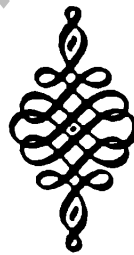




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The State Library, Pretoria, has registered our Bulletin with the International Serials Data System in Paris. We have been allocated the following number: ISSN 0037-5470 which will in future appear on this page in all future publications of the Bulletin.

A.F. Moore.

V.O.C. Ownership and reasons which led to their selling:

Monopolies are inherently self-destructive. "Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee" wrote Wordsworth of the Venetian Republic: but her tight control over the Eastern Mediterranean and consequent ability to exclude all other nations from the lucrative trade in silks and spices which at that time arrived there overland from the East, sent Portuguese ships probing tenaciously further and further down the west coast of Africa and, ultimately, round the Cape until Calicut was reached, thus cutting the Trade of Venice from under her feet and establishing a new monopoly for Portugal which, in due course, was itself superceded by Dutch rivals, who because of their improved ships, innate ability and forcefulness, supplanted the Portuguese in an amazingly short time and, then, by driving the English from Amboyna in 1623 temporarily secured a monopoly based on the Netherlands. However, by the time the Residency was being built the logic of history, as Bismarck described it, the reaping of what is sowed in Paul's metaphor to the Galatians, the nemesis of justice was about to turn the mighty V.O.C. into another chapter of history.

In Volume I of the Van Riebeeck Society's edition of "Travels in the Cape 1772-1776" the Swedish botanist, Anders Sparrman, wrote: "About the time of my departure from Africa they were building another large and handsome house for the accommodation of the Governor when he chooses to retire there for his pleasure." By invitation of Captain James Cook, Sparrman boarded the Resolution and set sail from Cape Town on 22nd November 1772 and "at length...on 22 March 1775, after a voyage of 60,000 miles and an absence of two years and a quarter....we came again to anchor in Table Bay." As Sparrman's reference to the building of the Governor's House is found in the portion of his Journal which dealt with his stay at False Bay from May to August 1772, some have assumed the building operations had been begun in that year; but there is little doubt that he was, in fact, referring to his final departure for home in 1776, for his statement is a sort of appendage to his enumeration of the buildings he had seen during his stay in Simon's Town before setting out with Captain Cook.

Baron Joachim van Plettenberg headed the Administration at the Cape from 1771 until 1785, and the house to which Sparrman referred is now known as the Residency. That it should have been built at that juncture was a surprising gesture of extravagance for the kaleidoscope of events was already foretelling the doom of Jan Compagnie. England had breached the trade fortress of the once mighty V.O.C., which then sought to maintain its profits by increasing prices, limiting sales to the European markets or even burning supplies - a folly which today is replaced by erecting huge magazines that then burst with frozen meat, butter etc. in order to circumvent the law of supply and demand. Only a stern monopoly could be efficacious under such circumstances and then merely in the short term. Power that is abused is always destroyed ultimately. "In matters of commerce the fault with the Dutch "Is giving too little and asking too much" jibed the English, and simply expanded their own markets and profits at the further expense of the Company.

That was not all. There were many other problems. In 1780 the Netherlands became involved against England in the American War of Independence, thus leaving her merchant fleet prey to the grasp of eager English admirals and zealous younger officers such as Cuthbert Collingwood and Horatio Nelson. The net was cast far and wide and the haul of Dutch merchantmen was great. Wars are expensive and wasteful. The decline in the Company's power and prosperity resulted not only in economic stress, but in a resurgence of political unrest throughout its far-flung commercial empire, and aggravated dissatisfaction with the rigid trading restrictions that had been placed on Company servants and Colonists at the Cape ever since April 1652.

In 1779, as had occurred initially as early as in December 1658 and subsequently, there was another Burgher Petition to plague the Governor. That same year the First Frontier War broke out bringing with it further strain on the ailing exchequer. By 1794 the V.O.C. was insolvent. The next year, just before the arrival of the British in the persons of Admiral Elphinstone and Major General Craig, Swellendam and Graaff-Reinet, influenced by the French Revolution, declared themselves independent. Van Plettenberg, whose head wore a very uneasy crown, might on rare occasions have been able to find brief solace in the magnificent panorama of sea and mountains, or in venturing into the pleasantly warm waters of Simon's Bay at his doorstep during a visit to the Governor's House; but soon after he had left the Cape that haven was no longer available.

Private Owners of the Residency 1791-1814.

During the course of these events the Company sold off some of its property, including the Residency which in 1791 was acquired by Gideon Rousseau - often spelt Rossouw - for 31,600 guilders and was paid for in five instalments. Seven years later the building passed to Dr. William Pattison, Chief Naval Surgeon, at a cost of 65,000 guilders, after which it was used as a Naval Hospital until the British left the Cape in 1803 in which year, as he was returning to England, Pattison sold to Thomas Maxwell, the price being only 40,000 guilders but, as the latter's financial position was much the same as that of the vanished company, Maxwell was forced to dispose of the Governor's House almost immediately for just over half of his own purchase price, and Isaac Strombom became the new owner on 5 January 1804. Finally J.H. Brand purchased the property in 1810 for the amount of 70,000 guilders, a figure which Isaac rightly regarded as quite inadequate, yet he had no option but to sell as he intended leaving the country. Like Gideon Rousseau and John Osmond, Brand had his ear close to the ground and knew that sooner or later the British would be eager to buy from him. He sold four years later for 120,000 guilders. The building then began a long period of use as various Government Offices and as a Magistrate's Court cum Residency.

On the face of it both the first and the last private owner of the Governor's House did extremely well financially out of their ventures into real estate. The exact extent of profit-taking, however, is difficult to establish because very considerable inflation which reflected the unstable economic position at the time, was a factor of no mean consideration. At Cape Town, for example, between 1795 and 1798 board and lodging increased by 50%, the price of slaves almost doubled and that of beef rose more than twofold. Nevertheless, these two Dutch colonists proved to be shrewd businessmen. As they and the three other private owners of this historic building in Simon's Town, now a fine Museum, played a not unimportant part in the affairs of the Cape, it is right that a few lines should be devoted to each of them.

Gideon Rousseau.

Pierre Rousseau, who had been born north of Blois in France, was already at the Cape in 1688. By his first wife Anne Retief, he had six daughters and four sons and then after her death and his marriage to Geertruy du Toit two more children were born, a girl and a boy. Large families were the order of the day and Pierre's tenth child, Daniel, became the (we hope) proud father of 19 children, also at the expense of two wives.

Gideon, a great-grandson of the original Pierre Rousseau, was baptised on 21 November 1762 the third child and second son of Francois Josua Rousseau and Margaretha (nee Joubert) the widow of Daniel Hugo. On 22 September 1782 Gideon married Johanna Susanna de Necker (sometimes De Nicker), baptised on 27 May 1759, a granddaughter of Adriaan de Necker who had arrived at the Cape in 1711. She was born after her father's third marriage which was to Magdalena Joubert.

Gideon and Johanna had three daughters, four sons, then two more daughters and a son in that order, the youngest being baptised on 1 February 1795. Gideon died in his prime four years later. Their second child, Margaretha Johanna, married John Osmond. Under the date 19 November 1802 we read "John Osmond, desirous of being

joined in matrimony on Monday next (with Margaretha Johanna Rousseau, daughter of the late Gideon Rousseau and Johanna Susanna de Necker) requests permission to have all three banns read next Sunday". (It was customary for a widow to become known by her maiden name.) In due course there is a record of the baptism of their son John Henry Houghton Osmond, the witnesses being Wm. Maud, J. Houghton and Eliz. Tennant, the latter of whom reminds us that Alexander Tennant also had property in Simon's Town as well as elsewhere. Other children followed: William Rousseau, Johanna Catharina, James Francis, Agnes (after whom Osmond named a schooner) and Ellen. Margaretha Johanna Osmond died at Simon's Town on February 4, 1833 and John Osmond on May 9, 1847.

The 8th child of Gideon and Johanna, who had been baptised Johanna Magdalena on 11 March 1792, married Lt. William Macarthy Cox of the 83rd Regiment in Simon's Town on 17 February 1817, the Rev. George Hough officiating. Cox, strangely enough, sometimes appears in records under the name of John. He died not long afterwards and Johanna married Lt. John Mudge, Royal Engineers, by Special Licence on 5 February 1821. They were married in the English Church in Cape Town, the Rev. N.R. Dennis being the minister. The notices of Johanna's two marriages appeared in The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser. Johanna was already unwell when she married John Mudge and, in an endeavour to restore her health, she and her husband sailed in the GLOBE for Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) but Johanna died on board on 19 June 1822. In 1942 the author came across a memorial plaque on the wall of St Peter's Garrison Church in Colombo which John had had erected. Quite obviously her death had left him distraught. On his return to the Cape he had an obituary notice inserted in the Cape Town Gazette on 2 November in which, inter alia, he wrote: "Her mild and benevolent disposition endeared her to all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance. She has left a disconsolate husband to mourn her untimely end." (For the wording on the plaque in Colombo and a sonnet on Johanna's death see Simon's Town Historical Society Bulletin No.1 January 1980 Vol. XI p. 8/9. See same Bulletin for Mudies at the Cape and the untimely death of John.)

The 9th child of Gideon and Johanna Rousseau, Magdalena Elizabeth, married Asst. Surgeon William Thompson of the 38th Regiment.

Gideon, who died before his daughter's marriage to Osmond, had his ear close to the ground and an eye for the main chance. He knew full well how desperate Dr. Pattison was for additional and improved hospital accommodation at Simon's Town, a desperation which Lady Anne Barnard's words make clear: "...there is sadly little room for the poor sick fellows, the honest tars, multitudes of whom have been lost for want of air and wholesome accommodation.Dr. Pattison has got, with much difficulty, leave to have the use of the stable for horses....and since then sixty men have been put into it." With this knowledge Gideon demanded 70,000 guilders for the Governor's House; but when Earl Macartney, sensing a grasping charge, ordered the Burgher Senate to examine the house and report, Gideon, still astutely, dropped only 5,000 guilders and the price was accepted. As a business-man he could claim considerable success, and, after his death the following year we read that when his son-in-law, 'King John' "needed cash urgently to take advantage of a tempting transaction, he could depend upon his wealthy mother-in-law, the widow Rousseau."

Dr. William Pattison.

Andrew and Lady Anne Barnard set sail for Cape Town from Plymouth on 28 February 1797 aboard the TRUSTY, an inept name, for the ship sprang a leak and had to put into Plymouth where the passengers were transferred to the SIR EDWARD HUGHES. Lady Anne was an historian's stroke of good fortune. Robert Burns wrote: "A chiel's amang us takin notes, and sure he'll print them." That is exactly what she did, warts, rumours, scandals, prejudices and all. Many who would otherwise be languishing in the limbo of oblivion which they deserved are, because of her pen, remembered to-day although, perhaps, not quite as they would have wished.

Among the passengers bound for the Cape on the same ship was Dr. Pattison whom Lady

Anne at various times in her correspondence described as "a modest, well-bred man, ...a very amiable, sensible and humane man sent out by the Admiralty as physician to the Navy Hospital....an excellent man, and.....a right good man." She tells us that Mrs. Pattison, whose maiden name is in doubt but may have been Miane or Meehan, was accompanying him and "a crumb of a sister." Margaret and her sister Mary had married Pattison and William Proctor Smith, respectively, the latter of whom became Naval Storekeeper and Clerk of the Cheque at the Cape. In one of her usual lengthy letters to Earl Macartney which she wrote on 9 January 1800, Lady Anne mentioned: "The Pattison have a nice little girl - Mrs. Smith, her sister, a boy." We are not told whether or not the little crumb's son was pleasant or otherwise. In a letter of 17 February 1801 written at Vineyard, Claremont, the same recipient was informed: "Your addorer, Mrs. Hipposley, has given the world another little one, as has Mrs. Pattison, Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Strombom, Mrs. Hogan; Mrs. Sandanley and Mrs. Craufurd follow soon."

A letter of 14 December 1799 gives us a momentary glimpse of Margaret Pattison in the social life of the Cape when the inimitable diarist wrote: "...the Ball being unexpected, went off charmingly, Mr. Barnard set Mrs. Blake a going, and Sir George (Yonge, the Governor; whom she disliked) had his little lassie again to flirt with; as to Sir Roger Curtis, in all secrecy be it spoken, he says that as Admiral he reckons a flirtation with Mrs. Baumgardt, now that the General is otherwise engaged, is attached to his Flag; Mrs. Baumgardt is perfectly of the same opinion...A quiet little English woman (Mrs. Pattison) whispered to me as at supper the two gentlemen were ogling their loves 'How do you think Lady Yonge and Lady Curtis would like it if they were to see their old boys behaving so.' Lady Anne's next remark is interesting: "Jesting apart, for this is only a jest as yet, I don't see what they can do but coquet; if wives wont accompany honest men they must run the risk." The two wives in question had not bothered to come to the Cape.

Dr. William Pattison became Chief Surgeon at the Naval Hospital in Simon's Town where he exerted himself greatly to improve efficiency and the extremely miserable conditions that had existed there for years. It was for this purpose that he bought the Governor's House and paid Gideon Rousseau handsomely for it. The fact that he accompanied Lady Anne (trews and all, for such she wore) up Platteklip Gorge to the top of Table Mountain reveals that he must have been physically fit and not lacking in energy. No doubt he was diplomatic as well for, so the Lady recorded, he told her he could have won a great sum by betting on the outcome of the venture. It seems there had been scoffers and few believed the party would get very far; but we read, "...he said..he knew I would do it if it was possible.." From the little we know about Pattison we are justified in thinking he was genuine. It is a pity that his stay at Simon's Town was short-lived.

The Peace of Amiens was signed on 27 March 1802 and on 16 October of the same year Lady Anne wrote: "We shall sail (for England, as the Cape was being handed over to the Batavian Republic), God Willing, in the INDOSTAN, the Pattisons, who have been constant and worthy friends, accompany us, and probably the little sister and her husband..." And so the actors who had trodden the boards for so short a while left the scene. Their appearance on our stage was brief and sometimes at fault, but not without praise.

Thomas Maxwell.

He was one of the "little potatoes" (a description which General Smuts, with the best of intentions, once used injudiciously at Buckingham Palace) and did not come within the purview of Lady Anne's opera glasses.

In 1798 he is listed among English persons resident at the Cape where he was, *inter alia*, a clerk to John Pringle the Agent to the Hon.English India Company. He became, also, an agent to William Skirrow of Bombay and must, therefore, have been connected with commerce. In 1800 he bought a house on Riebeeck Square, but his affairs did not prosper and in April 1803 his property was attached by the Chamber for Regulating Insolvent Estates - also known as the Desolate Boedelkamer - to

pay his debts, and the house was sold. Undaunted, and, like Mr. Macawber, always hopeful that something would turn up, in December of the same year he offered 40,000 guilders for the Residency at Simon's Town, was unable to raise the necessary loan and sold to Isaac Strombom for just over half the amount to which he had committed himself. His business ventures appear to have been unfortunate or ill-judged. He claimed, for example, to be agent for the ship MILFORD and her cargo, but this was disputed and led to a court case.

In spite of the Peace of Amiens the political situation in Europe was most unstable and this, inevitably, had its effect upon the Cape. Maxwell was one of a considerable number who, unlike John Osmond, did not have recourse to a wealthy mother-in-law, and went to the wall. Perhaps he prospered in after life. One can only hope so, but whatever lay ahead, he gained some fame in that he aspired to become the owner of the Residency.

Isaac Strombom.

Little is known about Strombom's early life other than that he was born at Karlskrona in Sweden, but at some stage he moved to London, possibly in connection with trade, where he had married Elizabeth Pocock. No doubt it was this marriage that had brought him to the Cape for on 20 January 1796 he wrote at Cape Town to General Craig concerning a shipment of iron which had been ordered in 1794 and sent out by Thomas Pocock and Company. Isaac, who might have arrived at the Cape before the First British Occupation, could have been a brother or son-in-law of Thomas Pocock.

The indefatigable and observant Lady Anne wrote: "...the Stromboms, having heard of our arrival, sent us an invitation to come to their house which was a blessing of no moderate sort, every place being crowded." Isaac and Elizabeth were friends of Dr. Gillan who knew the Barnards, and it was through the surgeon that the Stromboms became acquainted with Mr. Secretary Barnard and his sprightly wife, hence the offer of accommodation.

The tireless pen tells us much about the first day ashore at Cape Town, the first of May 1797. Having landed at the Company's wooden jetty near the Castle, Lady Anne and Miss Ann Barnard, Andrew's cousin, decided to set off on foot. When they reached the nearby Parade they were met by Mrs. Strombom who was on her way to the ship in a chaise-and-four to convey them to her home; but her guests, after the many days at sea, expressed a desire to walk. Lady Anne overflowed with curiosity and energy. On the way she was taken to 2 Strand Street to meet Mrs. de Wet, the wife of P.J. de Wet. It was in this house that the Abbé de la Caille had lived in 1771. They then proceeded up the Heerengracht to the Strombom's house, number 28 opposite the Groote Kerk, for which the princely sum in those days of £5,000 had been paid, and where their bedrooms were "spacious and hung with French paper; the bed high, narrow, of chocolate taffeta, no blankets but two or three quilted counterpanes of figured cotton, which did not prevent the march of some thousands of fleas. Our window curtains were of a chocolate cotton to match the bed and seemed to be Highlanders, viz. of the philibeg class, coming down no further, as is the fashion here, than where the sash ends. The mirror was hung high on the wall." Other travellers have commented on the fleas that used to plague the Cape. As the Stromboms refused to accept payment the Barnards moved to the Castle where accommodation had been provided about ten days after their arrival. Isaac's store, incidentally was in Berg Street, which, with the completion of St. George's Cathedral in 1834, was renamed in honour of St George and the now vanished building whose design resembled that of St. Pancras Church in London.

In 1800 Governor Sir George Yonge instituted the Board of Agriculture, Arts and Sciences etc. at the Cape and Strombom became one of the Councillors. Unfortunately the Board disappeared after Yonge's departure; however Isaac was Ward Master in Cape Town for Ward 2 from 1800 until 1806 or later and must, therefore, have been regarded as a man of competence and importance.

On 8 September 1804 Strombom informed his friends "with great sorrow that his

greatly beloved wife" had died on 3rd inst after an illness that had lasted for 26 days. Elizabeth was only 34 years of age when she died. Her daughters were then sent to England to further their schooling, leaving in the Hon. East India Company's ship STREATHAM. Strombom and his son Peter Henry remained on in Cape Town for several years, but on 28 January 1812 they left in HMS SCORPION to join the daughters. The Residency had been sold for 70,000 guilders, an amount which Isaac rightly considered as quite inadequate, yet his pending departure had left him no option. In March 1814 he arrived in Cape Town once more to settle affairs concerning his remaining interests here, but "purposing to return per the very first opportunity to England where he has settled his future residence."

Johannes Henricus Brand.

Burchard Brand and Catharina Hartz were married in Hamburg where they were born. It is not certain when they arrived at the Cape, but Burchard was listed as a Burgher at Stellenbosch in 1686, and as a wine merchant in Cape Town 7 years later. Two sons, Andreas and Burchard, each with the second name of Heinrich, were born in Hamburg. Andreas went to Sri Lanka, but Burchard came to the Cape in 1712 and became a farmer at Joostenberg. A third child, Christoffel, was born here, married, but died childless. The son Burchard married Anna van der Byl at Stellenbosch on 3 December 1730. Their sixth and last child, Christoffel, was baptised on 3 June 1738 and married Catharina Maria Blanckenberg on 11 March 1759. They had 8 children, the youngest of whom Johannes Henricus, who was baptised on 12 September 1771 and married Wilhelmina Catharina le Sueur on 25 January 1795, became the last private owner of the Residency.

Christoffel Brand had succeeded Kirsten as Postholder at Simon's Town in 1774, a title that was changed to that of Resident twelve years later, and it was there, also, that Johannes Henricus, who was appointed as Deputy Fiskal at Simon's Town as from 1 January 1810, was born and bred. His functions were wide-ranging and embraced the work done at present by a Mayor and Town Council, Town Clerk, Heads of Department and Harbour Master. He also had jurisdiction as a Justice of Peace and was Notary Public for the District. He proved to be a most capable and energetic man in the performance of all these functions.

Johannes Henricus and Wilhelmina had 8 children, the second of whom Christoffel Joseph, was knighted, became an advocate of the High Court, Editor of the Zuid-Afrikaan and Speaker of the Cape Legislative Assembly from 1854 to 1874. He married Catharina Frederica Kuchler on 25 July 1797. Their first child, the grandson of Johannes Henricus, after whom he was named, later became Sir Johannes Henricus Brand, and the 4th President of the Orange Free State Republic.

The last private owner of the Residency, which now houses our very fine Museum, certainly brought lustre to the historic building that had been his and which was built in Simon's Town shortly before the colonisation of Australia and more than 60 years before the first permanent settlement of whites in New Zealand other than by small groups of missionaries.

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NAVAL SAYINGS: A SPITHEAD NIGHTINGALE= a Boatswain's mate (because he pipes the calls).
From "Dittybox" Magazine - a former R.N. publication.

OUT OF THE PAST

Doreen Hope

The story of HMS CARLISLE's 3.7" Battery....in the STHS Bulletin No. 1 of 1982 brought back some interesting memories! It was of course when Sir Herbert Stanley, HBM Resident High Commissioner in South Africa was on leave and Vice Admiral E.R.G.R. Evans was Acting High Commissioner. Suddenly telegrams began to fly between Mafeking, Pretoria, Cape Town and Serowe, the Serowe telephone wires being suspended between rickety wooden poles across the arid desertlike reserve!

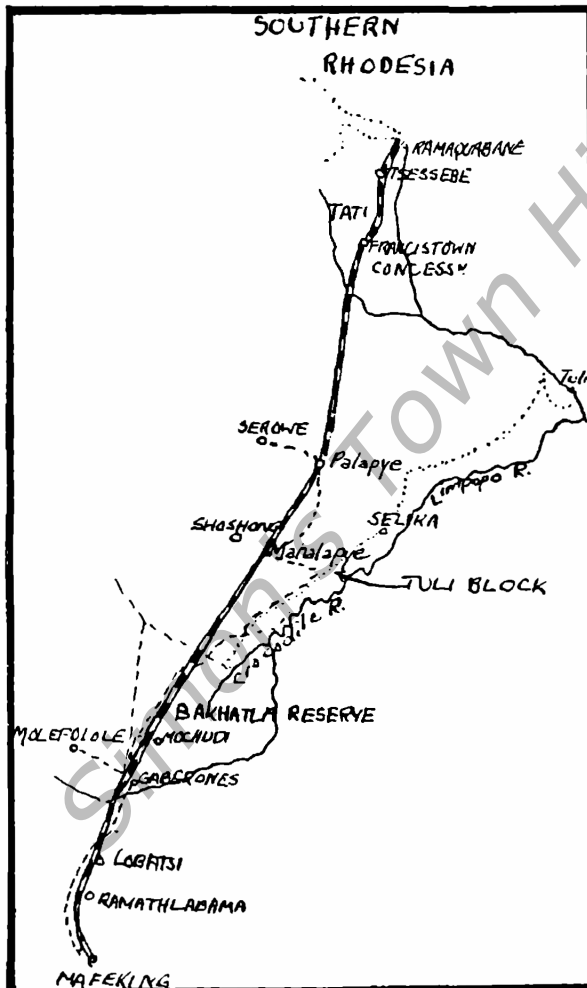
Two white men had been flogged by order of Acting Chief Tshekedi in the Bamangwato kgotla without any reference to the Resident Magistrate and the matter had not been cleared through proper channels. (Editor's Note: A very serious breach of Colonial Office procedure and practice!)

As confidential Secretary to the Resident Commissioner I immediately had to spring to attention, pack my hat box and proceed post haste by car on Sunday afternoon, the 10th September, with the Government Secretary, a Resident Magistrate and a Native Policeman to Serowe, 263 miles away. After a stifling, dusty journey over unmade roads and

"middel-mannetjies" we reached Palapye Road, the nearest station to Serowe, on Tuesday morning in time for breakfast at the little hotel on the station. Mrs. Dodd, the motherly little proprietress, was highly agitated as she expected a large crowd and was worried about the accommodation. Luckily we were the first on the field and I was given a nice room with a large double feather bed that Mildred Wilson, P.M.O's Secretary, who was arriving that evening, could share with me!

All that day the hotel was filling up - Tshekedi appeared on the scene, reporters galore, witnesses, Police, lorry drivers etc. All the local people showed much interest in the proceedings and by the time the special train pulled in that evening Palapye was overrun. The Marines arrived in great style and turned out on the platform in their different platoons. A small company of our own Native Police were already there to welcome Col. & Mrs Rey and Mr. Liesching.

Mildred came on the usual passenger train a few minutes afterwards and we trailed over to the hotel through thick sand. On Wednesday morning we started typing at 7a.m. in the police office on the hill above the station. We managed to rush off for breakfast and returned to the Enquiry which commenced at 9.30. Tables were arranged under the sparse kameeldooring trees in front of the empty staff quarters for the members of the Commission. The newspapers were also represented and Mr. Buchanan, Attorney Kieser and the Rev. Jennings were at Tshekedi's right hand.



Most important of all was the table for the shorthand writers! We went on in shifts an hour at a time overlapping for the first few sentences so that we could dovetail the notes when typed out and nothing was missing. There was a large crowd of natives outside the fence who followed the proceedings with great attention. The B.P. Police were in evidence and a section of the Marines were ranged all along the wall of the house in the shade as it was rather a warm day. We were kept busy typing out our notes till 3.30p.m. and were then called to take down the second enquiry in the empty quarters. The two R.Ms. Captains Potts and Nettleton, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Kieser and Tshekedi were present and Col. Rey and Mr. Liesching conducted the proceedings. We had a terrific scramble to get it down as they all spoke very quickly, especially Tshekedi, whom we had to pull up. It took us till 11 that evening to finish the typing of both enquiries and those in charge of operations worked until after midnight. More typing from 7 to 9 the next morning and at 11.15 the cars started for Serowe where Tshekedi's Order of Suspension was to be served. Mildred and I were in the last car and all went well until about half way when a car a little ahead broke down completely. The passengers piled into our already overloaded car and the cavalcade continued until the foremost car containing the Admiral and party stopped to give the lorries of Marines and guns time to get to Serowe before us and get drawn up ready for the proceedings, which were to commence at 1.30 p.m.

The Admiral, who had arrived in Palapye by plane at 5.30 on Wednesday, got out of his car and strolled round with Mr. Liesching who was in full regalia, complete with Napoleonic hat, only worn the other way round. The Admiral, however, was in his shirt sleeves owing to the warm weather. He spoke to any and everybody and even walked up to Mildred and myself and chatted for a few minutes, making all sorts of jokes. We both noticed his attractive dimples, and felt awfully elated at being able to speak to him. While we were on the topic of warm summers in South Africa he said "I can't imagine how you ladies keep your complexions so nice", which heightened our colour all the more. Later he caught Mildred snapping him and blew a kiss which, unfortunately she did not get in time.

We arrived at the Race Course at 1 p.m. The Marines had been drawn up into their different platoons across the race course in a line with the dais on which the Admiral stood when he delivered his speech to Tshekedi, who was halfway between the platform and his people with several of his councillors or headmen. The High Commissioner spoke clearly and well and Tshekedi, standing with his head bowed received his order of suspension quietly.

It was a very impressive meeting and was opened with a royal salute when the High Commissioner appeared. The three cannon were fired 19 times. At the first shot the whole native audience rose and began to jabber excitedly but they quietened down and waited. At the end of the Admiral's speech Tshekedi said farewell to the European residents and traders of Serowe who were there in full force and who were visibly affected, and then went off by car with an escort to Palapye Road. Little did anyone think then that he was soon to be reinstated.

There were one or two amusing incidents that day. On the way to Serowe a reporter hopped out of the car that was held up and tried to crowd into our overloaded car. He said it was most important that he should be there but we left him. However, when we were waiting for the lorries to get on ahead he flashed by on one of them amongst the Marines and got there before we did.

While we were having lunch the Marines regaled themselves nearby on bully beef and thick chunks of bread which they ate with great relish. They gave an empty beer bottle (from our car) a Royal funeral, placing a branch of mimosa thorns over the grave, and called it a "dead Marine".

The Admiral and party had lunch at the Resident Magistrate's house, and left at 3.15 by plane for Johannesburg. The natives were struck with awe when they saw the big red plane arrive. We were also awestruck when his Secretary, Kilpatrick, told us he had to take down shorthand notes even when travelling by plane. He always addressed us

as "You girls" in the general turmoil when we were working together in the Police office.

The Marines stayed on a few days in some buildings at the Serowe Hospital. On the doors were written in white chalk, "Royal Marines" and "Seamen". Others were accommodated in the train coaches which had been shunted to a siding. They were all very well disciplined and orderly, and left behind a wonderful impression on Europeans and Natives alike.

THEY VISITED SIMON'S TOWN: TSCHEKEDI KHAMA

A.E. Read

We have written up the Tschekedi Khama affair in several past articles in The Bulletin. However, when doing research in the Museum recently on quite a different subject, I came across a book "Adventurous Life" by Admiral E.R.G.Evans. From pages 195/6 comes the brief extract which appears below and which I thought would 'round off' our story.

Admiral Evans writes:

"Tschekedi after his deposition asked permission to come to Cape Town to see me and he then tendered an apology, declaring that he realised that he had no right to order a white man to be flogged or, for that matter, to try him in a native court. Having put this apology into writing on board HMS DORSETSHIRE we then had tea together and he left next day for his reinstatement. I read his apology at Serowe before many thousands of Bamangwato and then reinstated him as Acting Chief."

THE ROYAL NAVY ON LAKE TANGANYIKA

A.E.Read

Further to my article in the previous issue of the Bulletin I have now discovered some interesting facts about the German gunboat Graf von Gotson.

After the war she was lifted clear of the bottom of the lake and taken to Kigoma Bay, then abandoned. Tanganyika Railways then bought the wreck for £4,000 in 1922. A Royal Navy salvage party with divers, wire hawsers and special tanks, pumped compressed air speedily into the ship and the special tanks and she surfaced like a submarine on Sunday 16th March 1924. Afterwards she sailed the lake for many years in the service of the Railways. She was re-christened LIEMBA on 16th May 1927, the Lake in Livingstone's time having been called LAKE LIEMBA.

For those who like statistics you may be interested in the following:

She was 1575 tons. 232 ft long 33 ft wide Draught 9 ft

She carried 20 1st class passengers, 8 2nd class passengers
300 Deck passengers.

(Information obtained by the writer on a visit to the Railways Museum, Nairobi).

THE ROYAL NAVY'S FIELD GUN COMPETITION A Brief History of Fieldgunning

A.E. Read

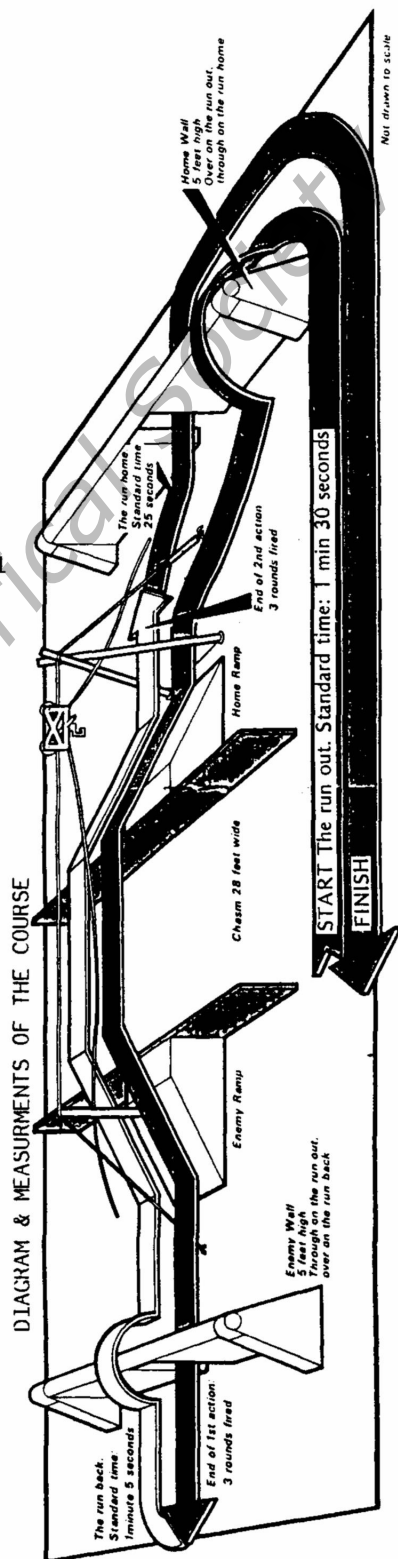
Many of you will have watched a Royal Naval Field Gun Competition at some time or another. These are regular items on the programme at the Royal Tournament at Earls Court in London in July of each year and are always a very popular item on any Royal Naval recruiting or public relations drive. The teams in England have traditionally come from Devonport, Portsmouth and Chatham commands and in latter years also from the Fleet Air Arm. The Fleet Air Arm team also comprises members from Wellington College. This has been necessary because the training of a team places a great burden on each section and each team must undergo intensive training and a campaign of fitness before every competition.

It is interesting to note that the Field Gun Competition in the Royal Navy came about as a result of the Royal Navy's participation in the Boer War. In October 1899 the town of Ladysmith was under ferocious attack by the Boer forces. Ladysmith suffered considerable damage. Captain Scott of HMS TERRIBLE landed 4.7" guns at Simon's Town where carriages were made for them. From Simon's Town they were taken to Durban by HMS POWERFUL where they were landed along with 280 men who formed the Naval Brigade under the command of Captain Lambton. They were transported to Ladysmith by train where they immediately went into action and silenced the Boer guns by the sheer speed of their attack.

The train that carried Captain Lambton and the Naval Brigade into Ladysmith proved to be the last one before the Boer forces cut the town off completely, so when General Buller and a further Naval Brigade landed they were forced to march the 189 miles from Durban to Ladysmith. The Naval Brigade or "Blue Jackets" manhandled their guns over rocky terrain and it was noted that when wheels broke the men were quick to pick up the guns and manhandle them.

It was this action that caught the imagination of the British public and from 1919 the Field Gun Competition as we now know it today was formed. There have been as many as eight crews competing and in 1947 the Naval Air, later the Fleet Air Arm, entered the competition. However, since 1960 only the Fleet Air Arm, Plymouth and Portsmouth Commands have competed. The traditions of Ladysmith live on and even now the current Fleet Air Arm No. 1 Trainer can be heard to say during training "Come on lads let's go to Ladysmith and back".

Alongside and overleaf are some diagrams, facts and figures which may help you to better understand what is involved.



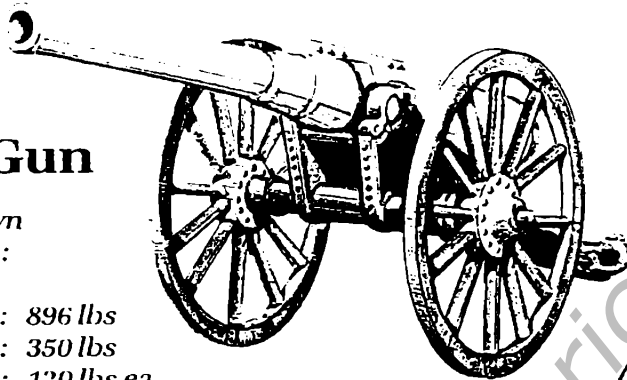
The Course: The pattern for the course in 1907 included two walls and a narrow bridge; the bridge was replaced in the following year by a 7'6" chasm. By 1913 the course had been standardised to its present form of a 5' wall at each end with a 28' chasm in the centre.

The Run Out: At the signal of an exploding thunderflash, each Crew will race its gun and limber down the side of the track and take them over the 5' high Home Wall. Sheerlegs are erected and the first two men using a 28' spar, swing over the 28' bottomless chasm. It is their job to rig the wire which will be used to haul over the rest of the men and equipment. Once over, the gun and limber are taken through a breach in the Enemy Wall and the enemy are engaged in a 3 round action. The time taken is 1 min.25 secs average.

The Field Gun

*Breaks down
into 4 parts:*

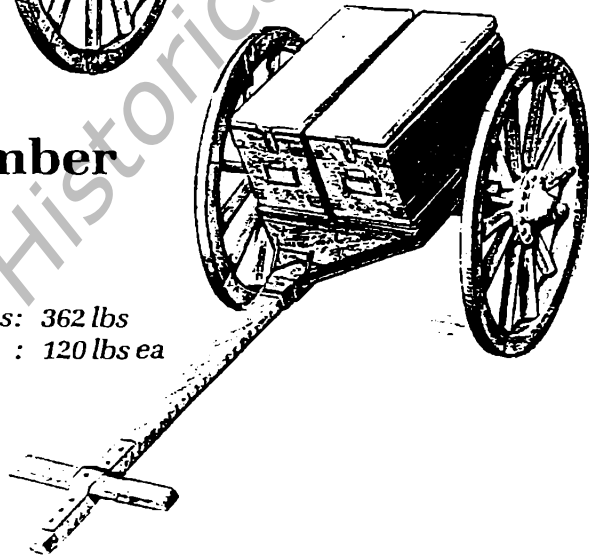
*Gun Barrel: 896 lbs
Carriage : 350 lbs
2 Wheels : 120 lbs ea*



The Limber

*Breaks down
into 3 parts :*

*Frame & Boxes: 362 lbs
2 Wheels : 120 lbs ea*



The Run Back: The gun and limber are taken over the enemy wall and then back across the chasm. The last man across the chasm, the "Angel", brings with him the 10' spar, the sheerlegs are collapsed and the main wire retrieved before 3 more rounds are fired in a sternchase action. Average time for this manouevre is 1 minute.

The Run Home: The crews take the guns and limbers through the Home wall, re-assemble them and race back over the finishing line. Each phase is time separately and the crews have no rest between actions except to prepare the gear for the next section of the run. The average time for the Run Home is 21 secs.

All three stages are carefully timed and the times added together. Rigorous time penalties are imposed if the drill is not carried out correctly; these are added later to the crew's actual running time to give the Official Time for each crew. Each crew now competes eight times against each of the other crews. A four-minute run was first recorded in 1948 and a three-minute run in 1962. Nowadays runs in less

than 3 minutes are fairly commonplace, the record being 2 minutes 40.6 seconds.

The daily results and fluctuating state of this competition are followed with great interest throughout the Royal Navy and are signalled to Ships and Establishments all over the world.

POSTSCRIPT:

Having typed out the above story I then found the following in Theal's Records of the Cape Page 290 (1793-1796). It is an extract from a letter from General Craig to the Rt. Hon. Hendry Dundas on 27.12.1795:

"British Sailors alone are capable of dragging guns and ammunition, in the way in which it was done, when we marched from MUIZENBERG to this place (CAPE TOWN) nor should we have been able to do it but for the assistance of the sailors from the Indiamen, of whom we had 420 appropriated to that service."

The article was written and prepared with the aid of information obtained at The Royal Tournament, London in 1986.

RUSSIANS VISIT SIMON'S TOWN

"In 1858 a Russian squadron arrived, men-o'-war and transports bound for China. Simon's Town was full of Russian and British sailors and the men clashed in the main street. According to the "Cape of Good Hope Gazette" the Russians were quiet and inoffensive, while the British were like a set of bulldogs eager for a fight. It seems that a crippled English soldier who had lost an arm in the Crimea taunted a Russian. Soon afterwards about one hundred and fifty Russians were facing a hundred British sailors (led by a marine), both sides being equipped with legs of tables, chairs, sticks and stones. After a number of men had been knocked senseless the Russians were driven to their boats at the jetty. Mr. Rennick, the chief constable, tried to stop the fight and had his arm broken. Some of the British seamen appeared in court after this incident, and were fined.

Another aquadron of Russian ships called in July 1872, and Duke Alexis, the senior officer, presented three hundred pounds to Cape Town charities. However the men of the Russian corvette did not leave a good impression on Cape Town."

Editor's Note: Mr. Rennick lived opposite Admiralty House next door to Palace Barracks in a small cottage which is at present undergoing renovations. The text is from a book by Lawrence Green.

Please turn to Page 99 for relevant photograph

THE 1820 SETTLERS AND SIMON'S TOWN

The 21 "Settler" ships set sail in December 1819 from ports as far afield as Cork, Liverpool and Deptford where they had lain frozen for several weeks. Ships at Deptford had to be cut out of the ice and the Thames was frozen over. Heads of parties and wealthier settlers enjoyed private cabins on board and had brought their own provisions. Ordinary passengers' rations consisted of hard salt beef, salt pork, mouldy ship's biscuits, oatmeal for porridge, a little sago, cocoa and sugar. Water was rationed, along with the customary allowance of rum.

The rum is a reminder that the settler ships were not of the notorious type that gained such a poor reputation for the trans-Atlantic emigrant run to North America. The ones for the Cape consisted mostly of naval transports equipped for transporting British soldiers to India. Though the settlers were often to mention overcrowding, in fact they suffered remarkably little on the voyage. The illness that broke out on certain ships was not as devastating as on other emigrant routes. There was smallpox on the BELLE ALLIANCE and the NORTHAMPTON, and measles and whooping cough also claimed lives on several ships especially among the children. The resulting quarantine prevented most of the settlers from landing in either Simon's Town or Cape Town for a much needed break but there was also the fear that the worthies of Cape Town would filch some of the settlers and give them jobs in the City which was not the reason for which settlers had been encouraged to come to the Cape. Specifically it was to populate the eastern province and discourage the marauders from coming into the west of the colony. It should also be noted that according to Theal Vol.XII page 255, the Times of London 17th July, 1819, says "It will be recollected, that £50,000 were granted by the House of Commons, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for encouraging emigration to the Cape of Good Hope." A very generous sum of money.

The ships which concern us were those which spent time in Simon's Bay after their 90-day passage - almost as long as it had taken Jan van Riebeeck some 155 years earlier! They were here from 30th April 1820 until 20th May, when they left for Algoa Bay, except for the SIR GEORGE OSBORN which arrived on 18th June and left on 25th June. This was the result of her running aground in the Thames and it had been very difficult to refloat her. Luckily the NAUTILUS which went aground on the Goodwin Sands near Ramsgate in Kent was more easily refloated and not delayed. For some strange reason we have not been able to discern, the ZOROASTER was only chartered to bring settlers as far as Simon's Bay and these were then put aboard the ALBURY which then became very overcrowded.

Below we give the names of the ships, heads of parties and numbers in party:

LA BELLE ALLIANCE	Thomas Willson (307)
BRILLIANT	J.T.Erith (120), T. Pringle (24) and some members of Hezekiah Sephton's party.
ZOROASTER	W. Wait (40), G. Dyason (67), W. Cock (91) S. James (60)
EAST INDIAN	Scanlen and Parker (220)
FANNY	J. Ingram (62), T. Butler (27), Synnot (25)
SIR GEORGE OSBORN	D. Mills (30), E. Turvey (27), E. Gardner (24)
ALBURY	Th. Calton (167)
AURORA	H. Sephton (344)
CHAPMAN	J. Baillie (256), J. Carlisle (15)
NAUTILUS	G. Scott (37), C. Crause (41), T. Owen (52), G. Smith (71), J. Mandy (44), T. Rowles (27)

NORTHAMPTON

T. Mahoney (42) W. Clark (88) W. Smith (40)
C. Dalgairns (33) G. Pigot (54)

One can imagine the frustration of the nearly 2,400 souls on board these ships and the massive operation of feeding them as well as the other thousands who had arrived in Table Bay. It was a massive logistical operation too, getting them and their belongings out to the Cape, an operation which must have caused Messrs. Seppings, Thomson and Bowen of the Navy Board in London considerable headaches as for one reason or another the names of the people contained in each party changed. According to Dorothy E. Rivett Carnac in "Thus Came the English" a ball was held on the deck of the Nautilus to while away some of the time. Sometimes the sailors danced the hornpipe to the amusement of the passengers. How frustrated they must have been when it was announced that only the leaders of the parties would be allowed ashore. Unfortunately the settlers in the ZOROASTER had to be transferred to the ALBURY for the rest of their trip and one of them Goldswain professed "our great surprise and astonishment when we got onboard to see the difference between them two Ships. I was astonished; they ZOROASTER was as clean as possible for a Veasel to be but the ALBURY you could not walk upright between her decks and she was not the cleanest Veasel I ever saw". It is interesting to note also that the modern spelling of Cape Agulhas was in 1820 "Cape L'Aguillas".

In all 21 ships safely carried nearly 4,000 settlers to the shores of Algoa Bay ready to be received by Sir Rufane Donkin, the acting Governor. What might the situation be here to-day if we had also accepted convicts from the Neptune and other ships instead of insisting they proceed to Australia?

Tradition gives W.T. Collen as the first settler to land at Algoa Bay but the lists give no such passenger and it could have been Thomas Collins of Bailie's party on CHAPMAN, which was the first ship to arrive.

The settlers had begun to arrive in 1817 when Captain Benjamin Moodie, Laird of Melsetter, brought out a group of 50 indentured Scottish artisans on the BRILLIANT, without the benefit of state aid. He brought two more shiploads of Scottish settlers on the GARLAND and the CLYDE, bringing the total number of settlers organised by him to around 200. The 50 from the BRILLIANT were soon absorbed into the labour-starved western districts of the Cape Colony but the 150 from the GARLAND and the CLYDE proved far more troublesome and frequently broke contract. Moodie's brothers Donald and John also emigrated here and joined the 1820 settlers in Albany in the Eastern Cape. Later on descendants of many of the settler families were to go on to Rhodesia either with the Pioneer column or on their own. Many of the families who remained behind produced descendants who have played a prominent role in almost every aspect of South Africa's development.

Footnote: There is a house named Garland House in Whaler's Way, Seaforth, and the Society wonders if anyone knows how it got its name. Maybe the first owner was a member of the ship's company of the GARLAND.

Bibliography:

Thus Came the English - Dorothy E. Rivett-Carnac
Theale - Records of the Cape Vol XII
Story of the 1820 Settlers - H.E. Hockly
The Rise of South Africa Vol II - G.E. Cory

Our thanks go to the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum for the loan of these books from the Museum's Library.

HMS PENELOPE had been used as a ship's name in the Royal Navy for nearly four centuries. Our HMS PENELOPE was in Simon's Town from 1888-1912. She was the first British battleship to be fitted with twin screws. Completed nearly 100 years ago, she cost £400,000. Her length was 265 feet with 50 feet beam; but she had a very shallow draught, as it was thought she might be used against Russia in Baltic waters and for some less obvious purpose on the Canadian lakes. Although she was given engines of nearly 5,000 h.p. PENELOPE was also ship rigged, with 18,000 sq.ft. of canvas. She carried 300 crew. She was a floating iron monstrosity, flat bottomed, with clipper bow and ram, projecting quarter-galleries and much ornamentation. Her screws could be lifted when she was under sail. This feature must have given her designers a headache, for they contrived a double stern of such ungainly shape that a certain amount of speed was lost.

The designers had intended to produce a floating gun-platform from which 8" guns could be fired with great accuracy. It did not work. She rolled heavily and her officers declared that "she made leeway like a teatray". Her crew hated her. She was of such a wicked design that good seamen dreaded putting to sea in her.

However, PENELOPE went into action during the bombardment of Alexandria in Egypt. Owing to her light draught she was able to operate close inshore, and as the weather was fine she distinguished herself in the attack on the western forts. She was hit several times, her mainyard shot away and a shell landed on her engine-room gratings but failed to explode. In this engagement her heavy guns fired more than 200 rounds. After the bombardment PENELOPE became flagship in the Suez Canal zone, but she saw no more active service.

It was in 1888 that PENELOPE rolled into Simon's Bay to serve as harbour receiving ship. All hands hoped that she would never smell the open sea again, and it was a long time (24 years) before she did. Kipling saw her lying off the town pier near where the GENERAL BOTHA later lay. In the ten years prior to his arrival she had been a bachelors' club, natural history museum, kindergarten and prison. Naval records show that she served as guard ship and store ship and during the Boer War she was host to hundreds of Boer prisoners. If ever there was a ship that justified the traditional naval joke about "grounding on her own beef-bones and bottles at low tide" PENELOPE was the one. Simon's Bay looked empty after her departure.

During the years in harbour a number of deck-houses appeared on her super-structure and her masts and yards were cut down. This did not improve her looks but she had long since retired as a fighting machine and no one objected. Among the many roles PENELOPE played was one of floating detention barracks towards the end of the 1800's she was the "punishment brig" where ill-behaved naval seamen were given every opportunity of mending their ways. Flogging had fallen into disuse but "shot drill" remained. The victims stood in a circle. Each prisoner was required to pick up a 32 pound cannon-ball, carry it waist high for 15 yards and then lower it to the deck. But there was no rest for the weary at that stage. They had to pick up another cannon-ball immediately and repeat the cruel, useless procedure until they were utterly exhausted.

Naval discipline was even more rigid in those days than it is now and the prisoners obeyed orders even when their backs seemed to be breaking. At last one seaman refused to carry out the shot drill routine. He was brought before a court of inquiry at which a notorious Captain R.C. Prothero was president. He was the same Prothero who had commanded the naval brigade during the South African War - a huge man with a black beard and face like a seafaring Shylock. Prothero to the dismay of the naval authorities ordered the rebellious seaman to be flogged.

The Admiralty Library in London supplied Laurence Green with much information but would not divulge further information on this subject and merely stated that Courts

of Inquiry were always secret. However, at the time of the incident some facts leaked out and Prothero was denounced by Labouchere, editor of the critical weekly "Truth" in London. PENELOPE received some unpleasant publicity. It is believed that this man was the last naval rating to be flogged. However, it would appear that Prothero escaped official blame for he retired in 1904 as Read-Admiral R.C. Prothero, CB, MVO.

PENELOPE ended her naval career in 1912 when she was sold by the Admiralty to Mr. Isaac Ochberg of Cape Town for £1650. He intended to have her towed to Germany and sold as scrap metal. However he lived to regret his adventure into being a temporary battleship owner. First she had to go into Simon's Town Dockyard Dry Dock to have her bottom cleaned. Lt. Colonel H.L. Jones, R.M. who was present when this happened tells us that the flat bottom was a wonderful sight, feet deep in barnacles. When this growth dried and rotted, the aroma shocked even the oldest dockyard hands.

A movement started to buy the hulk and moor her at Durban as a training ship for the merchant service. The scheme failed and one wonders if it was as a result of this that T.B. Davis later bought the THAMES for this purpose (later re-named S.A.T.S. GENERAL BOTHA).



"HMS" PENELOPE - In dry dock.

The Tug OCEANA arrived from Britain and towed PENELOPE round the Cape to Table Bay Docks. During this brief passage the tugmaster realised that the long tow to Europe would be anything but easy. Already she was leaking badly. They pumped PENELOPE dry, however, patched her up and loaded her with scrap iron in the hope of giving her more stability. Now everyone turned out to wave her good-bye. Next day they were back. The tugmaster reported that PENELOPE was unseaworthy and before long it became clear that he was unwilling to tow the old battleship to Europe. Indeed he went as far as securing affidavits from other master

mariners declaring PENELOPE was unfit to proceed to sea. Dock dues and expenses were piling up and so were the legal costs. At this point some wise seafarer suggested Mr. Ochberg would be wiser securing the services of a Dutch Tugmaster. Even then anyone who wanted a floating dock or suchlike towed across the world sent to Smit of Rotterdam. Before long the powerful tug ROODE ZEE arrived from Buenos Aires where she had taken a floating dock. Captain Rees of the ROODE ZEE looked over the PENELOPE and decided that it WOULD be possible to tow her safely. They set sail and once during the voyage PENELOPE broke away from the tug. Captain Rees allowed her to drift until the gale blew itself out after 18 hours, he then picked up his tow again and reached Genoa in the remarkable time of 34 days.

PENELOPE gained the reputation of a hoodoo while in Genoa. Soon after arrival a party was held in the wardroom. The Dutch Consul had almost reached the gangway when he fell and broke both legs. Several men were killed while PENELOPE was being dismantled. Thank goodness PENELOPE went to Genoa because had she gone to Germany as first intended her wonderful metal would certainly have been used against the British in World War I. As it was the Italians removed much of the armour-plate bodily and incorporated it in new Italian men-o'-war which fought the Germans in the Adriatic.

Photograph provided by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum showing:
 Left W. Rennick, Chief Constable
 Centre seated T.J. van der Riet, Resident Magistrate.
 Right Mr. T.T.C. Purland, Assistant Resident Magistrate.
 (See article on page 94)



EDITOR'S NOTE:

The recent publication of A History of the South African Women's Auxiliary Service 1943-1949 prompted the question what happened before the formation of the Swans and their sister service the Wrens. As the following article shows some very strange things happened!

BEFORE THE WRENS AND THE SWANS

On June 1, 1794 while HMS TREMENDOUS was engaged in operation off Martinique, a baby was born on the lower deck. The unexpected newcomer was christened Daniel Tremendous McKenzie, and was rated at the time of the battle of Guadaloupe as "Baby". Some say this was only a yarn and the entry "Baby" was probably made by a semi-literate seaman meaning to write "A.B." (Able Seaman). Objectors argue that there is no mention of this birth of the baby boy in the master's log. That is true enough. But that kind of entry would not be made in that place, one would expect to find it in the ship's surgeon's log. Again a blank.

The controversy is of interest because it opens up the whole question of the position of women with the Fleet in the early days - of the standing of such characters as Mary Anne Talbot, whose strange adventures have been chronicled. Would it be possible for a baby to be born on a man-of-war? Well, the case of Tremendous McKenzie may be classed as doubtful, but it is not the only one. On June 16, 1812 HMS SWALLOW found two French ships off Frejus and after an obstinate action, drove them under the batteries of that town. Aboard the SWALLOW was an officer who kept a log. It is preserved in the Navy Chronicles. This officer tells how a seaman named Phelan had on board his wife. "She was stationed (as is usual when women are on board in time of battle) to assist the surgeon in the care of the wounded." The action was close, yardarm to yardarm, and the wounded were many. One, a messmate of Phelan was brought below. The seaman was dying in her arms when Mrs. Phelan heard that her husband had become a casualty. She rushed on deck. "She received the wounded tar in her arms, she burst into a flood of tears and told him to take courage - all will be well. But scarcely had she pronounced the last syllable when an ill-directed shot took her head off....The poor lover who was closely wrapt in her arms opened his eyes, then closed them forever."

Three weeks before a fine boy had been born to them. The sailors agreed that Tommy should have a hundred fathers. A Maltese goat kept the nipper alive until the ship reached Port Mahon. In cases usually mentioned of women with the Fleet, there exists the element of concealment. In the case of Mrs. Phelan it is clear that she was tolerated on board.

In Rodney's battle with de Guichen off Pearl Rock, Martinique, April 1, 1780, a woman was in that action aboard Rodney's flagship HMS SANDWICH. It is related of her in The Life of Rodney that "she fought a 24-pounder gun and afterwards attended the whole night upon wounded men." Now there would seem to be only one explanation for the presence in men-of-war of these Amazons. They were tolerated, but they had no official recognition.

There was first printed in 1731 Instructions for Service at Sea. This Admiralty Order remained unchanged until Trafalgar. Of the Captain's duty it lays down: He is not to carry any Women to Sea. This order did not deter Captain Charles Austen, flag captain to Sir Thomas Williams in 1813. He took aboard his wife and 12 small children. Despite this injunction it is evident that women were frequently carried, and not always disguised as men, as the Phelan case shows.

Though Nelson, St. Vincent and Collingwood were against the practice, it is certain that a number of seamen's wives were carried through the 18th century. Nelson's objections to it lends special interest to the famous cartoon of his death by Daniel Maclise. This shows the Admiral being tended by women. There were women at Trafalgar, at the Battle of the Nile, at Cape St. Vincent and other historic actions, though the fact has been disputed. Ann Perrian was luckier than most of these women, for

she actually gouged a naval pension out of the Board of Admiralty, a body little known for acts of generosity in those days. Ann lies buried at Exmouth. She is the only naval pensioner of her sex. She served in HMS CRESCENT and HMS ORION and was present at Lorient, Cape St. Vincent and the Nile. Her job was with the gunners, preparing the flannel cartridge cases. Her pension was £10 per year.

From the Minute Book preserved in the Record Office we can get the true facts concerning yet another woman who served with the Fleet - Mary Lacey. In 1772 Mary Lacey petitioned the Lords of the Admiralty. That petition sets forth her naval career. It is a remarkable one. Mary Lacey, disguised as a man, was entered on board His Majesty's Fleet, where having served until the end of the war, she bound herself apprentice to the carpenter of the ROYAL WILLIAM and having served seven years there, entered as a shipwright at Portsmouth yard, where she continued till 1772. Their Lordships were particularly generous in this case and granted her the pension of a superannuated shipwright.

A writer in the Naval Chronicle in 1814 mentions another woman one Anne Chamberlayne, who served at sea in the last days of the 18th century but all we know of her was that she was rough and tough!

In June 1839 the Queen, in the Gazette, directed that all who were present at Trafalgar should have a medal, without any reservation as to sex. Accordingly Jane Townsend, armed with a letter from the captain of the DEFIANCE in which she had served in the battle, asked for her medal. Her certificate was first class, for she had behaved exceedingly well. The Queen's direction made her eligible. Yet this heroine of Trafalgar was denied her rights and got no medal. In the handwriting of Sir Benjamin Martin, one of the Lords of the Admiralty there is a note to this application "Upon further consideration this cannot be allowed, there were many women in the Fleet equally useful, and it will leave the Army exposed to innumerable applications of the same nature". This denial of the Naval General Service Medal of 1793-1840 to the women of the Fleet was not only mean and unjust, it was contrary to the Royal directive.

Mary Anne Talbot, Anne Mills and Rebecca Johnson deserve to be acknowledged. Mary Anne Talbot and Anne Mills from all accounts appear to have been hard-living, tough and fairly bloodthirsty females who dressed as men and were accepted as men by their shipmates. Not a lot is known about Anne Mills, though from old prints she seems to have had the engaging habit of marking out in battle those gentlemen with the finest coiffure and then detaching their heads with a smart swing of the cutlass. Thus is she portrayed, cutlass in right hand, gory, gaping pigtailed head in the other, and on her fat face a happy contented smile of a benevolent matron! She is thought to have fought with Nelson.

About Mary Anne Talbot there are more details. She is described as "the most conspicuous of the women who went to sea as men". As a young girl she was madly in love with a naval officer and to be near him she ran away to join his ship as seaman John Taylor. She is described as being tall of stature, angular, and singularly lacking in the physical graces of a woman. Her portrait or etching shows her as a morose giant whose muscular arms hand down to her knees but whose face is still finely marked, dignified and sad. Her love affair was a failure but she stayed in the navy for years, her sex unsuspected and unquestioned, that is until the day a shell fragment shattered her knee and gasping with pain on the operating table she revealed her secret to the surgeons.

Rebecca Johnson was a completely different kettle of fish. Her story begins when a London innkeeper's wife, Mrs. Lesley, found a handsome sailor begging for bread on the front doorstep. She took him in and fed him. He said he was an apprentice who had run away from his ship at Woolwich. However, Mrs. Lesley was no fool. Next day Rebecca was made to tell her story to the Lord Mayor. Her brutal father had not only apprenticed her to sea as a man in her 13th year but had also done the same thing to her mother years before. The mother had served with Nelson but had been

able to bear Rebecca without anyone knowing the truth before she was killed at the Battle of Copenhagen.

There is also on record but unhappily without names, the story of the two daughters of a West India merchant. A trade recession left him penniless and his girls rather than remain a drag on him journeyed to Portsmouth, bought sailor's clothes and joined the fleet as seamen. They fought in several actions and says the naval chronicle acquitted themselves as men, again without suspicion. Then one of the sisters was wounded and for her the masquerade was over. The other lay sick in hospital with a fever and thought she was doomed. This made her confess to the Lieutenant. He confessed to her his own secret - he had known about her all the time and not only that, had fallen in love with her and would she marry him? At this magic formula, a cure for most ills, she recovered forthwith and he led her as his bride to the altar, probably the first and only time in British naval history that a lieutenant has married one of his A.B's.

Material for this article obtained from copies of "Dittybox" - a Royal Naval magazine, loaned to us by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum.

GOLD RUSH ON THE SEVEN SEAS

A.E. Read

Most people associate the words 'Gold Rush' with the headlong flight of would be prospectors lured by the vision of instant wealth to some of the most difficult and inaccessible places on the face of the globe. This may be so when the world is at peace. Two World Wars, however, have produced Gold Rushes of a very different kind involving vast sums of money, varied modes of transportation on land and sea and as is usual in episodes of this kind, moments of high comedy and often with the Germans in hot pursuit!

In 1941 following the German invasion, the Bank of Greece wished to send its gold away for safekeeping so HMS DIDO was sent to Suda Bay, Crete to embark it. A heavy air-raid occurred at the time of loading and the crew stashed the gold with great speed and in some odd places in their haste. One box was placed in the Stoker P.O's Mess, another was under a side of beef in the butcher's shop, another in the sick bay underneath an injured seaman and a fourth had been hurriedly dropped down a magazine hatch, where it burst open and its contents later had to be swept up with a broom. A final tally, however, showed only 2 pieces of gold were missing!

The bullion reserve of the Bank of Poland however had some 18 months earlier been spirited away with much more difficulty. It had to go across 6 countries AND the sea to safety. The Director of the Bank Col. Adam Koc left its removal to a capable officer Col. Ignace Matuszewski. This resourceful man gathered together 10 courageous Poles, some soldiers, some clerks, all of them youngsters. They "borrowed" 5 derelict buses, piled the cases on board and set out at dead of night, driving without lights and with the Gestapo soon in hot pursuit. During the journey from Lublin (to where the Polish Government had moved to a temporary Capital) they managed to acquire and repair a plane. One of them flew it to Warsaw to renew contact with Col. Koc. They were told to return to Warsaw and the same night they rattled back into the capital. The next night they set off again, now with 15 buses and more gold. They crossed into Rumania 2 hours ahead of the pursuing Germans. It was then put on a train for Constanza and from there on a Turkish tanker to Istanbul and then through the Straits. For a week the tanker cruised the Eastern Mediterranean awaiting orders! Finally she was ordered to sail to Beirut where 3 French cruisers awaited it.

In Norway the moment the news reached Oslo that the Germans were invading, all the Bank staff were assembled. In the early hours of the morning they carried the bullion out of the vaults and loaded it on to 27 waiting lorries, covering the boxes with furniture. Four of the lorries were lost in bombing raids but the gold was moved to fresh lorries. Eventually they reached Lillehammer approx. 140 kms north of Oslo, only to learn that all the principal ports were in German hands, so it was decided to load it onto a train which would go via Gudbrandsdalen Valley to Andalsnes, a small fishing port on the West Coast. After a tortuous journey the train made it and the boxes were off-loaded into a creamery. Some of the gold was loaded in the end onto a British warship and the remainder onto a Norwegian freighter. For seven weeks the gold was on the move before it arrived safely in England.

From France 1,000 million dollars worth of gold was rushed across the Atlantic on the French cruiser EMILE BERTIN. It travelled via Halifax and reached Martinique on 22nd June 1940.

A few months after June 1940 an enormous flight of gold took place from England, when a German invasion was feared. It was stashed away in several places throughout the Western Hemisphere: in Naval bases and other strategic spots as well as Ottawa and New York. Much of it was used to pay for American supplies before the days of Lend-Lease.

It is estimated that during the whole of the 1939-45 war approx. £1,000 million worth of gold (probably approx. 40% of the gold reserves of the free world) was moved and what has been called "the greatest gamble in financial history" certainly paid off for only £5 million was lost. The worst loss was when HMS NIAGRA struck a mine in deep waters off New Zealand in the latter part of 1940. On board was £2,500,000 in gold. However, 94% of this was recovered from 438 ft of water.

The greatest single consignments of gold were carried to New York from Cape Town in the early stages of the Second World War. They were valued at £30m each. One Saturday afternoon after the Cape Town shops had closed, lorries with escorts took the first consignment from the Reserve Bank to Simon's Town where it was loaded onto a fast cruiser which made a record voyage to New York. A second journey was made by the same cruiser, this time in much fear and trepidation for Germany had heard of the first shipment.

These consignments recall a similar famous freight carried during the 1st World War. Then £40m worth of gold was shipped on a single vessel. The trip was in 1915. It was decreed that HMS ALBION which had been in the Battle of the Falklands should transport it to Europe. At Admiral Heneage-Vivian's suggestion it was stowed in boxes labelled "Special Ammunition" and it arrived in Simon's Town from Cape Town early one Sunday morning. One case was mislaid and permission had to be obtained from the C-in-C to get it admitted to the defence area. The local police got wind of what was happening and made inconvenient enquiries with the result that they discovered how valuable the "ammunition" was! A further complication was that HMS ALBION was in dry dock and the loading of 42 tons of gold was against the regulations. However, the Chief Constructor was appeased and the next day another 42 tons was loaded. This had been on board HMS HYACINTH before it was decided HMS ALBION alone should carry it. At St. Helena HMS ALBION transferred half to HMS CORNWALL which took hers as far as Gibraltar where the "Commissioned Gunner" signed for 42 tons of "ammunition". When both lots finally reached England the British Prime Minister announced that it had put the credit of the country up by £40million.

Probably the busiest "gold rush" period of all was during that first week in June 1940. In 48 hours the Federal Reserve Bank in America took into its vaults from "foreign sources" between £125m and £150m. It had come from Britain, France, Belgium and Holland.

From material in "Ditty Box" loaned by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum.

JOHN PAUL JONES to THE NAVAL COMMITTEE OF UNITED STATES CONGRESS:14.9.1775

"It is by no means enough that an Officer of the Navy should be a capable mariner. He should be that, of course, but also a great deal more. He should be as well a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy, and the nicest sense of personal honour.

"He should not only be able to express himself clearly and with force in his own language both with tongue and pen, but he should also be versed in French and Spanish.

"The Naval Officer should be familiar with the principles of international law, and general practice of admiralty jurisprudence, because such knowledge may often, when cruising at a distance from home, be necessary to protect his flag from insult or his crew from imposition or injury in foreign ports.

"He should also be conversant with the usage of diplomacy and capable of maintaining, if called upon, a dignified and judicious diplomatic correspondence; because it often happens that sudden emergencies in foreign waters make him the diplomatic as well as military representative of his country, and in such cases he may have to act without opportunity of consulting his civic or ministerial superiors at home, and such action may easily involve the portentous issue of peace or war between great powers. These general qualifications and the nearer the Officer approaches the full possession of them the more likely he will be to serve his country well and win fame and honour for himself.

"Coming now to view the Naval Officer aboard ship and in relation to those under his command, he should be the soul of tact, patience, justice, firmness and charity. No meritorious act of a subordinate should escape his attention or be left to pass without its reward, even if the reward be only one word of approval. Conversely, he should not be blind to a single fault in any subordinate, though at the same time he should be quick and unfailing to distinguish error from malice, thoughtlessness from incompetency, and well-meant shortcoming from heedless or stupid blunder. As he should be universal and impartial in his rewards and approval of merit, so should he be judicial and unbending in his punishment or reproof of misconduct.

"In his intercourse with subordinates he should ever maintain the attitude of the commander, but that need by no means prevent him from the amenities of cordiality or the cultivation of good cheer within proper limits. Every Commanding Officer should hold with his subordinates such relations as will make them constantly anxious to receive an invitation to sit at his Mess table, and his bearing toward them should be such as to encourage them to express their opinions to him with freedom and to ask his views without reserve.

"A Navy is essentially and necessarily aristocratic. True as may be the political principles for which we are now contending, they can never be practically applied or even admitted on board ship, out of port or off soundings. This may seem a hardship, but it is nevertheless the simplest of truths. Whilst the ships sent forth by the Congress may and must fight for the principles of human rights and republican freedom, the ships themselves must be ruled and commanded at sea under a system of absolute despotism."

The above was found among the papers of the late Commodore John Fairbairn and was passed to us by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum.

THE FRACAS ABOARD HMS FORTE

How a distinguished career in the Royal Navy was almost wrecked by the domestic differences between a former Governor of the Cape and his wife is taken from a book "The Beloved Little Admiral" published by Robert Hale Ltd and written by Vivian Stuart.

The Governor in question was Sir George Grey and the Naval Officer Sir Henry Keppel at one time Commander-in-Chief of what was then called the Cape of Good Hope Station at Simon's Town. Fortunately Sir Henry Keppel's career was not completely wrecked, and he finally rose to the position of Admiral of the Fleet. The scandal, which appeared deliberately to have been hushed up, throws a far from favourable light upon the actions of Sir George Grey - actions which appear to be strangely at variance with his distinguished record in South Africa.

On November 12 1860 the Times published the following, under the headline of "The Late Fracas on board the Forte"

"With reference to the reports in circulation reflecting most injuriously upon Rear-Admiral Sir Henry Keppel, Commander-in-Chief of the Cape of Good Hope Station, we have reason to believe that the circumstances in question have been grossly exaggerated.

"The Admiralty considering the disputed facts, have done most directly in not acting upon an imperfect or one-sided statement, and we believe that the case will be allowed to take its regular course in a court of law, when Sir Henry Keppel will have an opportunity of showing that the conduct complained of was not such as has been described, neither was it attributable solely to himself, nor to the accused lady.

"We have strong reasons for believing that the gallant admiral's character has been wilfully maligned."

In fact their Lordships of the Admiralty DID act upon a one-sided statement; Sir Henry Keppel was judged and condemned without being permitted to say a word in his own defence. Without giving him any reason, they made it abundantly clear to him that, having hauled down his flag on August 6, 1861, he need expect no further employment. That he hoisted his flag once more, on January 21, 1867, was the result of a direct intervention by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, who, on December 12, 1866 wrote:

"I am glad to be able to tell you that I received a letter from Sir John Pakington this morning, announcing his intention of offering you, with the Queen's approval, the China Command, as Admiral King is going to give up. I am only too happy if I have, in any small way, been the means of getting Sir John to give you this command..."

There is a curious paucity of newspaper cuttings and letters on the subject of what The Times called "The Fracas on board HMS FORTE" or, as another newspaper more bluntly put it, "The Keppel Scandal". Vivian Stuart says that she learned this when she started to write her biography of Sir Henry Keppel and began to suspect that the whole unfortunate affair had been deliberately hushed up. Sir Henry Keppel himself, in his lengthy three-volume Journal "A Sailor's Life Under Four Sovereigns" says remarkably little, but he was 89 when he edited his diaries for publication and the bitterness he must have felt at the time had long since faded. It is evident from a note made in 1898, when he had just then learnt of the death of the man who had maligned his character, that he felt it best to let bygones be bygones, for he wrote, by way of explanation:

"There are now living proofs in London of what did occur but Sir George Grey and myself are both old men...we must shortly be called to our full account." And then "Poor fellow! Since

writing the above, I find that Sir George Grey (born GRAY) rests under the same roof as Nelson and Wellington."

His brother-in-law Sir Algernon West in his "Memoirs of Sir Henry Keppel" respected his wishes seven years later and dismissed the differences between the two men in a few lines. Even in 1938 Sir John Stephenson, whose great-grandmother was Sir Henry Keppel's sister, in "A Royal Correspondence - Letters of King Edward VII and King George V to Admiral Sir Henry Frederick Stephenson" also glosses over the affair as "a private quarrel .

It appears now, however, to have been a very public one, although there was no lawsuit, no court martial, no official enquiry and the files of The Times yielded only two reports - the one quoted and a later addition to it. Vivian Stuart however felt that as a conscientious biographer of the famous "Little Admiral" she should endeavour to find out the truth. The so-called fracas had kept Sir Henry Keppel on the half-pay list for over 5 years and, quite apart from almost putting a premature end to his Naval career, it prevented him being made Governor of the Straits Settlements in 1865 and must also have come very close to breaking his heart.

Vivian's task proved a lengthy one. His family were very generous in their help when she was writing the book; no one though knew the whole story. There were only two letters both written by Sir Henry to his sister Lady Mary Stephenson, among the Hamilton-Keppel Papers at the National Maritime Museum. The log of HMS FORTE gave only the bare facts, without detail or explanation, and a painstaking search among the files of the Public Record Office seemed, at first, likely to be no more informative. Pieces of the jigsaw appeared but so many were missing that Vivian began to despair of ever being able to find out the whole truth concerning what Sir Henry Keppel described in his diary as "the sad and untoward even which occurred on June 9, 1860".

It took Vivian Stuart the better part of a year to arrive at what she believes to be the truth.

The facts are these:

HMS FORTE, steam-assisted sail, was put in commission at Sheerness on January 28, 1860 by Captain Edward Turnour who had previously served under Keppel in RALEIGH. On February 11, Rear-Admiral Sir Henry Keppel hoisted his flag at sunset and then, after the requisite salutes had been fired and returned, he proceeded to leave. FORTE's officers included his 19 year-old nephew Harry (afterwards Admiral Sir Henry Frederick) Stephenson, a midshipman.

As it was intended that the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, Sir George Grey KCB should be given passage in her to Simon's Bay HMS FORTE was fitted with extra cabins and a small poop for the accommodation of the Captain, Flag-Lieutenant and Secretary. At the last minute an order was received to prepare extra cabins for Lady Grey and her maid (Mrs. Thompson) which, coming so belatedly, deprived Sir Henry Keppel of what he described as "half his accommodation". All was ready by April 30 and the passengers were embarked, including Sir George and Lady Grey, Captains Speke and Grant (a renowned big game shot, after whom Grant's Gazelle was named) and the Governor's staff.

Judging by the entries in Keppel's Journal, the voyage began as so many other similar voyages had begun. The passengers, if not unreservedly welcomed, were tolerated by FORTE's officers and men, to whom their alien presence, as much as the space they occupied, represented a potential disruption of the disciplined routine of a man-of-war at sea, but nothing more serious. Very certainly Sir Henry Keppel, beyond expressing his understandable resentment at having to give up part of his quarters to her, seems to have had no premonition of the unhappy consequences of Lady Grey's arrival on board his flagship.

Sir Henry Keppel had apparently met neither of the Greys before although, since her father was an admiral, he was probably aware that Lady Grey had been Miss Harriet Spencer before her marriage in Australia in 1839.

Sir George Grey had first been appointed Governor of the Cape of Good Hope in 1854 because he was believed to be in favour of African unity, contrary to Colonial Office policy at that time. The fall of the Derby Ministry had, however, brought the Duke of Newcastle to the Colonial Office in place of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton and Lord Carnarvon, and Grey had been reinstated and was now on his way back to the Cape to resume office as Governor. The son of a Lieutenant-Colonel in the 30th Foot he was born in Lisbon in 1812 and, like his father, had been commissioned into an infantry regiment on leaving school.

Between the years 1837 and 1839 he had undertaken the exploration of the western coastal region of Australia, north of the Swan River, on behalf of the Secretary for State for the Colonies, then Lord Glenelg. An account of his expedition, published in 1841, brought him some distinction and he was appointed to administer the then financially unstable colony established in South Australia. Having achieved all that was expected of him there, Grey was transferred to New Zealand as Governor, at the height of the war between the native Maoris and the colonists in 1846. Two years later his efforts to bring about a just and lasting settlement of the differences between the two opposing factions was rewarded with a K.C.B.

Sir George was regarded as a brilliant colonial administrator, a fine linguist and an acknowledged expert in the fields of mythology and ethnology. He was also considered somewhat irascible, dangerously radical in his views, and a difficult man to get on with, and there strong rumours that his marriage was far from happy. His behaviour while he was a passenger on board HMS FORTE seems to have left a great deal to be desired, in particular where his attitude towards his wife was concerned. In a letter to his mother, Lady Mary Stephenson, Harry Stephenson described Lady Grey "as a very nice person" and later as "an injured wife" as if this fact were common knowledge on board HMS FORTE.

Up to June 9 the entries in the ship's log and in Sir Henry Keppel's Journal - both the original and published versions - read quite normally. Having sailed from Plymouth on April 30 HMS FORTE hove to in Funchal Roads, Madeira, on May 9. Visitors came on board, passengers and members of the ship's company went ashore and the midshipmen had a brush with the Portuguese police which resulted in some blood being shed - mainly Portuguese - and the young gentlemen having to be bailed out of prison next day by the British Consul. According to Harry Stephenson, his uncle's reaction to this was to express regret that they had not "marked the Portuguese more".

On May 12 HMS FORTE sailed for Rio. Twelve days later the Admiral gave a dinner on the poop to celebrate Her Majesty's birthday and the Line was crossed, with the usual ceremonies. Rio de Janeiro was reached on June 3 and FORTE's log for the 3 days spent in harbour reveals nothing unusual save that a seaman, James Sutherland, jumped overboard on the 6th and was picked up by the lifeboat. For the rest, the ship coaled and refitted, taking on 241 tons of coal. On June 7 she prepared for sea, received bread from the victualling yard and water from a tanker. The passengers who had been ashore, were re-embarked and on the morning of 7th HMS FORTE weighed and proceeded under steam out of the Bay of Rio de Janeiro, her destination logged as the Cape of Good Hope, distant 3,156 miles. By 5.30 p.m. she had finished with engines and was under sail. On June 8 the engines were used again, and a seaman, Henry Hill, fell overboard while the ship was going 10 knots under sails and steam. But, thanks to "Clifford's admirable apparatus for lowering", Keppel's Journal notes "the cutter was down in the shortest possible time and the man saved". On June 9 the log records that engines were stopped, fires put out and drawn, and with the first of a fine N.N.W. breeze FORTE's yards were squared and she proceeded under sail, still on course for the Cape of Good Hope, 518 miles out from Rio.

Then under this date, the following entry appears in the original copy of Sir Henry

Keppel's Journal:

"A sad and untoward event occurred during the first watch. Under extreme pressure from Captain Turnour and the surgeon, who stated that the Governor would either commit suicide or murder his wife, I consented to return to Rio de Janeiro and reached that port on the evening of the 12th."

HMS FORTE's log merely records that course was altered for Rio, no reason being given for the change. But Keppel's Journal continues: "Next morning, having landed the Governor, Lady Grey and her maid, sent an officer to know when His Excellency would be ready to embark. He sent word that he was then ready and that if I would not write home what had occurred, he would not. I kept my word....".

The foregoing is a plain statement of the facts, bare and without any attempt to explain WHY His Excellency, the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope should "either commit suicide or murder his wife" if the ship did not return to the port she had just left - now over 500 miles distant - and there land Sir George Grey and his wife.

Lady Grey must have been left behind in Rio, no doubt to await a ship to take her back to England, for there is no record of her re-embarking on board FORTE, although her husband signified his willingness to do so within a few hours of his being put ashore. He also appears to have requested Sir Henry Keppel - as one gentleman to another - not to make any report, official or otherwise, of what occurred during the first watch on June 9. It seems clear that he gave his own promise "not to write home" either and the circumstances were such that, presumably this was more to his advantage than Keppel's, or he would not have made the proposal.

Sir Henry Keppel's decision to return to Rio was made UNDER EXTREME PRESSURE FROM HIS FLAG CAPTAIN AND SURGEON - the latter, it must be supposed, on medical grounds - and both evidently fearing that Grey's state of mind was such that he might attempt to take his own life or that of his wife if he and Lady Grey remained together on board FORTE. This suggests extreme provocation, a marital quarrel of some magnitude or that Sir George Grey suffered a fit of temporary insanity. It subsequently transpired that the Governor accused the Admiral of alienating the affections of his wife. Yet in spite of this he returned to Keppel's ship to continue his journey, making no attempt to obtain a passage to the Cape in any other ship although there were a number of other British Naval vessels in Rio at the time and a British Commander-in-Chief to whom he could have put his case.

Sir George Grey spent a further three weeks on board FORTE, virtually as the guest of the man whose honour he later impugned and whose career he vindictively sought to ruin....strange behaviour to say the least, on the part of a supposedly wronged husband who had abandoned his wife in Rio !

When FORTE reached her destination his behaviour became even more odd, for Sir Henry Keppel's diary contains the following entry:

"Arrived at Simon's Bay on 4 July at 8 pm. His Excellency was in such a hurry to convey to Admiral Sir Frederick Grey the fact of his arrival that, unseen he dropped himself into a shore boat and landed at Admiralty House."

The Governor incidentally, was not related to the Admiral.

It was, of course, customary to land a Colonial Governor under a salute, with yards manned, but Sir George Grey was apparently so anxious to go ashore, that he did not stand on ceremony. He 'slipped unseen into a shore boat' - an extremely strange way for a Governor, representing Her Majesty, to leave one of Her Majesty's ships. Why, one is compelled to ask, did he do this? Because, as Sir Henry's diary records, he was "in such a hurry to convey the fact of his arrival to Admiral Sir

Frederick Grey" - Commander-in-Chief of the Cape Station, whom Keppel had come to relieve? Or was it, perhaps, that his anxiety was rather that he should be the first to relate HIS version of the "sad and untoward event" of June 9 to an Admiral he knew was about to return to England....and could be relied upon to tell THAT VERSION to Their Lordships and not Henry Keppel's on his return ?

It would seem possible, even probable, in the light of what subsequently happened that Grey's willingness to make the journey from Rio in FORTE was in order that he might be the first to tell his story in the Colony of which he was Governor. Had he waited for passage in another ship, Keppel would have reached the Cape before him and Admiral Grey would have left for England without having heard of his namesake's version of the unhappy story. As it was, Keppel did not land to pay his respects to his predecessor until July 5 and by that time the harm was done. He learnt from Admiral Grey "that the Governor had made out that the proposition not to communicate home came, in the first place, from me to him. This untruth accounts for my subsequent treatment" (by the Admiralty).

Whether or not Sir George Grey suffered some sort of mental derangement on June 9 it is obvious that by July 4 he had all his wits about him. Having gained Sir Frederick's ear that evening, he saw to it that the Admiral left for home with the official appreciation of his services placed on record by the Executive Council of the Cape Colony in a Minute dated July 7 and signed by himself. Not content with that he drew the attention of the Duke of Newcastle to it in a personal letter. Both Minute and letter praised Keppel's predecessor extravagantly and there can be little doubt that such praise would have been greatly appreciated by the flag officer to whom it was accorded - not least the fact that the Duke of Newcastle was requested to make the Lords of the Admiralty acquainted with "our feelings on the subject".

Communications being slow in the 1860's Sir Henry Keppel assumed command of the Station and set about "making the rounds". He saw Sir George Grey once, at a race meeting at Green Point, but gave no hint of what sort of reception the Governor accorded him. His diary records day to day events but makes no further mention of the "differences" between himself and the Governor until February 1861. He must, however, have written to his widowed sister Polly (Lady Mary Stephenson) concerning the unhappy affair because there is a letter among his papers at the National Maritime Museum in which he refers to it in a manner that suggests that she had been taken fully into his confidence. Dated January 10, 1861 the letter is far from optimistic in tone. After explaining that new regulations will prevent his giving his haul-down promotion to young Harry Stephenson, the letter continues:

"However that (his flag) may be hauled down for me sooner than I expect by the Board of Admiralty. Seven long months is a cruel long time to be kept in a state of suspense, and I cannot now know my fate until the end of next month, when I pick up my letters at St. Helena on my return to the Cape. What the fate will be I cannot tell, I have quite made up my mind to submit to no degradation or disgrace - such as being removed to a worse station, like the Brazils. If such are my orders, I (shall) resign my commission and retire into private life, marry and attend to my cabbages. (Although) I am afraid I am too old ever to marry now. This last business had made me at least ten years older which I can ill afford."

This letter was prophetic for mail must have reached Sir Henry Keppel at Sierra Leone with orders from Their Lordships to proceed as he had feared to "the Brazils" handing over the Cape Command to Rear-Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker. His official reply is included in his published Journal and in this he "respectfully begs to request that Their Lordships will be pleased to inform him of their reasons for removing him from the Cape of Good Hope and West Coast of Africa to an inferior command." This was dated February 11 1861 and the Admiral wrote privately to the First Lord (the Duke of Somerset) at the same time, making a similar request. Their Lordships' reply did not reach him until May 28, the First Lord's was

awaiting him when he reached England. The former stated that "Their Lordships are not in the habit of giving any reasons for the orders they may think proper to give". The Duke of Somerset simply said that "upon consideration" he thought it expedient to transfer Sir Henry Keppel to another station.

On April 24 HMS NARCISSUS arrived in Simon's Bay, flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Sir Baldwin Walker, his relief and, as it chanced, an old and valued friend. On the 29th Sir Henry relinquished the Cape Command and May 17 sailed in FORTE for Rio. He reached there on May 28 and, as ordered, relieved Rear-Admiral Sir Stephen Lushington - by a coincidence his predecessor in command of the Crimean Naval Brigade. On arrival Keppel found a notice from Their Lordships of their "intention to supersede him with Rear-Admiral Richard Laird Warren, whom he might expect in the EMERALD, to which ship he was to transfer his flag and return to England.....so that (if necessary and at his own request) inquiry might be made into his conduct." The second report in the Naval and Military Gazette that was found in the British Museum files was headed "Sir Henry Keppel" and was dated April 8 1861. This was a straightforward announcement of the change of command, but Keppel himself received a much longer one headed "The Keppel Scandal" which he quoted in full in his published Journal "A Sailor's Life Under Four Sovereigns". Sir Henry noted "from what paper it came I know not nor from whom I received it, but so struck am I by its truth and justice, it is herewith inserted." For the purpose of this article we will take a few brief extracts from it:

"...on the return of the gallant Admiral (Keppel) the scandal with which his name has been associated will be fully investigated and the danger of acting upon ex parte statements will probably receive another proof. Had Sir Henry tamely submitted to the sentence of removal from the Cape Station, he would have been pleading guilty to a charge of a serious nature; for having declined to accept the South American Command under such circumstances.

"This treatment of a British flag officer shows to what a miserable ebb the Navy has fallen. Had a general officer been complained of by a Colonial Government, he would not have been summarily dismissed or transferred to another command, unheard and untried....the naval officer is often condemned on the shallowest of pretexts, and (he) has no Court of Appeal.

"With respect to the alleged scene or scenes on board the FORTE, we have heard so many different versions that we decline to offer any decided opinion but we contend, on behalf of the service, for that measure of justice which is never denied to the veriest criminal - a fair and full trial before condemnation.

"It may turn out that Sir George Grey acted with unbecoming impetuosity, and that a British Admiral was removed from a valuable appointment at the request of the Home Secretary, because an irascible civilian Governor chose to pick a quarrel."

On June 16 1861 HMS EMERALD arrived in Rio harbour with Rear-Admiral Warren on board. Salutes were exchanged. Sir Henry's flag transferred to EMERALD (Captain Arthur Cumming) and Admiral Warren's to FORTE on the 26th. A measure of the affection his seamen felt for their "old Chief" lies in the fact that 50 of FORTE's crew deserted her the night after his flag had been shifted to EMERALD. The rest voluntarily manned yards and cheered him when, at 10 pm and in darkness, EMERALD left harbour.

On July 11 Sir Henry wrote sadly in his Journal "Crossed the Equator, in all human probability for the last time". Among his papers at the National Maritime Museum is part of a letter to his sister Lady Mary Stephenson, undated, which reads:

"What a loving darling but much too partial sister I have! I believe if I had been guilty of all that lying rascal Sir G. Grey accused me of and followed it up by murdering him - my dearest Polly would you think I was right?"

EMERALD came-to at Spithead on August 5 and Rear-Admiral Sir Henry Keppel struck his flag next day. On landing, the Prince Consort went out of his way to shake hands with him and welcome him back but the Admiralty preserved official silence, which Keppel explains by a note in his Journal: "...having found out how little regard he (Sir George Grey) had for speaking the truth, I believed that he had access by writing to some person near the Court, which would account for the mystery at the Admiralty (but) the kindness of the Prince Consort dispelled this idea. I proceeded to London and....tried to forget my service troubles and the notice I more than once received (from the Board of Admiralty) that I need expect no further employment. Sir Frederick Grey was then the only person (at Admiralty) who, if not deceived, knew what had occurred on board FORTE." Then - having at long last received the First Lord's reply to his private letter dated December 5, 1860 - comes the addition: "A more just and honourable man than the Duke of Somerset there could not be (but) by whom was His Grace misled?"

The next five and a half years were years of frustration and heartbreak for Sir Henry Keppel. True, he married - Jane West, sister of Sir Algernon West - and a son (Colin Richard, later Admiral Sir Colin) and a daughter (Maria Walpole) were born to him, but he yearned for active service at sea and this, together with his requests for an inquiry, the Admiralty denied him.

What WAS the truth of Sir George Grey's accusations? What really did occur during the first watch on board FORTE on June 9 1860? I believe that it is revealed in a letter which came to light only after Vivian Stuart had sent her manuscript to the printers. It was written by young Harry Stephenson, one of FORTE's midshipmen and Sir Henry's nephew. The letter, headed "HMS FORTE, Simon's Bay" and dated July 20 1860 is addressed to his mother:

"My dearest Mother, You will have heard the whole of our cruise from England (to Rio). We left Rio on 7th June- my 20th birthday - with every prospect of a quick and delightful passage. But unfortunately Uncle Harry began to listen and sympathise with the wrongs of an injured wife, which was followed by some notes and, two days after (wards) Sir George (Grey) discovered them. Of course there was the most awful uproar in the cabin, and nothing would pacify Sir George but putting the ship about and returning to Rio, when he intended returning to England with his wife. We anchored at Rio again on the evening of the 11th, when Mrs. Thompson (Lady Grey's maid) and myself took her onshore to the Hotel. The next day the 12th Sir George changed his mind, and determined to go on in the ship but send his wife home by the mail (steamer) which he settled that day, and left with us the same evening for the Cape.

"They have always lived unhappily together, and of what Sir George has exposed of his character through the whole affair, leads us to believe that he is trying to make it out as bad as he can (and) that he would be only too glad to get rid of his wife.

"Now dearest Mother, I have told you this, do not believe all that you hear about it. It is awful the reports and scandal that one hears flying about out here....Uncle Harry is away at present in the BRISK, he is going the rounds of the station (in her) as we are unfit for sea at present.....Ever your most sincerely affectionate son, Harry."

In fact Lady Grey and her husband were reconciled only a few months before Sir George's death in 1898; she was not with him in New Zealand and the "Dictionary of National Biography" states that "the marriage was not happy". Sir George's action following FORTE's arrival at Simon's Bay suggest that Midshipman Stephenson's guess was right and that he "would be only too glad to get rid of his wife." Furthermore because of his radical views his appointment as Governor of the Cape had been terminated by Sir Bulwer Lytton in 1859. Only a change of government brought about his reinstatement and his position on his return to the Cape a year later must have been, to say the least, a trifle insecure. He could not risk a scandal, in

his own interests, and could not justify his having left his wife in Rio except by "making it out as bad as he could" - in fact by placing the blame upon Sir Henry Keppel whose promise not to write home was chivalrously kept. Evidence was found in Public Record Office files, of Grey's vindictive persecution of a man named Green, appointed a district magistrate by the Lieutenant-Governor, which appointment Grey refused to confirm and upon which he expressed himself very forcibly.

It is believed therefore, that based on all the facts available, that Sir Henry Keppel was the victim of gross injustice, calculated to break the spirit of a lesser man.

Keppel's flag was hoisted again, as Vice-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the China Station on board CUMBERLAND at Sheerness on January 21 1867 and saluted - in poetic justice - by the flagship of Sir Baldwin Walker. He commanded the China Station from March 1867 until October 1869 when on promotion to Admiral he relinquished it, being rowed to the steamer that was to take him home by GALATEA's barge with her Captain the Duke of Edinburgh and 14 wardroom officers at the oars. His last active command was Devonport 1870-76 and when he died in his 95th year, he was Admiral of the Fleet and "Father of the Navy", holder of the Order of Merit and of the G.C.B. having - at the age of 90 - journeyed to Singapore alone to be present when "New Harbour" was named "Keppel Harbour" in his honour.

On his coffin, at the Naval funeral at St. Mary's Winkfield, Berkshire, on January 21 1904, lay a wreath from his Queen inscribed "In loving memory of my beloved "Little Admiral" best and bravest of men - from Alexandra. Rest in Peace".

The material for this article was provided by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum and was obtained by the Museum from the South African Library, Cape Town.

MEMORIES OF 76 YEARS IN THE CAPE.

Extracts from the Diary of the late James Thomson,
grandfather of L.C. & Llew. Gay

James Thompson was born in Buckhaven, Fifeshire, Scotland in March 1830 and died in Simon's Town on 2nd August, 1927. His wife Miss Emma King had pre-deceased him. At the time of his death he was the oldest European resident of Simon's Town and possibly in the Cape Peninsula.

James Thomson arrived in Cape Town by accident in 1851 aged 21 years. He was a carpenter of a sailing vessel bound from Scotland for Australia. When a couple of hundred miles past the Cape, the ship ran into a violent gale which dismasted her. Leaking badly and jury-rigged with the crew short of food and water, it was only after a terrific struggle that the disabled ship made it back to the Cape to anchor in Three Anchor Bay. The ship was found to be badly damaged and was eventually hauled ashore in Three Anchor Bay and broken up. Although an opportunity offered itself for him to continue his voyage in another vessel, Mr. Thomson decided to remain in Cape Town and soon found employment. The Cape was then settling down after the great disturbance which had been caused by the attempt to introduce convicts, the ships carrying whom had left Simon's Town a few months before.

Then followed the days of the great Kaffir War and Mr. Thomson often recalled the great reception which was given to Sir Harry Smith on his arrival at Cape Town on his way to England when he was called hom, a triumphal arch being built in his honour. Another very clear recollection of Mr. Thomson's was the disaster to the BIRKENHEAD (she sailed from Simon's Town); he being in Cape Town when the news of the tragedy arrived.

Shortly after this copper was found in Namaqualand and Mr. Thomson undertook a contract at Port Nolloth to repair a schooner engaged in carrying ore from the mines. Before starting the work he found it necessary to get the vessel clear of the water and related how, after being floated in on a spring tide, she was landed on rollers and teams of about 48 spans of oxen, collected from neighbouring farms, were used to drag the vessel up the beach. Remaining at Port Nolloth for some time Mr. Thomson eventually returned to Cape Town and was present when Sir George Grey began the work of building the first railway into the interior of Africa by constructing the line to Wellington. The library and museum in Cape Town were begun about this time. Mr. Thomson then worked for the firm of Robertson and Bain who were at that time amongst the leading shipwrights in Cape Town and he recollected Cape Town Docks and the Breakwater being started.

Simon's Town at that time, was a favourite port of call for many ships and after several visits Mr. Thomson left Cape Town to settle at Simon's Town in 1865. Among his earliest recollections of the Naval Port was the completion of the building of Roman Rock Lighthouse, the stone for which was trimmed and cut below Seaforth and carried off in barges to the site of the lighthouse. Cape Point Lighthouse on the top of the peak, was built at the same time. The work of transporting the material for this was carried out under very wild and difficult conditions by bullock wagon or boat. Another progressive step at this time was the opening of the first telegraph line in South Africa, between Cape Town and Simon's Town, which he said, caused much misgiving amongst the natives.

About this time, Mr. Thomson, who was a boat builder and shipwright by trade, was struck with the possibilities of establishing a boat-building business on the shores of False Bay to cater for the fishermen who were ,even at that time, numerous. Starting work at what is known as Steenbras Bay, since filled in by the building of the East Dockyard, his reputation as a boat builder soon became known and amongst his most cherished possessions, was the record of well over 100 boats, ranging from 20 feet to 40 feet in length, which he built to orders from places as far distant as the Orange River in the north to East London on the East Coast, 13 boats being built to carry copper ore down the Orange River. Moulding his boats on the lines of the open "coble" then so popular in the Scotch fishing village of his birth, there is little doubt that he strongly influenced the design of craft, even in the 1920's strongly favoured by the Malay fishermen of the Cape. Indeed Mr. Thomson was never happier than when chatting of his triumphs in boating. At one time it was an annual event to race the boats of the Kalk Bay fishing fleet against those of Simon's Town, the race being instituted by Miss Jameson who put up two prizes, viz £5 and £3 for the first two boats in. Apparently it was always a red letter day and it was with great satisfaction Mr. Thomson used to recall how, competing against a host of craft, two of his own fishing boats annexed the 1st and 2nd prizes.

An interesting side-light on the industries then in existence in the Peninsula, was given by the old gentleman in relating a trip he made to Cape Point where he remained some weeks working on the repairing of several boats which were quartered at Buffel's Bay being engaged in the snoeking trade, thousands of these fish being dried and exported annually to Mauritius. At this time practically all the country between Simon's Town and Cape Point was given over to ostrich farming, hundreds of the birds being fenced in in this district. It is interesting to learn that a few birds, now gone wild, still remain at Cape Point. Another thriving industry at the time was lime-burning. Huge stone kilns - the ruins of which were still to be seen in the late 1920's - being in use near to Buffels Bay, at which place lime was loaded into a small schooner named the NAUTILUS. The industry was brought to an abrupt end when the little craft was wrecked and some of the crew drowned in the vicinity of Cape Point.

At this time the journey to Cape Town was no light task, the railway stopping at Wynberg, and Mr. Thomson often described his experiences in taking the post cart to "Rathfelders" at Wynberg, the carts often sinking axle deep in the soft sand as the drivers raced across the beaches, leaving the roads, 'to cool their horses at the edge of the sea'. At a later date the railway was extended from Wynberg to Kalk Bay but it was not until 1890 that it was carried through to Simon's Town amidst great rejoicing.

Mr. Thomson clearly remembered the visit in 1860 of Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred, one of the hotels at Simon's Town being named after him.

A tragic side of the Colony's history is touched upon in a note in a diary kept by Mr. Thomson where, under the date of Sunday June 15, 1879 it reads: "Two Dutch Men o' War and HMS BOADICEA arrived in Simon's Bay with the corpse of His Imperial Highness, the Prince Imperial, on board. The body was transhipped on board the ORONTES, who steamed out on Sunday evening at 7 p.m. Dr. Rooney (afterwards Bishop Rooney) who was the Catholic minister at Simon's Town, left also aboard the ORONTES."

Other entries in the diary at this time show that Simon's Bay was then a meeting place for ships of all nations. For instance, an entry on June 20, 1879 reads: "This being the anniversary of the ascension to the throne of Queen Victoria, the Naval Ships, as well as the Dutch Fleet and a French Barque in the bay were decorated with all kinds of flags, and at noon one of the Dutch Fleet fired a Royal Salute whilst, later in the day HMS TENEDOS sailed for England."

At the time of his coming to Simon's Town, Mr. Thomson was wont to describe how the sea beach existed where today is the main street, and he had taken a keen interest in the development of Simon's Town as well as Cape Town. He frequently visited the latter to see what progress was being made. On almost the last occasion he visited, he stood in Adderley Street and reflected when the beach ran close alongside the Railway Station and Post Office (not the present ones). He also remembered when in Adderley Street itself masses of farm implements and machinery used to be stacked outside the shops on what to-day are pavements and sidewalks, whilst off in Table Bay, could be seen dozens of sailing vessels flying the flags of all nations, which had gathered to refit and replenish at the "Half Way House". (What a pity we can no longer see the sea or ships from Adderley Street! Editor).

The opening of the patent slip at Simon's Town which was designed to lift vessels of 1,000 tons out of the water, he described as a great event in the Cape. (The slip has only last year been taken out of commission. Editor). Another interesting fact was that during Mr. Thomson's period of residence in Simon's Town there had been 28 different Naval Commanders-in-Chief!

Mr. Thomson paid his last visit to Scotland at the age of 80 and it was during his absence then that his wife unhappily died. They had married at the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cape Town in March 1857, one of the earliest of the weddings performed at the church. Mr. Thomson was a very active man and had a daily walk until his 96th year. He attended the Dutch Reformed Church in Simon's Town and at the Sunday evening service on the Sunday following his death, tribute was paid to him by Rev. L.M. de Villiers and the congregation sang Mr. Thomson's favourite hymn "A Few More Years Shall Roll".

The information for this article was made available (from papers in the Gay Collection) by the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum.

CAPTAIN VANCOUVER'S VISIT TO SIMON'S TOWN 1791

Peter Philip

In Vol. XIV No.2 there is a most interesting extract from Captain George Vancouver's book "A Voyage of Discovery" describing his visit to Simon's Bay during his epic voyage to the North Pacific to search for a sea-passage linking that ocean with the North Atlantic. Vancouver mentions that there were other ships in Simon's Bay at the time of his arrival there (July 1791). Perhaps I may be allowed to offer some notes on these ships and what they were doing there.

HMS GORGON was on passage to New South Wales as part of the Third Fleet, with convicts and supplies for the infant settlement which had been established at Port Jackson in January 1788. She was commanded by Capt. John Parker whose wife Mary Ann Parker was also on board, and she afterwards wrote a book on her experiences during the voyage, including her two visits to the Cape - one outward bound in 1791 and the other homeward bound in 1792. Her book "Voyage Round the World in the Gorgon, Man of War" was published in 1795 and there is a copy in the South African Library.

Mary Ann emerges from her book as an attractive personality, who remained cheerful and uncomplaining throughout the discomforts of the long voyage. She and her husband are described as follows by the First Lieutenant:

"Captain Parker, with a thorough knowledge of his profession, was also to be considered a good officer, tho' too hasty to be always pleasant on duty or to those under him, but like most Passionate men, soon cool, nor capable of long resentment, and whose study it always was to make every person as comfortable as their situation would admit. He had, with all the Toughness of a Sailor, as much or more humanity and liberality of sentiment than generally falls to the lot of one with so boisterous an Education, having been most of his life at sea. Mrs. Parker, once reckoned a Beauty but, from the Small Pox, is only to be admired as having a Pleasing face with a good Person (i.e. a good figure); in accompanying her husband on so long a Voyage is enough to prove her an affectionate Wife, and from having been brought up in genteel life, with a knowledge of music, and speaking French and Italian fluently, must be pronounced an accomplished Woman, join'd to which ev'ry talent for domestic life. A little dash of satire in her composition, tho' not joined to the least Ill-nature, was therefore entertaining."

She does not mention in her book the arrival of Vancouver's ships in Simon's Bay, probably because she was at the time in Cape Town, lodging with Aletta Jacoba Blanckenberg, widow of Petrus Johannes de Witt (1716-79), Member of the Burgher Council.

The First Lieutenant of the GORGON was John Gardner (or Gardiner) who also wrote an account of the voyage; this was not published, but is to be found in manuscript in the custody of the Dixon Library in Sydney. A few years later, during the First British Occupation, he was posted to the Cape Station, as Commander of the 18-gun brig HMS RATTLESNAKE and by March 1799 he was commanding another 18-gun brig, the STAR, which captured the merchantman LODDISKA of Oldenburg the following year. Lady Anne Barnard reports his arrival at the Cape in a letter dated 10 July 1797:

"Among the English who have arrived in the fleet is Captain and Mrs. Gardner - the daughter of the late Lady Hobart and very pretty, young - brilliant - but a flower that blows but to fall shortly (i.e. she was dying of tuberculosis)." (Lewin Robinson p.57)

Gardner evidently fancied himself as a comedian, and wrote a humorous sketch, which was entitled "Hard Times of Ye Service" and which depicted the life of a naval officer at the Cape in 1797.

Vancouver also mentions other ships in Simon's Bay when he dropped anchor there:

".....the WARREN HASTINGS and EARL FITZWILLIAM Indiamen from Bengal, two Port Jackson transports from China bound home; three with convicts bound to Port

The three convict transports bound for Port Jackson also formed part of the Third Fleet. Mary Ann Parker mentions the names of two of them; they were the BRITANNIA and the ALBERMARLE, and the third could have been any one of the other eight transports which made up the Fleet. The convicts were subjected to the most appalling conditions. Collins (Judge-Advocate of the Colony) reports that 200 of them, male and female, died on the voyage, while the Australian Encyclopaedia states that out of 222 convicts landed from the QUEEN in September 1791, only 50 were still alive in May 1792; and that Sydney's death-roll for 1792 was 436, and most of the victims had arrived by the Third Fleet.

The two transports from China were the LADY JULIANA and the NEPTUNE, a storeship and a convict transport respectively, which had formed part of the Second Fleet to Port Jackson, had then proceeded to China to pick up a cargo of tea, and were now on the last leg of the return passage to England.

If the conditions in which the convicts lived in the ships of the Third Fleet were bad, those of the Second Fleet - the "Death Fleet" as it was called - were infinitely worse. The carriage of convicts, according to the Australian Encyclopaedia, was in the hands of private contractors, who stood to gain by overcrowding the ships and by reducing supplies to make more room for freight. The rations supplied to the convicts were then further reduced so that the surplus could be sold for profit on arrival. The more convicts that died, the larger the surplus would be. NEPTUNE, SURPRISE and SCARBOROUGH had left England with about 1,000 convicts between them, of which 267 died on the voyage, and another 50 within a month of their reaching Sydney.

Of all the ships of the "Death Fleet", the worst was the NEPTUNE, commanded by the infamous Donald Trail. When the transports returned to England, the Master and the Chief Mate of the NEPTUNE were charged with causing many deaths by curtailing the food and water, but both men fled to avoid being brought to trial. In 1795 Trail turned up again at the Cape as sailing master of HMS MONARCH, and was appointed Harbour Master and Master Attendant at Simon's Town. His record at the Cape was no better than it had been in the NEPTUNE. In 1799 he, with Tennant and Hogan, was involved in the importation of slaves from Mocambique under special licence in the Portuguese ship JOAQUIM. But then, such a thoroughly nasty trade would have attracted such a thoroughly nasty man. I have read that the fetters used on the convicts of the Second Fleet were alleged to have been employed previously in the African slave-trade.

Trail's other sideline was equally predictable. In the NEPTUNE he had used the victualling department to deprive the convicts of their rations - and in many cases of their lives - for his personal gain; in Simon's Town he used the victualling department to fleece the local people in an equally unscrupulous manner. Lady Anne Barnard, who disliked him intensely, wrote in a letter dated 10 July 1797:

"There is a man at Simon's Town, one Trail, in some of the publick departments (a great rogue) who buys up everything the moment the ships come in and then puts his own price on the goods" (Lewin Robinson p.56)

and in another letter, dated 24 August 1797:

"There is a company's garden - Mr. Trail asked for it for the above purpose, but since he has had it the navy people are the only ones to whom he will NOT sell a pottatoe for fear of its being remembered how he got it - I am told he is now worth 60,000 (pounds) - he was a favourite of our friend Lord Keith (Admiral Elphinstone), who certainly must have thought well of him then, but he is sadly detested here for his extortionary practices..." (Robinson p.59)

After 1799 no more is heard of Mr. Trail - or at least I have not been able to find any further references to him in the Cape records. It seems likely therefore that he departed from the Cape in that year - or perhaps was compelled to depart. I think we may assume that the people of Simon's Town were delighted to be rid of him.

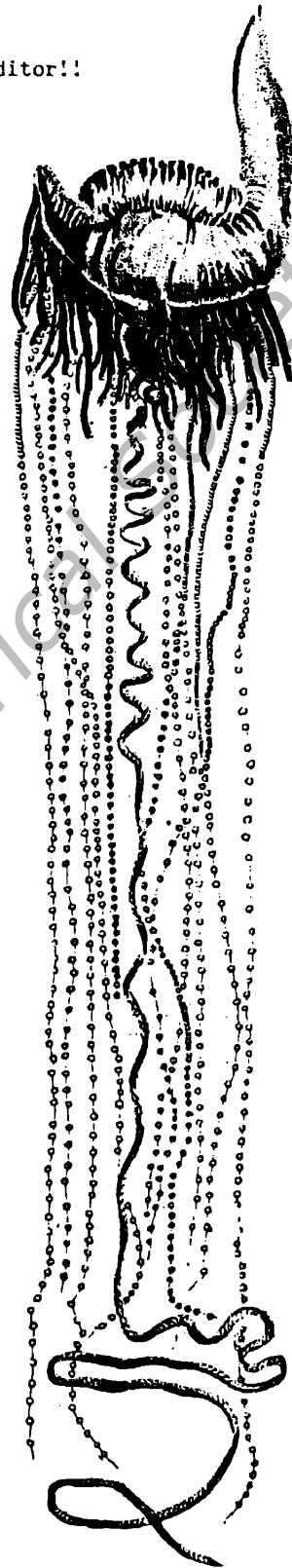
Not exactly History but it HAS been around a long time- Editor!!

The best known among the poisonous long-tentacled jellyfish is PHYSALIA PELAGICA, native of all tropical waters. PHYSALIA was derisively named Portuguese man-of-war by the English in the 18th century when the once-powerful Portuguese navy had gone into a state of decline. The designation is a strange one, for small as it is, PHYSALIA can be deadly. Actually not an individual, but a colony of highly-specialised polyps, it has tentacles up to 50 feet long which discharge a toxic substance that has painfully stung, paralyzed and even killed swimmers coming into contact with it.

With its sail-like crest or float, PHYSALIA does resemble a little ship, but either afloat or beached, it should be more an object inspiring respect than ridicule. The man-of-war - various iridescent shades of blue or pink, or rainbow-coloured with purple, mauve and orange-sails before the wind, its float filled like a balloon with a gas composed mostly of nitrogen. This float or pneumatophore is the only part of the animal that appears above the water and can be deflated so that the colony can sink below the surface, where the gas is reformed inside it, and the man-of-war rises within 15 minutes. Amazingly enough, all members of a school of PHYSALIA have their floats set at the same angle, so that a particular "fleet" always travels in the same direction.

Beneath each man-of-war's float are clustered colonies of polyps of four types - fishing, feeding, protective and reproductive. From the fishing polyps extend the long tentacles, coloured deep blue like the water and invisible to fish. When a fish swims into the tentacles it is harpooned by barbed threads discharged by thousands of stinging cells, hollow threads that both hook the fish and act as hypodermic needles, injecting poison into them. The tentacles then contract and pull the fish up to the feeding polyps, which envelop it and whose combined digestive juices prepare it for the colony's dinner. Only a few fish can live among PHYSALIA's deadly tentacles, the most notable being the little NOMEUS GRONOVII, which is perfectly camouflaged there, striped with bands of deep blue. Sometimes PHYSALIA drifts out of its tropical habitat and several summers ago a swimmer in New York was killed after encountering one in the water. Portuguese men-of-war should not even be handled when found on the beach, for the stinging cells can discharge even after the colony has died.

From: "The Compass" Mobiloil - 1976.



WITH THE NAVY AT BATTLE STATIONS IN FALSE BAY

the late Lewis C. Gay

Crouched behind the canvas dodger on the darkened bridge the skipper, Lieut. Cdr D.H.H. Whitburn R.N.R. (Retd) peers keenly into the darkness to Starboard. At the other end of the bridge, through a pair of night glasses a Naval Gunnery Lt. is closely scanning the sea to Port. Not a glimmer of light discloses our whereabouts. Those lights, absolutely necessary for safe navigation, are carefully shaded so that no tell-tale glow can escape.

Away on our Starboard bow, about 12 miles distant, the electric lights of Muizenberg and St. James twinkle across the water. Simon's Town with its Naval Base, lies about the same distance to Port. Right opposite us is Strand with the car headlights on its busy beach esplanade casting their reflections well out towards our ship. Cape Point light is winking its million candle power message astern and almost dead ahead the lesser flash of Roman Rock gives its warning of danger ahead. Ashore, everywhere, a scene of peace and quiet. Near Miller's Point the headlights of a car flash and disappear around a bend as a car-load of joy riders take a late run around the marine drive. On board the ship, however, every man is tense with anticipation as we steadily plough our 10 knots into False Bay.

Cr - a- sh. Cr - Cr - ash, a droning hum as if hundreds of bee-hives have been suddenly upset, a series of dull booms, a couple of thousand yards up overhead, and in a second the ship and everything within half a mile of her is centred in a blaze of light as half a dozen star shells burst and leave their artificial moons turning night into day. About 4 miles distant, in the direction the "Skipper" and "Guns" have been watching, a wicked flicker of orange flame breaks out as another batch of star shell hurtle into the air and then for ten minutes, Hell is let loose.

Out of the night, the blinding rays of a cruiser's searchlight leaps into life and settles about 1/2 mile astern of us. Cr - a- sh again. This time with a heavier note and astern, in the beam of light a fountain of spray flies 60 feet into the air and with a roar like an express train a 6" shell ricochets across the bay into darkness. Another roar, another white tower of water, this time a couple of hundred yards further to Port, as the guns make their ranging bracket over their target and then, the range established, salvo after salvo shatter the stillness of the night as shells are rained on the intruder caught creeping into the bay.

Far astern a light winks and disappears marking the position of another cruiser right in our wake and letting us know we are in the throes of "Action". Ashore in the Strand, a Muizenberg or Simon's Town the rumble of heavy guns, rattle windows and people look seaward and wonder what is happening. The joy-riding party in their car halt awhile to watch this spectacular drama of the sea. Overhead the disturbed gulls and ducks wheel and shriek in the darkness whilst ashore in False Bay and Strand fishermen mumble a curse as they think of fish shoals scared out to sea by the thunder of guns, and empty boats on the morrow.

At Geneva and a dozen other places an army corps of diplomats are talking and planning for universal peace and brotherhood. From the Far East, the West aye and from Europe itself comes the murmuring of unrest and threats of armed strife and war. Ottawa has again brought home the fact that the far flung empire of Britain depends more than ever on its great heritage "The freedom of the Seas", the very life blood upon which the well-being of every member of the great Commonwealth must depend. To ensure this freedom, and that their proud boast of "Ready Aye Ready" may always ring true the Navy in times of peace must prepare for war. And thus it is that for awhile Geneva is forgotten, and, smoke, flame and crashing din of high explosives has taken the place of the erstwhile peace.

The ships of the Africa Squadron are at Battle Practice and our ship, the Naval Tug ST DOGMAEL, is towing the huge battle practice target, which representing an enemy ship, has been trying to slip into Simon's Bay under cover of darkness. Spotted by the lynx eyed watchers aboard the cruisers the raid has failed and now, directed by the white glare of their searchlights the heavy guns of the squadron are concentrated on the target which is straining along astern of us at the end of 450 fathoms of heavy steel wire hawser.

The target itself is a remarkable structure calling for a word or two of explanation. Built at Simon's Town and costing almost £20,000 it is one of a number of similar naval targets scattered all over the world wherever a British squadron is stationed. Underwater is a massive shiplike hull built of plate and girders and measuring over 160 ft long. The upper body is built of thousands of feet of timber baulks bolted in a criss-cross fashion and practically the whole of which is under water. Always exposed to the risk of being holed by a direct hit underwater the inside of the target is packed with tons of slab cork to render it unsinkable. Reared above the deck level stands the actual target structure at which the ships direct their fire. 145 ft long by 30 ft high, 40 masts varying from 6 to 8 inches in diameter and made from spars specially imported from Norway carry over 6,000 ft of lattice battens the whole interlocking in such a manner that although the salvoes of heavy shells carsh and splinter through them again and again the structure remains standing.

Some of these targets have queer histories. In one case three men were left aboard the target at which the Atlantic Fleet were actually firing. No. 4 as the Simon's Town target is officially designated has herself had an adventurous life since she was first floated in 1921. Displacing almost 400 tons the target is built on such ship-like lines that in a strong breeze she trims herself and sails against the wind at about 4 knots, often to the acute discomfort of the towing ship. On her trial trip, towed by HMS LOWESTOFT, No. 4 took charge and sailing against the wind, carried away her tow line and made off on her own towards Cape Point. LOWESTOFT spent a hectic 4 hours trying to catch the runaway and was often in danger of being rammed and it was only the fact that her broken tow wire, trailing on the bottom, fouled amongst rocks about 1/4 mile from shore that saved the target piling on the rocks at Buffel's Bay. A few weeks later she again took charge, almost cut a big pair of bollards aboard HMS WALLFLOWER in half, sailed up alongside and punched a hole in WALLFLOWER's side and did so much damage that the Admiralty forbade the sloops to tow again. Then H.M. Tug ST DOGMAEL, the 1200 h.p. deep sea tug was detailed for the job, but even then the target was not finished with her misdeeds. Under fire one night a 6" shell cut the towing hawser clean in half and away into the darkness, with a howling South Easter to aid her went the target. It says much for ST. DOGMAEL that in exactly 35 minutes No. 4 was again safely in tow. No light task when it is realised that under wind pressure the target will heel over to an angle of 55 degrees and woe betide the craft then attempting to come alongside.

But whilst I have digressed to introduce the target, what of the warship under whose fire we are running. On board that ship is a scene of intense but orderly activity. She is cleared for action. Decks stripped of all frills and ornamental trimmings. Crews at action stations, each at his allotted job in that matter of fact manner which marks the machinelike state of perfection the Navy has attained. Guns crews are working their weapons. As the ship closes in on the target and the shortening ranges click into view of the gunlayers on the range dials, the gunners alter elevation to suit the new condition. The speed of the ship or target alters and immediately another recording dial announces the fact and more corrections are made. Yet another delicate instrument makes allowance for the roll of the False Bay swell.

High up on the tripod mast the Gunnery officer is fighting his ship by means of her electrical and mechanical brain situated in the control top, a maze of instruments, complicated and delicate, which are both the joy and the bane of "Gun's"

life, but which reduce the chance of failure of the human element to almost nil. From his post almost 100 feet above sea level he can control the whole operation of firing, fire every gun in the ship at the same instant, every gun trained at the self same square foot of the enemy's waterline. What the effect of such a concentration of fire must be leaves nothing to the imagination. And all the while, amid the deafening clanging of the steel structure of the ship, the crimson flashes of the guns and the acrid smell of burning cordite this one-sided battle in the night goes on. Guns crews are exerting every effort to make the shoot a record success, for not only is the enemy to be taught a lesson but the fate of the Squadron Gunnery Trophy depends on the result and this is a keenly coveted trophy.

ST DOGMAEL is steaming towards Kalk Bay at 10 knots and by means of a special winch from which the target is towed, its speed is increased to about 14 knots. The cruiser, on an opposite course is rushing to meet her doing about 20 knots, so the range is closing at almost 45 miles an hour but in spite of this the showers of splinters showing white in the searchlight announce direct hits are being scored. In 10 minutes the "run" is over. Searchlights swing up to the clouds, flicker a message to the marking ship following about a mile in our wake, and then fade out. On the tug and the marking ship the umpires total up the points scored by the "series" just fired whilst tug, target and warships alter course and prepare for another run which will engage the guns on the opposite side of the cruiser. And so it goes on until shortly before midnight when "Cease Fire" is signalled and on warships and tug a breathing space is welcomed.

Lights blaze out, bows are pointed towards Simon's Town and with their job over the cruisers are soon slipping past the East Breakwater with crews at stations for entering harbour. With a rattle the anchor finds bottom and in a manner in which "Jack" has no equal, a few minutes finds everyone in their hammocks and the ship "piped down". Meanwhile, far out in the bay ST DOGMAEL has not yet finished her night's work. On his bridge Skipper Whitburn has time to see the lights at Strand and Muizenberg gradually fade out as ST DOGMAEL plods her way homeward with £20,000 worth of target in tow. Gaping rents in the canvas screens, jagged splinters of torn lattice, and a mast here and there which sways drunkenly to the roll of the swell, testify to the deadly accuracy of the gunners and point to a rushed repair job by the dockyard staff in the morning for to-morrow night they will be at it again, another ship taking her place in the firing line.

Even as they nose in past Roman Rock, in the small hours of the morning, the flagship flashes her signal from C-in-C that to-morrow the squadron will carry out gunnery exercises in False Bay and ST DOGMAEL with the Battle Practice Target in tow is to be in position and steering W.N.W. at 10 knots by 2130 (which to the landlubber means 9.30 pm) for by such means do the Navy keep themselves "Ready Aye Ready".

This article was found among the papers of the late Lewis C. Gay which are now in the possession of the Simon's Town Museum. Another time when the late Commodore Fairbairn was the Gunnery officer aboard ST DOGMAEL and the Editor's father-in-law J.E. Mar-Gerrison was temporarily in charge, a shell actually passed between the funnel and the mast. Fairbairn and Mar-Gerrison went aboard the flagship to register a complaint, carrying with them an umbrella. The captain was not amused! However that near accident did not recur.

EDITOR
