, 1964. The late Mr. H.C. Willis of our Society assisted with the checking and furnishing of naval data concerning ships at the Cape.

The material for this article was supplied by The Curator of The Simon's Town Museum.

THE MYSTERIOUS RUSSIANS IN SIMON'S TOWN

Lt. V.M. Golovnin of the Imperial Russian Navy who was captain of the Russian Sloop DIANA in his book "Detained in Simon's Bay" tells of an amusing incident which happened to him in Simon's Town.

".....some of us while ashore met a strange man by accident, a Russian residing here; we invited him to our sloop to which he came; he said that his name was Gants -Russ, and that he lived now in the Valley called by the colonists Hottentots Holland, some 10 to 12 hours walk from Simon's Town. At the beginning he was loath to admit that he was Russian and pretended to be a Frenchman, who had lived a long time in Russia. To support this pretence, he told us the following story: that his father was a Frenchman, a teacher in Russia; and that he exercised this profession after he had been shipwrecked near Viborg, when he was a passenger travelling by sea in Europe. This happened in 1764 and Gants-Russ was then a child of four and he was with his father when the latter became a teacher in Nijni-Novgorod, where he had a boarding school and taught the Governor's children. He, Gants-Russ, remained for ten years in Russia, was in Astrakhan, from whence he travelled to Azov and further to Constantinople. Later he went by sea to France from Turkey, but in some way or other landed in Holland, where he was tricked into signing on in a Dutch-India ship, where he served for seven years and went to India and Japan. When the English occupied the Cape of Good Hope he left the sea and to support himself worked for a smith, from whom he learned to forge and make waggons. He made money, settled in Hottentots Holland and later married. He had three children and traded in poultry, potatoes, vegetables and wine.

"The veracity of the later part of his story we could not confirm. But concerning his origin, we had no doubt at all that he was a true Russian peasant, and later on probably a sailor in naval service, who had either fled or turned up in some way on a Dutch ship, where he was named Gants-Russ, meaning true Russian. He could not speak even five words of French, but he spoke fluent Russian with a peasant accent. All his expressions were crude and rustic, indicating clearly his origin.

"On his first encounter with us he would not reveal his origin and left us pretending to be a Frenchman. But subsequently he confessed with tears in his eyes to some of our officers, that he was not Gants-Russ, but Ivan Stepanov, son of Seziom. His father, from whom he had fled, was a spirits merchant in Nijni-Novgorod. He said he was 48 years old, but gave the impression of being between 35-38. He asked me for a gun and gun-powder, but as in this colony no one is allowed to keep arms without the permission of the Governor and import is severely forbidden, I had to refuse his request. We made him other gifts. Among them I gave him a silver rouble with the head of the Empress Catherine II and a calendar in which I inscribed the names of all our officers and told him to keep these objects in memory of us, so that he should not forget he was a Russian and a subject of our Emperor."

This took place in 1808 but again in "A Russian View of the Cape 1853" by I.A. Goncharov, Secretary to Admiral Putjatin, travelling as "Collegiate Assessor" in the frigate PALLADA, Goncharov tells a story of his fellow officers meeting a Russian in Simon's Town.

"However, our fellows when they came aboard said that an old man had approached them at the landing-place and had said to them in Russian "I wish you good health, Your Honours". "Who are you and where do you come from?" asked our officer. "I am a Russian" he answered. "In 1814 I was captured by the French, then at Waterloo I fought against the English and

"was captured by them and brought here. I married a black woman and have six children by her". "Where were you born?" "In the Orlov District" But it was difficult to get any other information out of him so bad had his Russian become."

When this translation appeared in the Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library in 1960 D.H. Varley added in a note that a few Russian names persist in Simon's Town to this day, i.e. 1960.

The material for this article was supplied by The Curator of The Simon's Town Museum.

THE SIMON'S TOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY - 100 YEARS OLD

On 25th May 1984 The Simon's Town Public Library celebrated its 100th Anniversary. Guests whose links with the Library covered its past and present activities were invited to a cocktail party which proved to be a most enjoyable and successful Simon's Town occasion.

The May, Mr. Harry Dilley, in his opening speech outlined the history of the Library and some of the prominent Simon's Town citizens of earlier years inter alia Runciman, Attwell, White and Miller who had played an important role in its formation. He also paid tribute to the hard-working librarians both past and present who had contributed so much to the Library's success in return for rewards in past years anyway that appeared somewhat less than generous! He noted that the grand daughter of W.S. Gillard - the first known Librarian of the Simon's Town Public Library and also the Town Clerk at the time - was carrying on the family tradition at the Fish Hoek Library.

Mr. Gilbert Morris, Head of the The Provincial Library Service, addressed the guests and he particularly thanked Mrs. Simone Hammerton and Mrs. Peggy Ball for all they have done to ensure the continuing success of the present Library. The proceedings terminated after a vote of thanks proposed by Councillor Gordon Wilson.

LIST OF LIBRARIANS

UNKNOWN		1884 - 1890	
Mr. W.S. Gillard	January	1891 - 1902	April
Mr. J. Glyn	May	1902 - 1904	March
Miss Agnew	April	1904 - 1914	February
Miss Toms	March	1914 - 1917	August
Miss W. Parry	September	1917 - 1918	September
Miss M. Godsiff	September	1918 - 1924	July
Miss Rowland	July	1924 - 1929	December
Mrs. Calcraft	January	1930 - 1934	June
Mrs. A.E. Merriott	July	1934 - 1949	October
Mrs. Markham	November	1949 - 1959	March
Mrs. Bird	April	1959 - 1970	January
Mrs. Leibrandt	February	1970 - 1972	September
Mrs. Ball	October	1972 - 1974	January
Miss Berger	February	1974 - 1974	March
Mrs. Hammerton	April	1974 - 1976	October
Mrs. Sturman	December	1976 - 1980	April
Mrs. Whitehead	May	1980 - 1981	October
Mrs. L. Fawcett	November	1981 - 1982	April
Mrs. Hammerton	May	1982 - date	

ANOTHER ROYAL VISITOR TO SIMON'S TOWN - 1808

We are indebted to Lt.V.M. Golovnin of the sloop DIANA of the Russian Imperial Navy for a description of one of our lesser known Royal visitors.

"Here in Simon's Bay roadstead stood a transport on the way to New Holland with female convicts; on the same vessel a son of a New Holland chief was returning to his country from England. This chief is the king of the northern part of New Holland. His kingdom is called Puna by the inhabitants (marked on the map as Rososke) and Bay of Islands by the English. His name was Topachi. He was very cordial and friendly to the Europeans and the English therefore tried to do him favours. They have taught him all sorts of trades, supplied the tools, built him a house and made him all sorts of presents. His son spent some time among the English in New Holland, by the wish of his father, and from there he was taken on a whaler to England, lived in London 12 months and was then returning home. We wished to make the acquaintance of the Australian chief and therefore invited him to dinner together with a medical doctor, a passenger on the transport. They came and we entertained them as well as we could; except that we did not salute the prince. The doctor, Mr.McMillan was a modest man, courteous and clever. The prince was 18 years of age, short but well built. The shape of his face was European, but dark purple in colour, lacking those designs customarily made by the savages as an ornament. His hair was black, straight and very short. The earlobes were pierced, as our women pierce for earrings. He was lively and gay, understood almost every word of an ordinary conversation in English, but he spoke it very incorrectly and pronounced it even worse. He greeted one and behaved as Europeans do, and was also dressed in their manner. He drank wine as well as the English do and judging by the amount he drank without being affected, he was seemingly no novice in this European pastime. He ate of all that was served and was particularly partial to sweets. He spoke a lot at table with us and in answer to our questions he told us that his father had 15 wives and many children, the exact number of whom he did not know; whilst from his own mother there were three more sons and two daughters. The doctor told us that his mother was a ruler in her own right and that her kingdom was conquered by Topachi, who married her; that METARAI himself had two wives to whom he is much attached. His father, before his departure, instructed him fully on how to behave among the Europeans and what he must endeavour to learn from them. He appeared to us to be a fellow of considerable natural gifts and many of his remarks did not give the impression of coming from a savage from New Holland without any education. Here are some instances:

Taking a walk on shore with Lt. Ricord, he found a brass coat-of-arms from a soldier's bag. The size of it attracted him. Picking it up, he said to Ricord: "It is hardly likely that the person who lost it would find it again, so there is no thieving in taking it" and saying this he put it in his pocket.

In England he was introduced to the King and his family. He told us that the King talked very fast and that he could not follow what he said. He also remarked that among the princesses there was one who squinted. In London he was taken to the theatre, to Vauxhall, and so on, but he talked very little of these entertainment places and evidently found them of little interest.

The doctor knew a little of the language of Metarai's people and the prince would therefore always begin by talking to him in his own language. Once, the doctor told him that it would be better to talk English, as none of us understood his language, at which the prince replied in his

own language that as many of us present at the table did not know "European", meaning English, there was no point in speaking English.

In the wardroom under the deck, where we had dinner, were shields made by a carpenter, and the boards were so well glued and painted that he believed them to be made from a single board. He noticed that they were uncommonly wide and enquired where trees grew of such uncommon thickness. When we explained to him that the shields were not made from a single board, but from many, he was much astonished and tried, with a look of disbelief, to see it for himself.

I showed him a sea-map where were marked the Cape of Good Hope, New Holland and New Zealand. He immediately traced with his finger the route that they were to take, indicating Port Jackson, the island of Norfolk where they were supposed to call, and the Bay of Islands. When I indicated to him our route to Kamchatka, he remarked that Russia (apparently taking Kamchatka for the whole of Russia) is further from England than New Zealand. But having heard from us that one can go in one week from Russia to England, he asked why we did not go via England, as it would be shorter.

We also showed him a full-length picture of a man and woman from New Holland. He said that there was no resemblance, and he was right as the pictures were of inhabitants of a different part of that land, whom his people never see. Ricord had a reed-pipe and a funnel produced by his nation and as soon as they were put on the table he impatiently seized the pipe and began playing.

His language was quick, short and abrupt, but not unpleasant to the ear. According to Mr. MacMillan their language is very poor and a number of things are indicated by the same word.

The English King made this prince a knight of an order especially established for savage chiefs and called the Order of Friendship. Its regalia consists of a blue ribbon and a silver star on which are depicted two golden clasped hands. The King sent his father a rich hat and mantle in lieu of a crown and the royal purple. Besides these, a great variety of useful articles were despatched, consisting of tools, clothing, and so on. They were all packed in cases addressed to King Topachi from King George.

The above text is taken from "Detained in Simon's Bay" by V.M. Golovnin. This was supplied by The Curator of the Simon's Town Museum.

Port Jackson - now part of Sydney, Australia.
Norfolk Island is in the Pacific Ocean, north of New Zealand.

FROM: HIS MAJESTY'S SUBMARINES - published by The Admiralty, London 1945, p.30

"Submarines operating from Colombo had carried out valuable though unspectacular searches of the innumerable islands and coral atolls in the Indian Ocean that might have been used as secret bases by enemy surface raiders. One of them, the OLYMPUS, made a remarkable cruise. She was away from her depot-ship for 66 days and steamed 12,500 miles, her quest taking her as far south as the Crozets and Prince Edward Island. She left at 8 hours notice; her crew clothed for tropical conditions in shorts and sandals, found themselves in precipitous seas, swept by icy gales and trousers were made from canvas by the coxswain which proved a very inadequate protection."

EXTRACT FROM "THE VOYAGE OF THE 'CAP PILAR' by Adrian Seligman

Adrian Seligman began his sailing career at the age of 4 at St. Jacut, a small fishing village in Brittany and between the wars learnt to sail on the Brittany coast between St. Jacut and St. Malo. He went to Preparatory School in Wimbledon and then aged 14 to Public School. In 1929 he went up to Cambridge for 2 years and then quite suddenly he decided to go to sea. He was serving as an ordinary seaman in 1932 aboard the OLIVEBANK, a Finnish four-masted barque, where he met Lars Paersch also an ordinary seaman and it was when they were passing Tristan da Cunha at 15 knots with the aid of a strong westerly that they vowed one day they would fit out a ship of their own and re-visit Tristan. What follows is a brief resumé of the first part of their voyage round the world which brought them to Simon's Town.

With considerable encouragement from the News Chronicle in England Seligman finally decided to purchase the CAP PILAR, a three-masted barquentine which had been laid up at St. Malo and after a survey and some repairs she was pronounced to be sea worthy.

The CAP PILAR's statistics were as follows:

Length between uprights	118 feet	Extreme breadth	27 feet
Depth of hold	13 feet	Height of main truck	
Gross tonnage	295 tons	above deck	103 feet
Length of foreyard	50 feet		

Her frames were of oak 9" thick and her planking of oak and elm 3" thick. She was double-skinned, both being of equal thickness.

The crew were:

FRANCIS NEWELL	aged 31, ex-Paymaster R.N. who had left a good job with Shell to join them
WILLIE MARSH	aged 26, builders labourer and gardener, from Sussex.
JOHN DONNELLY	aged 25, who had just passed his final exam as a solicitor
ALAN BURGESS	aged 22, formerly a ventilating engineer in Birmingham
PETER ROACH	aged 18, fresh from teaching in his father's prep. school.
ALEXANDER DRUMMOND SANSON	aged 24, a biologist from Edinburgh University.
DR. EDMUND ATKINSON	aged 25, just qualified.
KURT ROMM	aged 28, who came as official photographer, a refugee from the Nazis
ALAN ROPER	aged 20, a student of botany from Leeds University.
GEORGE BATTERBURY	brother-in-law of Adrian Seligman - schoolmaster
LARS PAERSCH	tall, raw-boned Finn of very aristocratic descent
COLIN POTTER	aged 25, sheet-metal worker.
CHARLES PAYNE	aged 22, formerly 2nd chef at an hotel on the S.E. coast of England. He came as chef.
DUNCAN McDONALD	shipping office clerk.

They sailed from London on 30th September, 1936, taking with them as far as Madeira one Gelder, a reporter from the News Chronicle, who was to "cover" the sailing. They had been lucky in their re-fit in being advised by COMMANDER JOHN STENHOUSE, RNR, who had spent most of his life in sailing ships and had at one time been Master of Schackleton's DISCOVERY.

They sailed via Madeira, Tenerife, Cape Verde Islands and Rio de Janeiro for Cape Town also having called in at Tristan da Cunha for the period 31st January to 3rd February, 1937. They arrived in Cape Town on 15th February and the whole crew went off on a week's holiday. They were in need of extensive repairs to the sails

and they had run out of money.

The Royal Navy had been very kind to them since they arrived so they decided to sail round to False Bay and do their sail-making there. When the Admiral heard of their plans he immediately suggested they should take with them some of his midshipmen "and give them a taste of sail training". Accordingly on Thursday 25th February 1937 nine midshipmen came aboard and reported, each with a suitcase and a hammock. At precisely 3 p.m. they sailed.

"The white cloud, known as the tablecloth was already pouring over the edge of the mountain" when they left. This was a certain warning of a south-easter, and if they had had their own way they should probably have remained in harbour, but the Admiral's Secretary had sounded appallingly efficient over the telephone. "The midshipmen will be aboard you at 1100 on Thursday" he had said. This meant 11 a.m. and Seligman had rashly replied that the CAP PILAR would put to sea at 1500. So at 1500 precisely off they went "with the wind already piping across the Cape Flats and ships in the harbour laying out extra moorings in preparation for a blow".

The gale caught them suddenly just before sunset and the CAP PILAR heeled over before the first violent blast as though she would lie upon her side. One or two light sails blew out at once, and there was a great deal of shouting and rushing to and fro in which the midshipmen took part with immense gusto, galloping about the deck in eager groups to lend a hand wherever it was wanted.

It was a dead headwind for them and soon a high sea started to hurl them about, so they furled all except the essential canvas and settled down to ride it out. During the next 24 hours the CAP PILAR fought a hard battle, the waves were like small cliffs, and she pounded into them, one after another, with sickening shocks. Soon most of the midshipmen and half the crew were ill and before morning the rest of them were so weary that they could do little more than lie on deck and wait for the weather to moderate. The gale continued out of a brilliant cloudless sky until midnight on Friday 26th February, then left them as suddenly as it had sprung up. On Saturday morning they were becalmed, and their forenoon sights put them 120 miles due west of Cape Point. For the next two days all hands, including the midshipmen, were busy repairing sails that had been blown out. They reached False Bay on Tuesday morning, five days out from Cape Town. "The journey from Cape Town to Simon's Town takes less than one hour by train."

In Simon's Town their troubles descended upon them more heavily than before. They were beset by doubts and indecision. Adrian's wife Jane must go to England as she was expecting their first child. They still had no money. Adrian seriously considered sending the CAP PILAR in charge of Lars up to Zanzibar and back to Durban while he found a job to earn some money. A week later four young South Africans agreed to join the ship and contribute £75 each; so they made plans for an ox-waggon trek across the Karoo to fill in time while new accommodation was being built.

In all they spent nine weeks in Simon's Town doing repairs and generally sprucing up the ship. The Seligmans first stayed at the Lord Nelson Hotel, but unfortunately one night a riotous party, which included some of their crew, resulted in the removal of a picture from the wall of the lounge. When they heard about this the next day they sent Newell to return the picture and apologise for his shipmates. He did this so thoroughly that on the way back he fell into the sea and had to be fished out on the end of a boat-fall. Next morning the Seligmans were politely asked to leave; so they established themselves in the British Hotel.

At the British Hotel their room overlooking the harbour had a large airy balcony, where they used to have breakfast in the morning sunshine. For one hour of the day only, between 7a.m. and 8a.m. the Seligmans used to sit alone together talking about the coming baby or about the little house they would someday live in, the rest of the time there was frenzied activity.

From where they sat they "could see the whole of False Bay spread before them and beyond it the Hottentot Holland Mountains, standing like fortresses to protect the

little peninsula from the continent of Africa; the air was fresh and laden with the memory of last night's flowers; the south-easter came skipping across the water, and the whole bay trembled into winking life like a field of snowdrops. At 8a.m. the bugler on the training ship GENERAL BOTHA sounded "still" and all the ships in the harbour made their colours. Another day had begun."

Financial assistance was promised from England so frantic arrangements were made to get the ship ready for sea. Jane Seligman booked a passage on a tramp that was due to leave for Sydney in three weeks. She couldn't bear to leave them.

Six new crew joined.

CLAUDE MAGGS, an Englishman of 34, who had been a fruit farmer in Kent, then went to take charge of the Botanical Gardens in Rangoon in Burma and when he joined was fresh from working at Kirstenbosch.

CHARLES JAMES CARMICHAEL from Cape Town, who had a passion for the sea and all its traditions. He had just returned from a world cruise as a cadet under A.J. Villiers in the ship JOSEPH CONRAD.

DOUGLAS LOW, a chartered accountant, son of the Mayor of Cape Town.

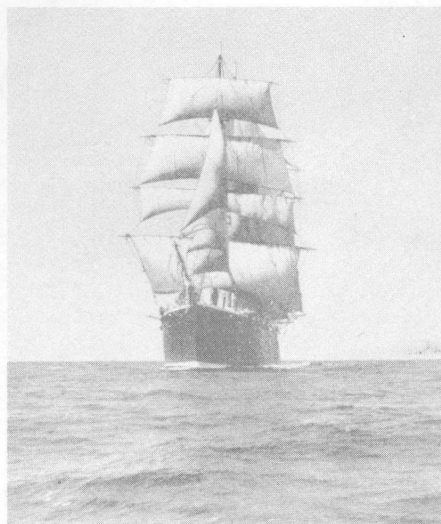
WELSLEY MURISON, who had worked as a clerk in the office of the Cape Times; he was also an expert musician and spent his evenings as the leader of a dance band. When he joined in Simon's Town he was obviously in urgent need of a holiday.

GEORGE SMITH, 58, pensioned Chief Petty Officer, R.N. He had first gone to sea at 15 in one of the training brigs used by the Navy in those days. He had for a time been Seamanship Instructor in the GENERAL BOTHA.

JACK OVENSTONE, aged 17, very shy and youthful even for his years. He was very keen to join and every day would "come down to the ship in a large and expensive car driven by a chauffeur. All day long he worked aboard and in the evening the car called for him again to drive him home, covered in the grime of honest toil."

They left on Saturday 17th April. There were towed out by the ST. DOGMAL. The tug left them in the middle of False Bay, dropping them "like a wet rag". All through the night they were dead becalmed. "The full moon clambered over the mountains, and hung above them like a fat old man holding his breath." Sunday morning found them still inside the bay with only the slightest of airs to stir their sails. All Sunday they lay becalmed. "At moonrise on Sunday dark boulders of cloud gathered in the north-west" and they were off towards Australia!

FOOTNOTE: After calling at Sydney, Auckland, the Marquesas and Gambier Islands and the Galapagos Islands in the Pacific, thence through the Panama Canal to Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, New York and Halifax in Nova Scotia, Seligman and his companions arrived back in Falmouth on 12th September 1938 to a great welcome from family & friends. It was decided the CAP PILAR should be laid up in London for the winter and she berthed once again in the East India Dock on 24th September, 1938, almost the same day on which she had left the same dock 2 years before. The following year she was sold to the Haifa Nautical College which was anxious to acquire a square-rigged training ship - even though the outbreak of World War II was only months away'



THEY PASSED THROUGH SIMON'S TOWN

Audrey Read

Another of those who came to Simon's Town and ultimately achieved fame in South Africa was JAMES LOGAN. He was born in 1857 at Reston in Berwickshire, the son of a minor railway official. He began work as a booking clerk in his home town. He was a young man of drive and intelligence and seeking greater challenges, at 17 he went to sea. At 19 his Australian bound ship THE ROCKHAMPTON put into Simon's town in 1876, waterlogged as a result of a severe storm off the Cape. It was here he decided to leave the ship and with only £5 in his pocket he walked to Cape Town. There he got a job with the newly formed Cape Government Railways. He began as a porter at 5/- a day but one year later was made Station Master of the newly completed railway station in Cape Town. In 1878 at 21 he was District Superintendent of that stretch of line between Hex River and Prince Albert Road, stationed at Touws River. In this year he married Emma Haylett of Cape Town. At 36 he was a member of the old Cape Parliament. He attended Queen Victoria's Silver Jubilee celebrations in London with Wm. Runciman.

In 1833 he moved his family to Matjiesfontein and developed the village into a Victorian helath and holiday resort. He became known as "the Laird of Matjiesfontein". Many famous people stayed with him. Olive Schreiner returned again and again and at one period lived there for a time. Rhodes was a frequent visitor and over the years Governors, Premiers and leading political figures of the Cape were his guests at his fine house in the village "Tweedside Lodge".

During the Boer War a vast Remount Camp with 10,000 troops and 20,000 horses was established on the outskirts of Matjiesfontein. Part of the recently finished Hotel Milner served as a convalescent hospital for British Officers, its central turret becoming an armed look-out post. He also established a cemetery for senior British Army officers who were killed in the debacle at Maggersfontein. Generals Wauchope and Macdonald, both of whom fought at the Battle of Omdurman, are buried there.

James Logan died in 1920 at the age of 63. At one time his interests included the railway catering franchise from the Cape to Bulawayo. He also owned an enormous amount of land on the Cape Town side of Matjiesfontein amounting to 100,000 acres. One feels that James Logan must be happy with the Matjiesfontein of to-day which has been so attractively restored by David Rawdon. It is again bustling with activity and continues to receive as it did in the past - visitors from all over the world!

BOOK REVIEW - TIM ANDERSON'S 52 DAY-WALKS IN AND AROUND CAPE TOWN

by Tim Anderson: Maps by Peter Slingsby: Cape Town: Struik 1984 Price R9,95

The book is written for visitors to Cape Town but will prove invaluable to residents as well. The walks range in difficulty from "a lazy little walk for bird-watchers" at Rondevlei Bird Sanctuary to "Following Smuts' Track" up to Maclear's Beacon on Table Mountain. The walks include towns: Cape Town, Simon's Town and Stellenbosch; coastal areas: Table Mountain; Cape Peninsula and Country Districts - Somerset West, Franschhoek, Paarl & Grabouw; thus covering a wide variety of scenery and climatic conditions.

Each walk has a detailed sketch map of the route to be followed and information on each includes a description, estimate of time required (allowance is often made for a picnic) whether permits are required and where to obtain them, flora and fauna to be seen, whether a dog can be taken, the facilities available and time of opening.

On reading the descriptions, one is tempted to start immediately. It is written with an abvious knowledge and love of the outdoors tempered with sound advice on the dangers and problems to be encountered. A chapter on "Hassle-free hiking" provides a list of equipment needed and the places to purchase it, action to be taken on encountering wild animals and basic first aid. A book to be enjoyed by all who would like to extend their knowledge of the Peninsula and its environs.

SHARK ATTACKS IN FALSE BAY

Gordon Wilson

To a reader there is no account of an attack on a human being more blood-chilling than a front page press report of a swimmer being savaged by a shark. Dozens of people may lose their lives daily on our roads without arousing much popular sympathy and concern but one report of a serious attack by a shark can send a wave of horror and shock through a community. Sometimes it can even cause the closing of beaches at coastal resorts, the abrupt departure of holiday makers, and severe financial loss to a community dependant on the tourist attractions of its seaside resources. Happenings such as these on the East Coast of the U.S.A. provided the basis and theme for Peter Benchley's absorbing novel "Jaws".

False Bay happily has experienced few major shark attacks, particularly in recent years, but these have happened from time to time as various episodes, drawn from accounts of the day and related below, amply demonstrate.

The presence of huge sharks in False Bay has been recorded on numerous occasions in the press. For instance, the "South African Commercial Advertiser" of 7th August, 1830, reported that a shark of 16-17 feet in length was caught off Fish Hoek. It was reported that when cut open it was found to contain 25 large pieces of whale blubber and its jaws were so large that it could have "completely enveloped a man's body."

The Guinness Book of Records states that the largest carnivorous fish found to date was a man-eating Blue Pointer 43 feet long, weighing about 17 1/2 tons, captured after standing itself in 1835 in False Bay. Again on the 17th August 1839 the "Verzamelaar" reported that two sharks were caught at Simon's Bay, one of 26 feet and the other of 22 feet. The two livers rendered 150 gallons of oil.

The extraordinary tenacity of large sharks when in search of food is illustrated in the account of 13th December 1878 in False Bay when the fishermen aboard a fishing boat lying off Gordon's Bay were busily pulling in numbers of glistening geelbek from the blue waters. Suddenly a large shark was seen charging after one of the hooked geelbek as it was being pulled to the surface of the water. As the fisherman swung the fish out of the water, the shark, so intent on seizing the fish, crashed into the side of the boat, stoving in the planks. The boat foundered and four of the fishermen were lost.

As there were several whaling stations in False Bay in the last century, this activity no doubt attracted large sharks to the area. An account in the "Cape Argus" of 25th June 1894, tells of a whaling hunt that ended in tragedy. A whale had been harpooned and in its struggles it upset one of the whalers, tipping the men into the sea. A young Swede was swimming to safety of another boat when suddenly he threw up his arms, shrieked and was pulled under, leaving the water in the area where he disappeared, crimson with his blood. Although the shark was not seen, no doubt the whale's blood and struggles had attracted it to the area.

At the Seaforth whaling station a harpooned whale was attacked by sharks. According to an account in the "Argus" of 2nd October 1897, two monsters, one of 15 feet and the other of 13 feet, were caught while stripping huge chunks of blubber from the carcass while it was lying in a couple of feet of water awaiting flensing.

A terse entry in the Roll of Honour of the Boer prisoners of war held in Simon's Town during the South African War 1899-1902, reads: "No. 5316: CHANDLER, J.H.: aged 29, from Ladybrand, O.F.S.: captured at Paardeberg: killed by a shark on 30.7.1901."

Many readers will be aware that during this war there was a Boer PoW Camp on the present day golf course at the Boulders. Among the recreational facilities granted to the prisoners by the British authorities was the pleasure of bathing at the adjoining beach, among the rocks, just below the camp. This facility was greatly enjoyed and appreciated by the prisoners - some of whom had never seen the sea before being held at the camp. On a sunny winter afternoon of 30th July, 1901, a number of prisoners were allowed to have their usual dip in the briny (in the nude, of course) and were happily splashing about, when tragedy in the shape of a large torpedo-like killer struck swiftly among the prisoners in the shallow water. Young John Hendrik Chandler dived off a rock and was immediately seized by the shark. Captain C.H. Bayly, R.N. reported that the shark first bit off Chandler's right arm and then one of his legs at the thigh. Chandler was a powerful fellow and fought with the brute and nearly dragged it ashore, but he let go in less than 3 foot of water. He managed to crawl out on to a rock from where his fellow prisoners carried him at once to the hospital in the nearby camp. Chandler died of loss of blood and shock within half an hour. He lies buried in the old cemetery in Simon's Town.

Let us now turn to an episode that happened over 50 years ago. Many members will remember the old training ship GENERAL BOTHA which used to be moored about 300 yards off the end of the jetty at Simon's Town. On a beautiful, calm Saturday in May 1922, on the jetty stood young Eddie Pells, a student of the University of Cape Town, later to become Professor of Education at U.C.T. The sea was as flat as the proverbial mill pond and it did not take young Eddie long to dive into the translucent water for a slow swim round the training ship. Some distance out three Malays in a flat-bottomed "pram" lay at anchor - their "anchor" being a smallish boulder on the end of a rope. The fishermen were Edroos Slarmie (one of Simon's Town's oldest fishermen of Cole Point Road), Jonkie Moses and Marona Potts. Somewhat lazily Eddie swam towards the GENERAL BOTHA. He had covered about half the distance when there was a swirl of water below him followed by what felt like the impact of a torpedo. Simultaneously he was seized by very powerful jaws. The huge triangular saw-edged teeth of a man-eating shark's top jaw sank deep into the front of his left thigh while the smaller teeth of its lower jaw found a purchase in the small of his back. At the same moment the brute turned sharply downwards. Its tremendous tail flashed in the air and lashed the water as it descended with Eddie.

Young Pells was of course now panic stricken and in the dim depths he struggled frantically to free himself. By using leverage against the shark's body, he literally tore himself free! The large serrated rows of the top jaw simply ripped through the yielding flesh and muscle of his stomach and thigh while the smaller teeth, fewer and further apart, gashed his back in the process of forcing his body from this merciless grip.

Fifteen feet down he was aware of the monster looming darkly beside him and he struck at once for the surface. At last, with lungs craving for fresh air, he broke surface in a wide circle of flecked foam and in his immediate vicinity the water began to crimson ominously. Quickly locating the dingy he struck out for it with what speed he could muster. The shock of the attack robbed him of his speech and he was unable to shout for help. The three Malay fishermen had witnessed the attack and were busy hoisting their stone "anchor". Eddie was weakening but at last the eager hands of the fishermen hauled him over the gunwale and in that instant the sinister shape of the huge shark approached and bumped the bow of the dinghy. Petrified horror spread over the Malays' faces as they thought the shark would upset the "pram" and tip them all into the sea.

Mr. Robert Lankester, the coxswain of the port boat, also witnessed the near tragedy. After a short but anxious row to the jetty, the Malays delivered Eddie to a waiting motor car summoned by Mr. Lankester while Eddie was still in the water. Within minutes Eddie was lying on the operating table of the False Bay Hospital having the flow of blood staunched and the wounds stitched by the

District Surgeon who had fortuitously just finished an operation!!

Mr. Lankester immediately asked his boat's crew to keep a look-out for the shark and reports came through that the shark was still "cruising" about in the Bay. Mr. Lankester then got his equipment ready. A large foot-long 1/2 inch steel barbed hook with a foot of heavy metal trace, three steel harpoons fitted in wooden shafts and plenty of rope. He fixed a four gallon drum on the line and baited the hook with a leg of pork. Two days later the shark was seen idly swimming on the surface of the bay and the port boat went out after him. Mr. Lankester threw the baited hook, drum and line overboard and it was not long before the bait was taken and the shark was well and truly hooked. A battle royal followed but the heavy drag caused by the drum on the line eventually tired the shark out and it was forced to the surface. Approaching the shark in the boat, Mr. Lankester plunged the first of the harpoons well home into the monster's back. Immediately the shark came for the boat with open jaws. Mr. Lankester thrust the second harpoon down its throat and the great jaws snapped closed, bending the steel shaft on the harpoon like a piece of baling wire! Eventually a third harpoon sealed its fate and it was subdued and brought to the shore. It was then discovered that the 1/2 inch steel hook had been almost straightened out in the struggle.

Hung by its tail from an old gum tree (then growing in the area where the present Marlin and Tuna Club House stands, before the reclamation of the area by fill), it proved to be over 12 feet long and over 1,000 lbs in weight. It was a Blue Pointer (*Carcharodon carcharias*) known as the Great White Shark (or Great White Death in Australia) and the most ferocious and voracious of all shark species. (Specimens of this type sometimes grow to 30-40 feet.)

Mr. Lankester cut the jawbone from the shark and later Eddie Pells allowed the monster's jaws to be fitted to the wounds on his body. They fitted his wounds exactly even to the breaks in continuity of the wounds which corresponded precisely with broken or missing teeth in its lower jaw. Mr. Lankester presented Mr. Pells with one of the shark's teeth which the latter had mounted on a tie pin as a memento of his desperate encounter.



Two major intriguing questions arise from the attack and a subsequent one related below. Why did the shark grip Eddie Pells so 'lightly' in its jaws that he was able to free himself. Why did it not attack him again when he was struggling to reach the Malays' "pram". The writer will endeavour to provide an answer later in this article.

The subsequent and somewhat similar attack took place nearly eight years later. On 16th January 1930 Mr. Servy le Roux of Somerset West was swimming at Melkbaai near The Strand. He was in deep water some 200 yards from the shore and had swum perhaps half a mile parallel with the shore. A strong swimmer of fine physique, Servy then espied a friend's motorbike on the beach directly opposite where he now was and did a right angled turn towards the beach. As he made the turn he felt the impact of a terrific force. A huge shark had seized him on the right side with its upper jaw on his stomach and upper thigh and its lower on his right buttock. The shark then dived. He then, with amazing presence of mind, put his right hand into the lower jaw embedded in his buttock and with his left hand he gripped the upper jaw across his abdomen. Then, exerting all his strength, he tried to part the monster's jaws, although his fingers were being cut to the bone by the shark's teeth in the process.

Somehow or other the shark released its grip sufficiently for him to tear his body loose. Without hesitation the shark returned to the attack and gripped his right arm from fingers to just below the elbow. Servy struck at the shark with all his might with his left fist and it released his arm! Being free once more, but with torn buttock and stomach and thigh, as well as a badly lacerated arm, Servy splashed and kicked frantically and began to swim. To his dismay he found he had lost his bearing and was now swimming out to sea. Turning once more he swam shorewards and he was horrified to see the shark swimming parallel to him on his right. He kicked the monster several times to keep it away.

At last le Roux reached the breakers and touched bottom and the shark turned away to sea. He struggled shorewards and shouted for help. Applying pressure to stop the spurting blood from a severed artery in his arm, he staggered a hundred yards up the beach towards a car. Friends came to his help and he was conveyed to the De Beers Hospital where he made a good recovery.

To return to the intriguing questions these two attacks pose. In a recent book on "Shark Attack" by Tim Walleit (Purnell) the author puts forward the following theory:

Sharks have been in the seas, practically unchanged, for 60 million years. They are creatures of habit (albeit often irrational and unpredictable to human beings). They instinctively know all creatures of the sea. Man is a terrestrial animal and unknown to sharks. The predatory shark picks up vibrations of something in the sea with its ears and sensory lateral line and investigates. Suddenly it homes in on this strange being in the sea. As a bird will pick up something in its beak to test if it is edible, a shark will "mouth" its victim as part of its investigatory approach. Because a shark's teeth are razor sharp, the resulting mouthing often causes severe injury to soft human tissue, giving the impression that an attack had taken place. Often by the reaction of a victim such as shouting and splashing and even striking it, because it is not expecting this reaction, the shark probably becomes frightened and departs.

It can be postulated that both the "attacks" on Eddie Pells and Servy le Roux were more likely to have been of the investigatory type and that both men were "mouthed" for, if these sharks had been in earnest, neither swimmer would have lived to tell the tale. This theory is borne out in the case of the war-time attack on Corporal N.S. le Blanc at Strandfontein on 29th February, 1944, when while bathing in shallow water he felt his right leg seized from calf to foot. He kicked the shark with his left foot and hit it with his fists while tumbling above and below water. The shark released its grip and departed.

Similar investigatory "attacks" were those on Michael A. Hoffman at The Strand on 5th January 1946 (bitten on the foot while bathing); that of Fanie Schreuder who received bites on his thigh and both wrists while bathing at Melkbaai, Strand, on 16th January 1959 and the case of Graham Smith who was bitten on the foot while diving off Glencairn Quarry (27th October, 1956). Peter Hendricks received a gashed ankle while bathing at Strandfontein on 8th January 1961, while a similar "attack" on Alan Saffery, bathing at Sunrise Beach, Muizenberg, on 2nd February, 1964, when he received bad lacerations to his right foot; while nearer at home Sheryl Teague of Fish Hoek had her arm "seized" by a shark, sustaining a gashed wrist, on 16th February 1971 and Lt. C.J. Lubbe while bathing at Miller's Point received lacerations above his right ankle on 31st December, 1972.

Nevertheless it seems very apparent that if a shark is "in earnest" a swimmer has no chance, being out of his element. This, unfortunately, was the case for Barry Gildenhuys who while bathing at Melkbaai, Strand on 23rd December, 1958, was seen to be taken by a large shark. His body was not recovered, only one of his feet washed up on the shore eleven days later.

Society Members will be interested to know that our late President Alderman Gerry Ferry recalled seeing packs of huge sharks, often half a dozen strong, swimming on the surface just outside the breakers along Long Beach at Simon's Town Station. Old George Cotton would put out and harpoon several of the monsters which were then pulled up onto the beach where their livers were extracted. (Note: The Shark has a double liver representing almost 20% of its mass, in effect a natural storage compartment enabling it to survive for as long as a month without food.)

Alderman Ferry recalled a near tragedy when, as a youngster, he was playing cricket on the beach with a few of his school friends. One of the concrete pillars supporting the sewage outfall pipe was used as a wicket, and the batsman hit a ball into the waves. A player, a young girl, waded out to recover the ball which was bobbing in the waves, retrieved it and made back for the beach. Young Gerry was horrified to see a shark making for her. It, however, turned away as the child reached shallow water.

What of the future? Although thankfully the incidence of shark attacks now is very low, the experts are agreed that there are still a considerable number of sharks in False Bay. The temperature profiles of the water in the Strandfontein/Gordon's Bay area are well suited to sharks and as they prey heavily on the seals around Seal Island this part of False Bay is particularly dangerous. Helicopter pilots flying over the area have seen substantial numbers and it is obviously foolhardy to venture into these waters and before you do just remember, the shark has been around for some 60,000,000 years - he is not likely to give up very easily if he happens to be "in earnest"!!

From: The Fish Hoek Echo of 4th May, 1984:

A shoal of half-grown sharks recently joined a group of scuba divers at Millers Point, to their alarm. One of the cheekier sharks approached a diver in a rather menacing way but was grabbed by the tail and pulled backwards by another diver. The shark then swung round, took a large bite and realised too late that he had bitten a chunk out of his own tail!

SOCIETY's SPRING TOUR TO MOSSEL BAY & OUDTSHOORN 20/21 OCTOBER, 1984

Nigel Farquharson

Anyone who thought that 1,000 kilometres on a bus must be sheer purgatory would have been pleasantly surprised if they had come on this tour: the bus itself was fast, clean and comfortable, Claude Brevis the driver, handled it so surely and safely that for once it was a real pleasure to have someone else to do the hard work, and the overall arrangements were so well organised that the whole week-end went like clockwork. Gerry and Audrey Read, together with Gordon Wilson, had done extensive research into the historical, cultural and geographical background of the places through which we drove and Gordon delivered the most detailed and enthralling commentary over the public address system. Thank you all three for your most excellent planning.

This Tour was the longest yet attempted by the Society, and an early 8 a.m. start from Jubilee Square in beautiful weather allowed us to be at Houw Hoek Inn for a welcome coffee and cream scone break before 9.30. Here we were joined by a couple who had quite literally missed the bus and who had to chase after us in their own car.....quite how they ever recovered it later is unknown as we came back on a different road!

Just short of Caledon we turned off left and half an hour later idled into Genadendal, the site of South Africa's oldest mission station. It is now a sadly and partly decrepit little village, but the water mill is still working and of interest. By comparison Greyton, only a few miles away, had a quiet charm and the householders exhibited some pride in the state of their property. Our time schedule did not permit a stop here, so it was off through farmlands showing the ravages of the recent storms and back to the Main Road at Riviersonderend: 50 kilometres later into Swellendam....here too many newly cut tree stumps bore mute testimony to the power of storm winds.

The picnic lunch in the Bontebok National Park was enjoyed under warm skies: suitably victualled and watered for the long stage to Mossel Bay, the passengers quickly embussed in response to Gordon's police whistle! It was late in the afternoon when we pulled up beside the Post Office Tree and debussed to inspect it as well as the circa 1918 2-8-0 steam locomotive parked nearby. The site is only a few metres from the sea and as no protective work has been done, the old iron horse is rusting so badly that it will soon be a public hazard; presumably the City Fathers will then put a fence around it complete with warning notices!

A quick walk to the Museum buildings, the wind getting chilly now and a rather perfunctory tour through them was all that time would permit. Happily we were informed that a large grant is to be made available to finance improvements in time for the celebrations in 1988 marking the quincentenary of Vasco da Gama's landing. Then we took a short drive to the Poort area and back along the main street to view all the lovely old stone building which abound in Mossel Bay.

The Management of the Santos Hotel succeeded in making us all welcome and feeding our appetites; the breakfast was especially notable for its variety of fresh fruit, juices and cereals. Summoned by a "toot" from Gordon we found our seats in the bus and were off on the most scenically attractive section of the whole tour, the drive up, over and down the Robinson Pass. The soft, wooded shapes of the lower slopes were enhanced by an early morning mist that hung in the branches and relinquished its hold only as the sun burnt through. The old road glimpsed now on one side of the new road, now on the other, twisting and turning, all the time climbing....just one of Bain's many masterpieces. Oudtshoorn and Ostriches: by the time we reached the C.P. Nel Museum we had been well tutored by Gordon in the rise and fall of the Town's prosperity and the swings in overseas fashions that had controlled their fates. It was, therefore, with a keen sense of satisfaction that we entered the Museum: we were not disappointed what a collection, what fine display, what marvellous reconstructions (how could

those items in the apothecary's window look so new?), what absolute fascination. Time was far too short to do it justice and many of us vowed to return for a second and unhurried visit.

Following a quick "cuppa" and some more cream scones, it was "all aboard" again and off westwards, through flat karoo land dotted with ostriches, towards Calitzdorp, Hoeko, Opsoek, Amalienstein, Zoar and Ladismith, negotiating the rugged Huis Rivier Pass en route. This otherwise arid stretch came to life with Gordon's well-researched commentary and it was a very exuberant parcel of travellers that poured into the Valley Inn Hotel at Barrydale for lunch. The owners, Mr. and Mrs. Slabber, had laid out a mouthwatering spread of cold meats and salads, also a generous selection of local wines of all types. It is surprising how hungry one can get sitting in a bus; thirsty too! Montagu was revisited fleetingly, then on via Ashton, Robertson and so to Worcester, where the bus refuelled and most of the passengers did otherwise. It was into the setting sun that we wound our way up the long approach to Du Toit's Kloof, our fourth major pass of the tour, and at Paarl we turned off the kamikaze-ridden N2 to return sedately through Stellenbosch and Faure; less than an hour later it was Jubilee Square and friendly goodbyes.

The Society tours have always been over a week-end with a maximum of one night away; yet the great majority of our "regulars" are retired. Extending the tour to three days and two nights would allow us to venture further afield, Graaf-Reinet and Grahamstown maybe: please let your Committee know how you feel about this idea.

SIMON'S TOWN CROQUET CLUB

SIMON'S TOWN CROQUET CLUB

This was situated behind the old Post Office building where an outbuilding of the present Post Office is, i.e. on the right hand side of Wharf Street, opposite Harry Dilley's office/workshop. Fronting on to Wharf Street itself was the old Customs House (the croquet lawn was behind it).

As far as we have been able to ascertain some of the members were:

Mr and Mrs Flowers 1926-30

Mr. Arthur Holwill (Customs Officer)

Mr. Johnnie Holder

Mr. & Mrs. James (of The Cycle Shop in the 1902 building Main Street -
who in later years built and lived at 260 Queen's Rd)

Mr. & Mrs. Whyte (R.S. Whyte - opp. the P.O.)

Mr. & Mrs. Rayner (Hardware shop)

Mr. & Mrs. Squires

Perhaps some of you may have photographs or know of other members , or even have some records of the Club. The old Club House which was a wooden structure of the same design as the Customs House was, on the closure of the Croquet Club, sold to the Rondebosch Bowling Club and re-erected there. Before its demolition last year because it was riddled with worm and literally falling to pieces we were able to obtain photographs of the old clubhouse.

Editor.