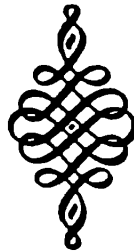




SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



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VOL. XV NO. 2
JULY 1988

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN MR. G.B. READ CBE AT THE 28TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN THE LECTURE HALL, SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM ON THURSDAY 24TH MARCH 1988 AT 8 p.m.

We again meet to-night in the dual roles of Members of the Simon's Town Historical Society and Friends of the Museum. The need for this apparent duplication in our organisational structure has been explained from time to time in previous reports and should a further explanation be required this can be provided later in the meeting. You will have the opportunity to read the Annual Report and Accounts of the Friends' activities which reflects another active and successful year.

I propose to deal fairly briefly with the main headings first because many of you here tonight have participated in a lot of the activities covered by the report and know all about them anyway and secondly because I want to give our distinguished guest speaker Professor Brian Warner as much time as possible, following a short break for tea, to talk to us about The History and Role of The Royal Observatory at the Cape of Good Hope. It is a very great pleasure and even though he did attend Oxford University, a considerable honour to welcome Brian Warner to talk on a subject about which many people seemed curiously unaware, that is, of the extraordinary contribution the Royal Observatory has made to the advancement of scientific knowledge in the Southern Hemisphere particularly in the field of Astronomy, Navigation and of course the survey of the Oceans and the land masses of the Hemisphere.

Brian Warner's career to date is full of interest and distinctions. He gained a BSc Astronomy with 1st Class Honours from University College, London also a Ph.D in Astrophysical Spectroscopy from there. He holds an M.A., D.Sc from Oxford University and a D.Sc. from London. Before coming to South Africa he held numerous appointments overseas. He was appointed Professor of Astronomy at U.C.T. in 1972 at the age of 33. Inter Alia he has been President of the Royal Society of South Africa and President of the Astronomical Society of Southern Africa and so on - the list is virtually endless!

To deal with the business of the past year, it has again been one of solid progress and achievement. But before I touch on activities, the Society suffered some quite devastating blows with the deaths of Barbara Willis, John Wiley and Peter Philip and Commanders Billy Kingswell and Brian Powell each of whom in their own separate and different ways made great contributions to the Society's affairs. They will be sadly missed.

Perhaps the most heartening trend in the activities of the past year is that at long last we are beginning to see some worthwhile results. As you are well aware we have never been able to go for "a quick fix" by throwing large amounts of money at improvement/restoration projects because these sort of monies are no longer available, rightly perhaps, because they are mainly being diverted to some of the Republic's more pressing social problems. Thus we have had to get by with modest financial assistance and to rely on the continuing involvement, perseverance and ingenuity of the Members over a period of years. On reflection for a Society such as ours this is probably the best way to go about it. Be that as it may, and although the every-day visitors to Simon's Town may scarcely perceive the changes, they are considerable. Two examples merit comment.

The Historic Mile: The United Supply Store has been repainted, the E.K. Green Building is now restored; Whyte's Building, opposite the Post Office, is now a great credit to the tenant Lewis Stores; Strand House is having its balcony refurbished; the new owner of Central Building has grasped what must be a fairly substantial "nettle" and has stripped the front verandah of all doubtful timber. The rebuilding and even possible replacement of the brick verandah columns with cast-iron ones as originally used in 1907 when the building was erected will probably have to wait but this is a most encouraging start!

The Old Burying Ground: Restoration of the Anglican section began in February 1987 with the clearing of weeds and rubbish. The Municipality have spent R3,000 for the installation of a fine pair of gates, the rebuilding of a back wall, restoration of a

pathway and the provision of water points. Thanks to a donation of R2,500 from a member of the Miller family, Vice-Chairman Gordon Wilson was able to put his plasterer/painter to work and together they have repaired and whitewashed over 200 graves previously buried under soil washed down in the winter storms. It is hoped to complete this work before the coming winter. Assistance has also come from Members of the New Apostolic Church, Mitchells Plain who have adopted this burying ground as a project. In February they cleared the Roman Catholic Section of all Port Jackson and began a clean up of the graves that remain. A considerable amount of volunteer work under the direction of Nigel Farquharson has produced a card index of almost everyone buried in the O.B.G., based on the Sexton's original records. Only the graves in the Dutch Reformed Church section need to be added.

Sensitive Areas: As a follow up to the foregoing the Society plans to compile a record of the Areas of Special Historic and Aesthetic Interest other than the Historic Mile, for which drawings, records, photographs etc already exist. These areas really comprise those parts of Simon's Town bounded by St. George's Street, Runciman Drive, Mount Pleasant, Belmont and Jackson Roads. This project will involve a photograph and detailed description etc of every building (whether it is of special historic or aesthetic interest or not) in the area.

Finance: The activity described above and indeed others which I will touch on later will place a strain on our financial resources. As you will hear shortly from our Hon. Secretary/Treasurer the Financial position of the Society is quite strong in terms of Funds on Deposit and Cash in Hand.

You may wonder why the Committee chose this moment to double subscriptions. Apart from the ravages of inflation, the growing number of members who really deserve to be kept informed of the Society's planned activities etc and the continuing support the Society must give to the Museum from time to time have forced this on us but as I pointed out in the Editorial in the January 1988 Bulletin, the new Subscription rates compare favourably with those of Sister Societies. Additionally the Society has not been idle in deploying some of the available funds.

Anniversary Covers: As highlighted in my report last year, thanks to the initiative of Nigel Farquharson, two Anniversary Covers, one to mark the 50th Anniversary of Just Nuisance's Birth and a second to mark the Tercentenary of Simon van der Stel's visit to Simon's Bay have been issued. We estimate that we have made approx. R4,000 contribution to Society funds from this exercise to date after covering our expenses etc.

This would not necessarily dazzle the Old Mutuals, the Sanlams or the Guardbanks of this world but it is a help to our hard pressed Cash Flow!

Other points of interest which require comment

<u>Membership</u>	1960 - 1970	300
	1970 - 1980	450
	end 1985	676
	end 1986	732
	end 1987	800 +

These are net figures. The Committee is very heartened by this response although they fervently hope all the Members will never show up at the same place, at the same time, on the same day!

Public Relations Tours:

Two very well attended one-day Tours were mounted - the first to the Josephine Mill, Mostert's Mill and after a picnic lunch at Blaauberg Strand, a visit to a power source of a very different kind - the Nuclear Power Station at Koeberg! We are grateful to James Walton, Life President of the Vernacular Architecture Society of S.A. for his

most interesting commentary on the two mills. The second Tour took the Society to Fort Wynyard where Mac Bissett was kind enough to give the Tour Party a wonderful insight into the newly-opened Coast Artillery Museum where the Party had a Picnic Lunch. The return journey included a visit to Hout Bay to view a rather older Coastal fortification with a walk through the harbour area.

The Spring Tour which included visits to Field Marshal Smuts' birthplace at Riebeeck West, Clanwilliam (for a nightstop), Lamberts Bay and Laaiplek was very well supported.

Bulletin and Chronicle:

Interest in both publications continues at a surprisingly high level judging by the number of telephone calls received by the Editorial Committee and once again Mesdames Biggs and Read and Nigel Farquharson certainly deserve our thanks! We are particularly grateful to Professor Pryce-Lewis for his outstanding contribution "The Buildings of Jeremias Auret and Jan Pieter Kirsten at Simon's Bay" in the January 1988 Edition of the Bulletin. Happily another article on the building immediately next door to the north is in the course of preparation.

On a more depressing (though hardly surprising) note Bulletin production costs continue to increase. In July 1987 Printing Costs and Cover came to R1.74. In January 1988 the comparable cost was R2.09 per copy (an increase of approx. 20%). To this add 35 cents for postage.

The Museum:

A full report from the Curator follows immediately after this but it seems only right to congratulate her and her staff on a most successful year.

The Simon's Town Flora Conservation Group:

Led by Peter Salter, John Preston and Captain van Eck the Group has had a very busy year. Please remember volunteer hackers are always most welcome and there is a tremendous amount of work still to be done.

I would like to thank our Vice Chairman Gordon Wilson, our Hon. Secretary/Treasurer 'D' Kinkead-Weeks and Committee Members Nicki Holderness, Cherry Dilley, Jill Grant, Nigel Farquharson, Alf Glover, Malcolm Cobern and the S.A. Navy Representative Mac Bissett for their wonderful support during the past year. Sadly I have to report that due to pressure of work Jill Grant feels unable to stand for re-election to the Committee and so in saying hopefully what is only au revoir, I would like to thank her for all she has done. During the past year we have enjoyed considerable assistance and co-operation from the S.A. Navy without whose help many of our activities would be very difficult, if not impossible to organise successfully, and I would again like to thank Admiral Bennett, Captain le Roux, Commander Bredenkamp and his successor Commander Page. At the same time may I on behalf of the Society say how delighted we are to learn of the reinstatement of Navy Day after a gap of some eight years. It seems to us a most imaginative concept and we wish the very hard worked organizers every success on this coming Saturday 26th March.

Finally in welcoming many new members may I also say thank you to the old ones for their continuing interest and support over the past year. May 1988 bring even greater enjoyment and achievement!

THE BUILDINGS OF JEREMIAS AURET AND JAN PIETER KIRSTEN AT SIMON'S BAY

Professor O. Pryce-Lewis

PART II

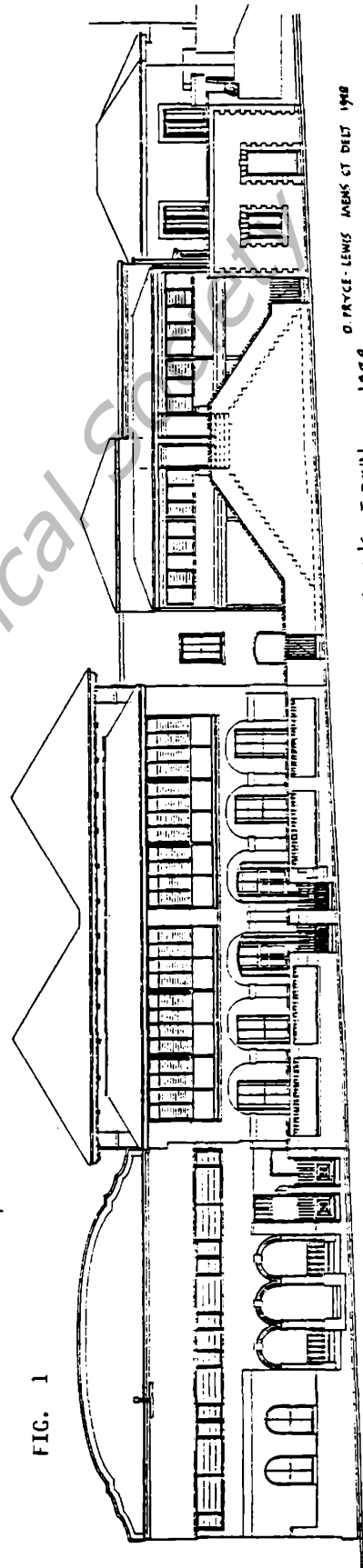
In February 1795, J.P. Kirsten, son of J.F. Kirsten, a person of considerable status in the governing hierarchy and one-time Postholder at Simon's Bay, applied for and was granted a large erf with a frontage of 40 metres in line with and 7,2 metres westwards of the Auret Lodging House. Kirsten's purpose was to build a home-cum-Lodging House and a warehouse with ancillary accommodation. When the buildings were completed, probably in 1796, the competition feared by Auret had arrived.

The buildings appear to have been designed by one with a cultivated architectural taste although this quality came to the notice of the author only after it was detected that the remains of the original facades lie behind the verandahs and balconies built in later times.

Two early photographs, one taken from a long distance and the other from fairly nearby show the building complex as it appeared some 70 years after its building. In both a large tree obscures a good deal of the facades, nevertheless it can be inferred that the group comprised a central rectangular block whose architectural character has close affinities with double storeyed houses existing in Bree Street, Cape Town, at that time. A central pediment can be discerned as can tall rectangular windows on both floors. The central block is seen to be flanked by outbuildings. All of these structures have flat-roofs. Reference to Major Kirsteman's survey of Simon's Town dated 1799 shows the central domestic block to stand within a U-shaped string of buildings separated from it by a yard or uncovered passage.

These impressions were confirmed when with the kind permission of the Naval Authorities at Simon's Town and the co-operation of the Heads of the various Departments housed in the premises, the measurement of the buildings was undertaken. FIG. 1 (BELOW) and FIGS. 2 and 3 (ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES) show the plans and elevations of the complex as it exists at the time of this publication.

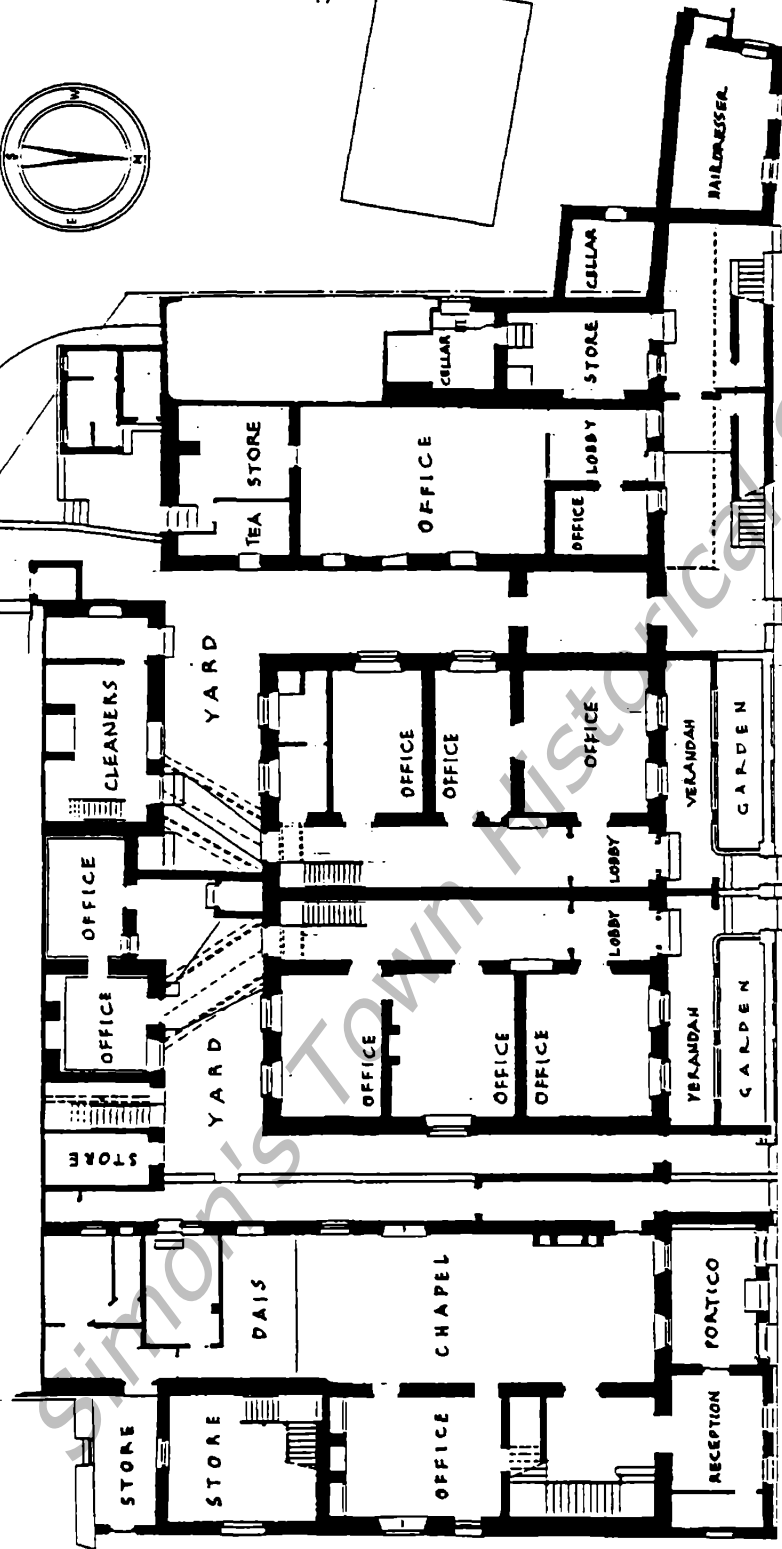
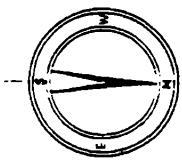
FIG. 1



KIRSTEN'S BUILDINGS ST GEORGES STREET : SIMON'S TOWN 1988
O. PRYCE-LEWIS ARKS CT DIST 1988

AURET'S LODGING HOUSE

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D. PRYCE-LEWIS DRAWN BY DBT. 1988.

S T. G E O R G E S S T R E E T

FIG. 2

KIRSTEN'S BUILDINGS ST. GEORGES STREET SIMON'S TOWN 1988 GROUND FLOOR PLAN

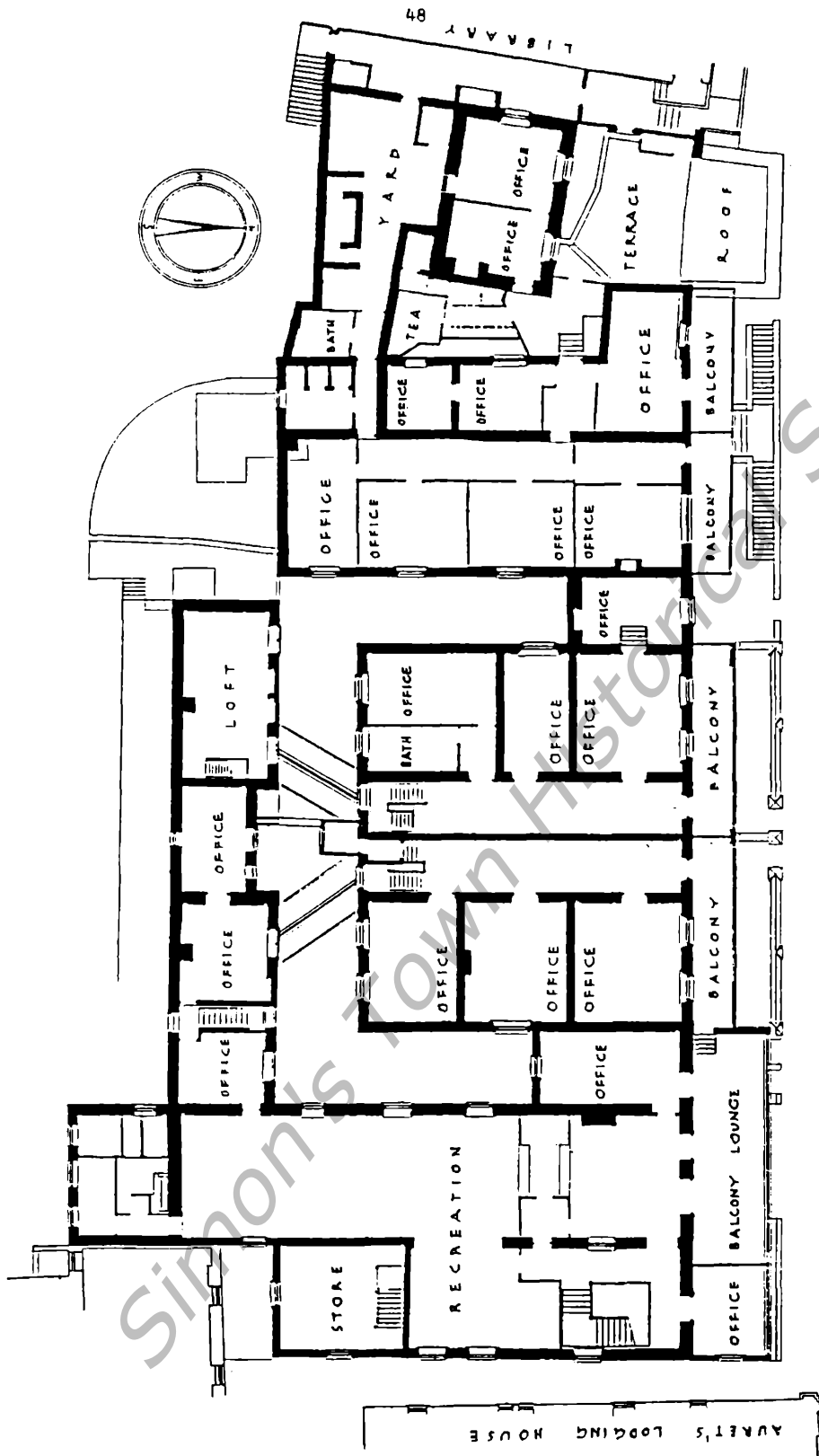


FIG. 3

KIRSTEN'S BUILDINGS : ST. GEORGES STREET, SIMON'S TOWN 1988 FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

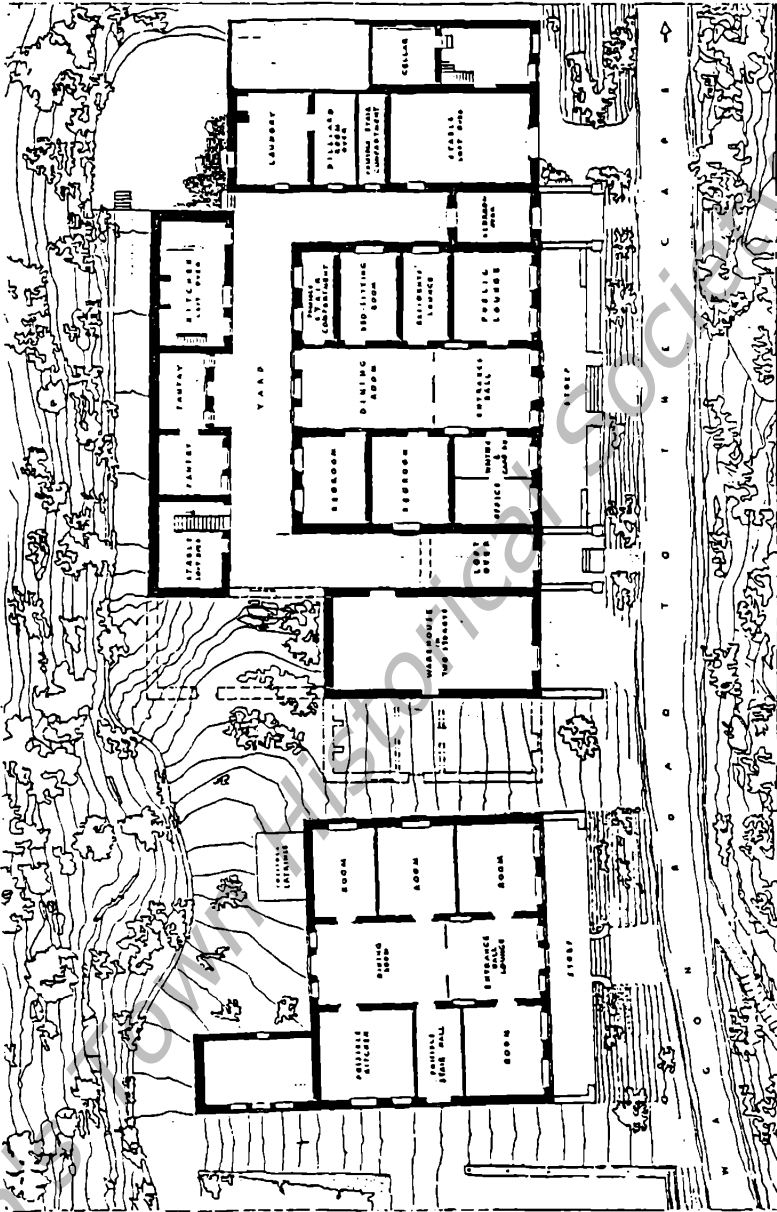
THE ORIGINAL KIRSTEN BUILDINGS:

Armed with the knowledge so obtained and with information derived from the Deed of Grant Deeds Registry 897; O.C.F. 5- 23, both the extent and ordinance of the original Kirsten building may be determined. FIG. 4 (BELOW) shows the ground floor plan derived from this investigation. Despite its subdivision in the 19th Century, it is obvious that the central domestic block followed closely the pattern of the Aurret Lodging House. Voorsaal, Gaandery (Dining Room) and Bovenhuis appear to have been almost identical in width and little different in length. Both buildings were accorded wall-cupboards in the Voorsaal. Those in the Kirsten house still exist.

To the left and right of the Voorsaal

were two large rooms while the Gaandery gave access to two fine rooms on the left and to three compartments on the right. The hindmost of these latter may have contained the staircase leading to the upper floor. On either side of the Bovenhuis were three rooms whose sizes were determined by the supporting walls on the ground floor. The small room adjacent to the front room on the right may be a later addition as might be the loft adjacent to the front room on the left. Both rooms have floor levels related to those of the outbuildings. With the exception of the front rooms on both floors all other rooms looked into the passage between the main building and the outbuildings. The main building did not contain a kitchen. In that respect it differed from the Aurret Lodging House. This compartment was situated in that part of the outbuildings to the south of the main block.

FIG. 4



These plans show conjecturally the relation existing between the various compartments comprising the Aurret and Kirsten Lodging Houses in 1796 when the latter was completed - later additions are indicated by chain lines.

O. PRYCE-LEWIS 1980

Scale 1:100

block. Adjoining were ample pantry and food storage facilities. In this southern section, a double-storeyed structure, were a stable with a loft over and lofts over the kitchen and pantries.

The outbuilding to the east of the main block (on the left looking from the roadway) comprised a warehouse in two storeys. The converging shape of the boundaries of the erf constrained its length as is indicated by a change in the wall thickness observable in the building as it exists at present. (See FIG. 1)

The outbuilding to the west of the main block occupied most of the remaining area of the erf and appears to have contained a coach house, harness room and almost certainly a laundry on its ground floor. The upper floor in addition to a loft over the coach house may have contained a billiard room reached by a stair of which there is now no trace.

The origin and purpose of the compartments to the west of those just mentioned has not been determined. It is possible that only the cellar and the room leading to it were built by Kirsten and that the upper storey came later. The cellar is mentioned in an inventory made in 1809. Was this part of the complex a public house?

FIG 5 on page 51 which omits the accommodation just described is a conjectural restoration of the facades facing the road and the sea. It shows that the design, in whole and in part, was governed by proportions based on the square and its derivatives, notably the "golden mean". The central block which dominated the group was twice as wide as high (two squares); the windows were twice as high as wide, their spacing governed by the proportions mentioned. The proportions of the outbuildings and their relationship to the central block were chosen on the same basis. It is of interest to notice that the space between the eastern side of the Kirsten complex and the Auret Lodging House specified in the deed of ownership of the former to be kept open, was as wide as the two buildings were high. This excellent provision, of advantage to both buildings, was soon to be destroyed.

THE WESTHOFF PROPERTY:

As related in Part 1 in the January 1988 Bulletin, Kirsten purchased the Auret Lodging House in 1800 and held both that building and his original property for a short period. He was certainly over-capitalised and offered his original home for sale. In Willem Westhoff, an unnaturalised immigrant, he found in 1803 a purchaser of the warehouse. Westhoff required a place for a resident manager to live. This was provided by constructing a two-storeyed structure 5 metres wide and the length of the warehouse, leaving a less than salubrious lane a mere 2 metres wide between it and the Auret building. It seems that it was by this lane that the living quarters were approached.

It is almost certain that Kirsten took the opportunity offered by the eastward extension of the erf to build a new warehouse for his own use southwards in line with the original warehouse and extending to the south face of the kitchen block mentioned earlier.

JAN MICHEL ENDRES AND THE KIRSTEN BUILDING:

After the sale of the Auret Lodging House in 1798 (see Part 1) Endres left Simon's Bay, only to return after the insolvent Auret estate had been wound up. He took lodgings and earned a living by performing minor works, chiefly in connection with repairs to ships and boats. Through the generosity of a friend David Piton he enjoyed the usufruct of a cutter LOUISA and the loan-place "Buffelsfontein" (now the "Homestead" in the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve) which Piton had bought at the sale in execution of the Auret estate. During the Batavian Republic Endres served as Surgeon-Major, Company Cavalry, at Stellenbosch where he met Maria Isabella de Vos, aged 16 years, daughter of Wouter de Vos. With her, at 47 years of age, he formed a lifelong

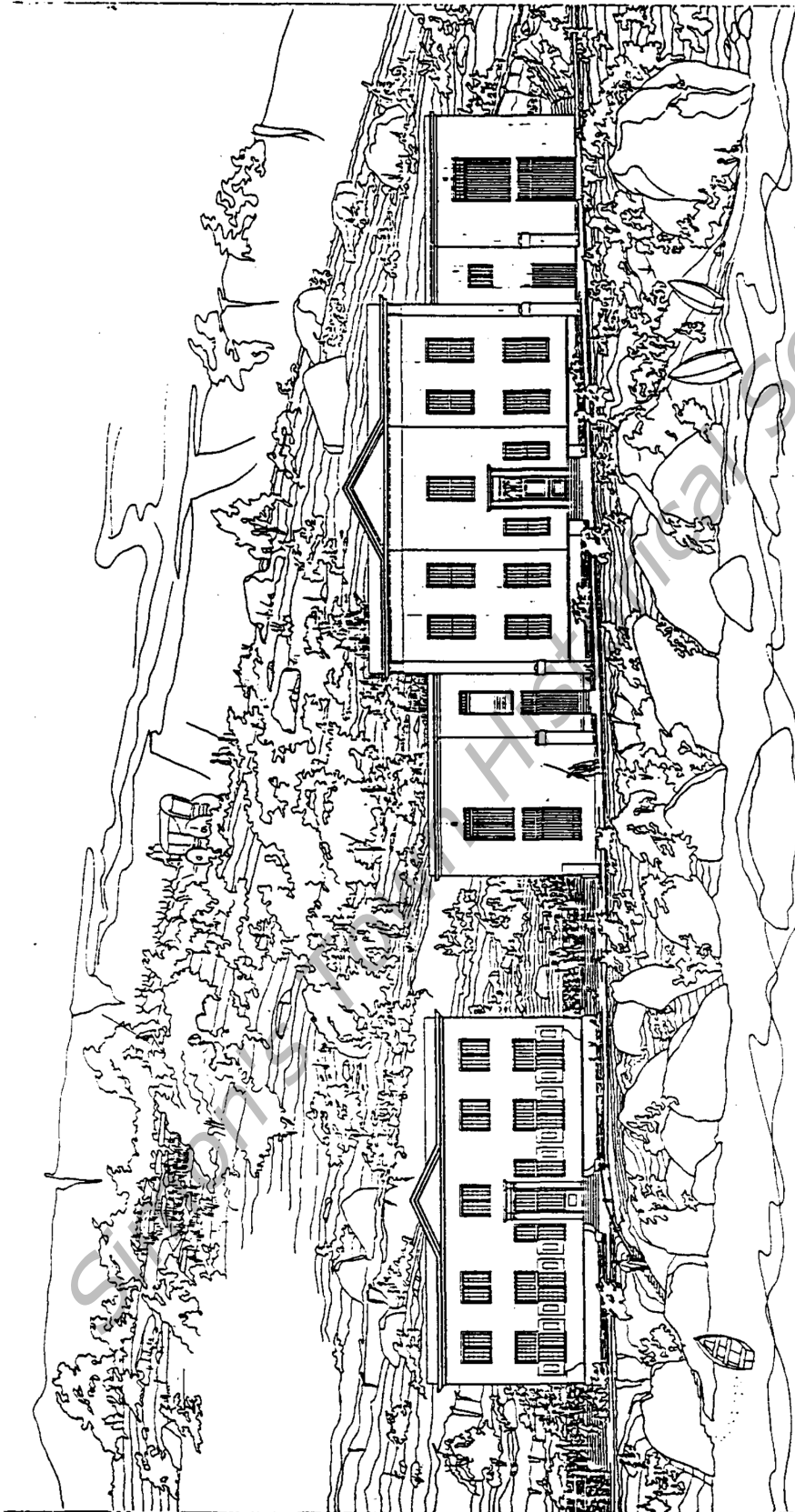


FIG. 5
 SCALE: 1" = 100'
 THESE ELEVATIONS, BASED ON MEASUREMENTS OF THE EXISTING BUILDINGS, ON EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS, ON CONTEMPORARY DESCRIPTIONS OF
 SOME OF THE BUILDING ELEMENTS, AND ON EARLY ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS, SHOW AURET'S LODGING HOUSE ON THE LEFT AND KIRSTEN'S
 WESTGATE TERRACE ON THE RIGHT AS THEY MAY HAVE APPEARED IN 1736 WHEN WESTGATE TERRACE WAS COMPLETED. LATER ADDITIONS
 TO KIRSTEN'S BUILDING NEARLY CLOSED THE GAP BETWEEN HIS PROPERTY AND THE LODGING HOUSE AND EXTENDED IT TO THE RIGHT ..

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association.

Endres' activities at the Bay came to the notice of John Osmond, ships' carpenter, risen to the position of Chief of the Construction Department. In this capacity he was unable to undertake private work but in Endres he saw one likely to serve as a "front". Osmond, by virtue of marriage to the daughter of the relict of Gideon Rossouw, had money to invest. He set aside a sum enabling Endres to make an offer for those parts of Kirsten's buildings not sold to Westhoff. After some difficulties over the raising of bonds had been overcome, Endres entered into possession of the building and, it appears, of the furniture and household equipment as well.

This is not the place to recount the extraordinary history of the property's new owner, nevertheless it is of interest to refer to some of his activities. These included the letting of rooms to persons of rank; the sale of general merchandise to local inhabitants and travellers (although for a time he lacked proper warehousing facilities); the repair of merchant ships; trade with farmers in the District of Stellenbosch; the transport by sea of cargoes between coastal places; the transport by hired wagons and oxen of goods between the Bay and Cape Town and the herding of cattle at Buffelsfontein. In total these enterprises do not appear to have been profitable or if profitable equal or in excess of the interest payable on bonds.

Attempting to recoup his losses, Endres expanded his business premises in 1806 by buying the Westhoff property and increasing his capital by floating a company, Endres & Co. He also evaded customs controls and engaged in smuggling at which he sustained great losses in money and goods. It is likely that he lost heavily by gambling aboard ship. Conflict with British officials nearly led to his extradition.

At first the house appears to have been simply furnished although the floors of the principal compartments were carpeted and the windows curtained with yellow calico. The pantry was well stocked with silverware and domestic items of copper and brass. Cutlery and crockery there were in abundance. Towards the end of Endres' occupation an inventory of effects indicate a subsequent addition of some fine pieces of furniture. The walls, surprisingly, were hung with a considerable number of paintings, some described as very large. Unfortunately, neither the subjects nor the names of the artists were mentioned.

At an unknown date Maria Isabella was installed in one of the rooms. She had borne or was about to bear a son, Charles William, destined to die when young. Before that event her room contained her own four-poster bed, a bed for the boy and later a cradle for Anna Maria who arrived on 14th November 1808. Add to these items provision of illuminants, storage of clothes, facilities for ablution, a night stool and elementary arrangements for heating food for two children, a spinet and two bird cages and we have an exceedingly crowded space. Isabella enjoyed the services of a maid and possessed a riding horse and its equipment.

By 1809 Endres' ineptitude as a business man, combined with an uncertain temper, untrustworthiness and outright criminality led to his financial downfall. An unsuccessful attempt in the courts to deny the validity of his marriage to the Widow Auret and to marry Isabella added to his financial difficulties. Osmond, now his principal creditor, foreclosed and Endres' estate was sold in execution. Osmond bought not only a number of items of trade goods but most of the better articles of furniture and most importantly the buildings. These last he kept until 1813 when he received in return for the property a sum four times that which he had paid. The British Government was the purchaser; its purpose the use of the complex by its Victualling Department.

THE VICTUALLING DEPARTMENT IN OCCUPATION:

The central building of the Kirsten complex became the residence of the Agent Victualler, a naval officer, and of his four assistants. The stores were kept in the outbuildings.

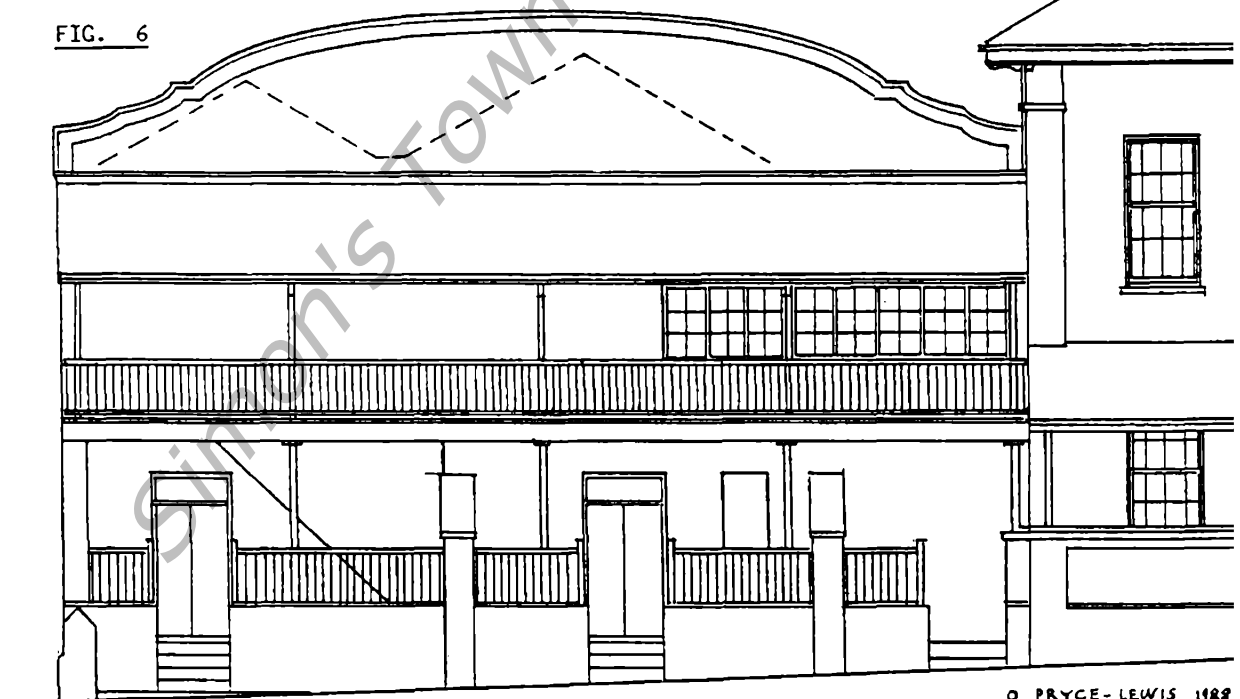
The Agent Victualler, an official of considerable importance, ranking at times as Commodore, required entertainment facilities of a kind which the Kirsten dwelling did not provide. At an unknown date or perhaps at different times, the front and middle rooms on the ground floor were thrown together. The front room on the left and the left-hand middle room became a reception suite from which guests proceeded to the dining room in the English manner. The front room on the right became a withdrawing room with a retiring room for the ladies in the middle compartment. The windows of the middle rooms were replaced by wide and high sliding sash windows as part of these alterations. Fireplaces were introduced into two of the reception rooms and into one of the bedrooms on the first floor. Otherwise the buildings retained their Cape Dutch character.

In the early 1860's the Victualling Stores were removed to the Dockyard. In anticipation of this event or because it had taken place, it was seen fit to renovate the buildings then showing signs of age. An inscription dating work on the roofs in December 1863 has been found in one of the buildings. It is likely that this indicates the removal of the flat roofs and their substitution by pitched roofs, slate covered. Re-roofing was however only part of a more radical alteration the background to which can only be sketched lightly. Early in 1864, Sir F. Grey, commanding the Cape of Good Hope Station wrote to Rear-Admiral Sir B.W. Walker, commanding at Simon's Town, asking whether it would be possible to sell the Old Victualling Yard and House. He suggested that Commodore Cockburn move to Admiralty House and the Storekeeper's and Victualling Clerks to other specified localities.

The suggestion was not adopted because accommodation for a variety of naval usages was foreseen. Thus while the outbuildings may not have been immediately occupied, the house continued to house naval officers and their families. For this purpose the building was subdivided by constructing a wall from back to front of the building on the centre line of the original voorsaal and gaandery. Two semi-detached double-storeyed villas were thus created and named Westgate Terrace.

The alterations altogether altered the character of the facades demanding the replacement of the existing windows by sliding sashes and the provision of front entrance doors. The Stoep received a roof and became a verandah.(FIG.6 below).

FIG. 6



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ROYAL NAVAL CLUB C. 1868 WITH PART WESTGATE TERRACE ON RIGHT

Internally the original stair was removed and staircases introduced at the ends of the corridors formed by the subdivision of the gaandery. A pantry in the outbuilding across the yard was converted to become a kitchen for the eastern half of the terrace. The reroofing of the outbuildings was dealt with somewhat strangely by stopping the pitched roofs against gables on the facades. The plain triangular gable on the right hand end of the group conceals a pitched roof of moderate span while the widespread and alien gable at the opposite end conceals two pitched roofs of unequal span. (See FIG. 6 on previous page).

After some years, possibly in the 1880's, the earlier and simple verandahs were replaced by the arcaded arrangement now existing. Balconies with plain vertical balusters to the balustrade were provided. (FIG. 6 previous page). The curved wing walls which separate the villas from neighbouring buildings and the villas from one-another together with the garden wall were all part of this alteration. Still later the balcony balustrade was elaborated. (FIG.8 on page 55). A last transformation resulted in the glazed enclosure of the balconies. (FIG.3 on page 48).

Westgate Terrace retained its domestic character until 1973 when the buildings were converted to office use.

THE ROYAL NAVAL CLUB:

During 1868, with the sanction and assistance of the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty, a Naval Club with a Recreation Room and Canteen for the Seamen and Marines was established. The club was recognised by the Colonial Government as having the status of a Military Mess. The Westhoff section of the property was granted for the Club's use. The first floor was allocated to the officers and the ground floor to the men. The amenities were minimal for the premises had long been used as a warehouse. In particular there was no convenient way of reaching the first floor nor was there an obvious way of providing separate entrances for the two classes of users. The solution to these problems lay in the addition of a verandah and a balcony, the former partitioned by a substantial wall. The left-hand section was allocated to the other ranks while the right-hand section gave access by means of a somewhat steep stair to the balcony, the whole of which became the prerogative in use of the officers. It was a simple, straightforward solution as may be seen from FIG. 6 previous page. While this reconstruction of events depends on a faded photograph, it is very obvious that this first addition to the Westhoff Property determined the course of subsequent alterations and additions. Even now steps by which the present entry to the building is effected are in the same position as originally while the wall separating the two sections of the original verandah defines the extent of the entrance hall. Many small details of the first addition are still visible.

At a presently unknown date (possibly in the late 1880's) the requirements of the Club were met by converting the ground floor to domestic use (the other ranks had moved to the Africa Station Club) by an official of the R.N. Club and by providing office space for the Secretary at the left-hand end of the balcony. FIG. 7 on the next page shows the facade which came about through these alterations. The verandah formerly used by officers became part of the domestic usage while the left-hand part originally associated with the seamen was altered to become the entrance hall for officers. Toilet facilities off the hall account for the awkward eccentricity of the entrance. The present stair hall came into being at this time.

During the 1890's the design was dignified by the incorporation of the arcaded entrance element which presently gives access to the S.A.N. Church Centre. At the same time the present method of entering the building as shown in FIG. 1 on page 46 was adopted, thus eliminating the necessity for the eccentrically situated door in FIG. 7 (see next page). FIG.8 (next page) indicates the appearance of the Club when these changes were completed.

Nothing is known of the proceedings of the Club before 1888 when the first surviving Minutes of Meetings are dated. However, the Rules of the Club prepared at its inception

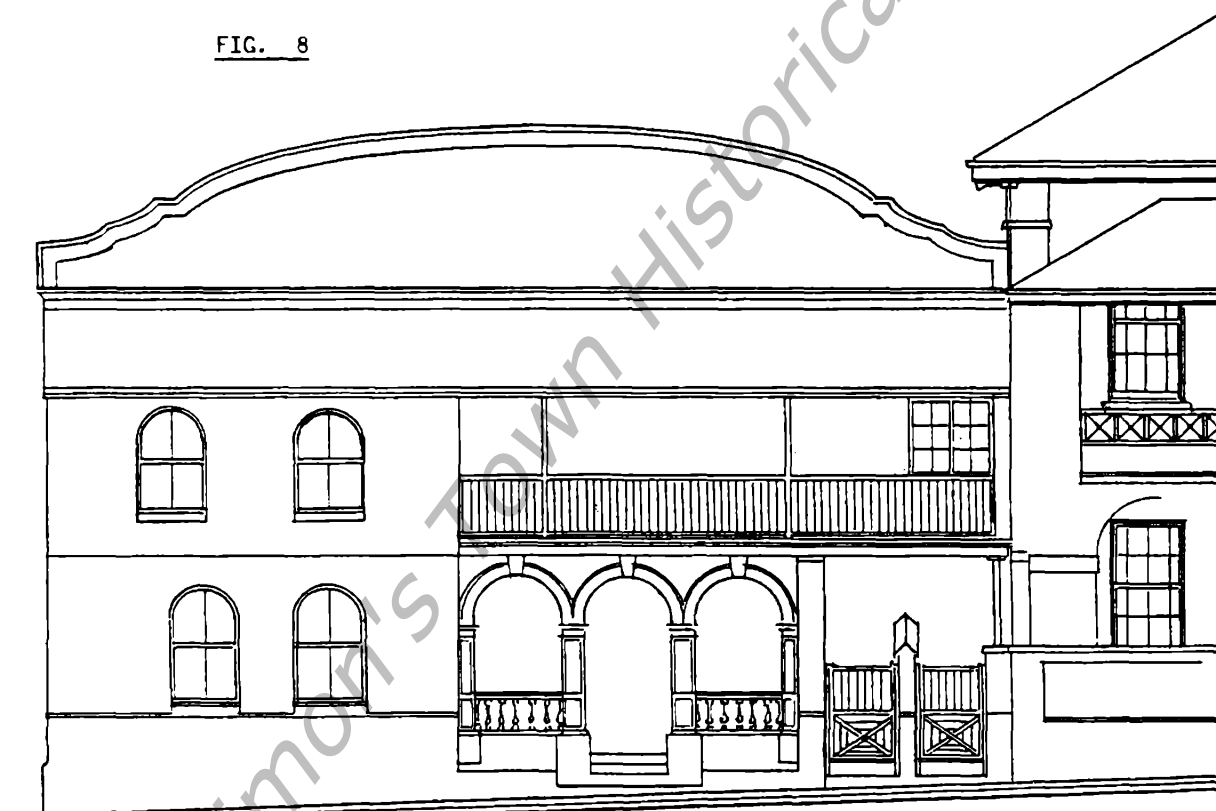


O. PRYCE-LEWIS 1988

FIG. 7

ROYAL NAVAL CLUB LATE 1880

FIG. 8



O. PRYCE-LEWIS 1988

ROYAL NAVAL CLUB : C 1895

show that membership was confined to naval personnel on the Station. Honorary status could be extended to a few Colonial Officers, namely, the Resident Magistrate, the Clergyman, the District Health Officer and to Navy and Army Officers serving on full pay. The Club employed a full-time staff, the Secretary, the Cook and Provider, a Head and an Under Waiter and a Billiard Marker.

The Rules were strictly applied. Until 1899 all members were permitted to sign "chits". Thereafter cash was demanded of Midshipmen. Daring innovations were the playing of billiards on Sundays from 1500 hours onwards. Further permissiveness occurred in 1911 when Good Friday and Christmas Day were included. The provision of ice was cautiously approved in 1898. No satisfactory solution to the illumination of the premises was found until electricity came to the rescue sometime after 1905. Dockyard and Post Office telephones were installed in January 1913.

The usual human failings exhibited themselves. In 1911 the Committee called upon the Fleet Surgeon to render an apology, in writing (to be posted on the notice board) or to resign forthwith, for he had referred to an action of the Hon. Secretary as "caddish". At an unknown date the Admiralty Civil Engineer reported that a drain in the yard had been deliberately blocked to form a pond for ducks and that a pig or pigs were or had been kept. The Committee acknowledged the smell, denied the pig and remained vague about the ducks. The admission of ladies, an explosive issue, was proposed on several occasions from 1911 onwards. Despite a resounding defeat in 1925 it is clear from a plan drawn sometime later that even if they did not become members, they were admitted as guests. A ladies' cloakroom is shown to have been provided off the entrance hall.

When Simon's Town Dockyard was handed over to the South African Government, the R.N. Club closed on 31st March, 1957. Its successor, the South African Naval Club held its first meeting on 25th April when a donation of £500 was received from the R.N. Club. The premises, now the property of the S.A. Government were rented at a nominal figure.

All went well until 12th June, 1958, when the Chairman reported that a Governmental ban on the sale of alcoholic drinks in Union Defence Force Messes and Clubs had been introduced. The ban applied to the Club because it occupied premises belonging to the Department of Defence. Consternation reigned. A suggestion that the Club purchase a building was turned down. There was nothing for it but to find new premises. When no suitable building could be found land near Jubilee Square was acquired and building operations commenced. In the meantime the Club virtually ceased to exist.

The new structure reached roof level when the Club was informed that it could not be permitted to occupy the building unless the restrictions on liquor were observed. However no objections would be raised if the Club ceased to represent itself as having a connection with the Defence Force, and made it a rule that no Serving Officer of the S.A. Defence Force might serve on the Club's management. The Club could not expect to borrow money from the Navy Fund. At the suggestion of Commander Pearce, the Club was renamed "Seven Seas" a title derived from Rudyard Kipling's reference to the "gossip of all the Seven Seas" to be heard in this particular club. On 2nd May, 1959 the new club house was opened with "Choir practice". The Westhoff Property knew the Club no more.

Since these events the eastern section of Kirsten's buildings has been occupied by Coastal Command and subsequently by the S.A.N. Church Centre. In the process the domestic accommodation on the ground floor was removed and the balcony enclosed and extended affording, at first floor level, communication between the Padres' offices in Westgate Terrace and the remainder of their domain in the Westhoff section.

THE BUILDINGS TO THE WEST OF THE CENTRAL BLOCK:

The requirements of the Victualling Department involved the acquisition of all of the land, comprising two erven, lying to the west of Kirsten's erf. The erf contiguous

to Kirsten's property was narrow on its street frontage but long in its depth. It contained a small cottage which shows prominently on Major Kirsteman's map. This building may well have been associated with the Company's Kiln situated on the other erf and for that reason alone be of some antiquity. (See FIG 3 on page 48 top right). The existence of this building may have been a limiting factor in the extent of ground granted to Kirsten in 1795. It is possible that the cottage was used in conjunction with the Victualling Department's cooperage which took the place of the Kiln. When, in 1873, the Africa Station Club was built on the site of the cooperage, the cottage tended more and more to be seen as an appendage of the building on the Kirsten erf and to become incorporated with them by roofing over the space between them (FIG 2 page 47 right-hand side).

The western buildings, even after the removal of the Victualling Stores to the Dockyard remained for many years as stores of one kind and another. In 1890 that was certainly the case and the cottage was occupied by the Store Porter. However a few years later the buildings were converted to become three flats for naval personnel. The flats were called Residences Nos. 39, 39A and 40. 39A was on the ground floor where Kirsten's coach house was situated while No.40 occupied the western compartments, that is, that part of the first floor which may not have been part of Kirsten's original complex. It was approached by way of the entrance hall at ground level and had the aforementioned cottage as its kitchen and dining space. The first floor front room was extended to provide a sitting room. Residence No. 39 occupied the eastern part of the first floor. It was reached from the road by a circuitous route comprising a narrow lane between the Africa Station Club building and the cottage leading to its own yard from which the Residence was entered through its kitchen.

The facade of this block remained unprepossessing until some of the discomforts of these conversions were overcome. These consisted primarily in providing a more direct approach to the first floor. Enclosed balconies designed to serve as entrance halls for Residences Nos. 39 and 40 were added and approaches from the sidewalk level by means of two flights of steps meeting at the top on a landing unsocially divided by a low wall, built. Of the three Residences No. 39A was the worst provided for. Its accommodation ill-fitted the space it was made to occupy. A large percentage of the floor area could not be used profitably. Much of the underlit living room was of this kind. A huge kitchen, also grossly underlit, no doubt served as an eating area. Ablutions also took place here for there was no bathroom. The miserably tiny w.c. in the yard clung piteously to the kitchen wall. When the South African Navy took over, this part of the building was gutted and the spaces used for educational purposes. The largest compartment became a lecture room but on occasions was used for meetings. The Girl Guides met here. Most recently the spaces became offices. In its latest phase the upper floors also became offices. (FIG.2 on page 47).

THE GUARD ROOM:

FIGURES 1, 2 and 3 show both the cottage mentioned earlier and, at the extreme right-hand side of those drawings a second structure lying beyond the western boundary of the Kirsten erf. Stylistically this small stone building relates to the Africa Station Club and is probably contemporaneous with it. Now used by the Naval Hairdresser, its original purpose was to house the Guard. Then it was divided internally by a partition. The left-hand section was for the members of the Guard on call, who were provided with what can only be described as a communal bunk.

This small building, though an important element in the architectural composition of the complex as it stands was at no time incorporated into the usages of the Kirsten group.

THE COMPLEX AT PRESENT:

Despite the wide differences in the architectural character of the different parts, the composition as a whole hangs together reasonably well. The enclosure of the balconies although different in each case tends to unify but the effective element in unification was, in the author's opinion, the creation, consciously or otherwise of a

plane at the back of the footway comprising the facade of the Church Centre, the garden wall in front of the Terrace, the triangular walling in front of the western block and the Guard House. Behind this plane the surfaces of the Terrace and the Western Block advance and recede without disturbance to its regulating influence.

REFERENCES:

1. Deeds Office: Deeds Registry 793 S.M.T. with S.G. diag.18/1795 Vol.5.p.23,1795
2. Simon's Town Museum: Early photographs
3. *ibid* Map 1799 - Maj. Kirsteman
4. C.A.: MOIC 2/36 (a) Inventories of buildings contents
(b) List of M.I. de Vos' possessions
(c) Disposition of compartments in building
(d) Endres' debts and insolvency
5. Deeds Office: Deeds Registry 794 S.M.T. Folio 1 Transfer T1 SG Diag 1/1803 to William Westhoff
6. *ibid* Deeds Registry 795 S.M.T. Fol2 Trans.T2 to Jan Michiel Endres Vol.1 1803 SG. Diag. 2/1803
7. *ibid* Trans.T135 Westhoff property purchased by Endres in 1806 but not registered till 15th June 1810
8. *ibid* Trans.T130 Fol.251 Vol.2, 1810 - Whole property to John Osmond
9. *ibid* Trans.T186 Fol. 31 Vol.13, 1813- Whole property to George Dundas on behalf of Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty
- 10.*ibid* Deeds Registry 865 S.M.T. Trans.T1,Vol.1, part 1/1816 refers site to west of Kirsten's property containing cottage
- 11.C.A.: CJ.914-930; 1476 and many others give Endres' history while in Simon's Town 1803-1809
- 12."Historical Simon's Town": Balkema C.T. p.141 : Details of Victualling Department
13. C.A.: B.W. 1/21. Letter Sir F. Grey to Rear Admiral Sir B.W. Walker.
14. Simon's Town Museum: Photographs Westgate Terrace at various stages of alteration
- 15.C.A.: G.H. 17/5 Rules of R.N. Club
16. Seven Seas Club: (a) Extract from R.N. Club minutes, 1888 onwards. Author unknown
(b) Minutes of S.A. Naval Club and of Seven Seas Club - courtesy of the Secretary.
17. Simon's Town Museum: Photographs R.N. Club at various stages of alteration
18. Admiralty, Director of Works Dept.: Map Jan 1890 shows occupancy western block
19. Officer Commanding Engineers: Drgs.2286 and 2287 show plan of all sections of group. Date unknown

T.S.S. TYNDAREUS - MINED OFF CAPE AGULHAS 6:2:1917

In our Bulletin Vol.XIV No. 4 of July 1987 we wrote an account of the mining of the ship and the same author, Cdr. W.M. Bisset, has come upon a very interesting sequel to this event. It is a letter written by Captain S.H.T. Braham of the 25th Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment to his mother after the episode. This letter has been passed to us via the South African Embassy in London by the grandson, Mr. K.F. Braham of Birchington, Kent and makes a very welcome addition to the original article. Ed.

It is just over 61 years since the ship was mined.

"Garrison Officers Mess,
Wynberg,
Cape Colony, S.A.

Sunday 11.2.17

My Dearest Mother,

We are now settling down at our camp here and I have an opportunity of writing you an account of our adventures this last week.

I sent you a cablegram yesterday, which you should get on Tuesday.

I won the draughts tournament a week ago to-day and we reached Cape Town on the 5th, had a look round there in the afternoon and evening, and sailed again next morning.

We had not long started dinner that same evening when a tremendous explosion shook the ship; we rushed for our lifebelts and got on the deck somehow, though water was pouring down the companion. On deck we found a huge column of water had been shot into the air and was still falling on the decks with such force as to break down the canvas awnings.

We immediately made for our boat stations and stood by; the ship was evidently going down by the bow, but thanks to the promptness of the Captain in ordering the watertight compartments to be shut the ship did not sink immediately. Any other ship in the convoy (which by the way we had left behind at Cape Town) would have sunk in 10 minutes; our ship though no beauty, seems to be all iron and solid, with numerous watertight compartments. As it was the mine (for such it was) hit between two of the compartments, so two holds filled immediately with water. One Chinese was buried in coal, and had to be left when the watertight doors were closed, but was got out alive later. Our hooter was giving forth the most weird appealing shrieks which I shall never forget, worse than the cries of a wounded animal; that and the noise of the steam blowing off was enough to strike panic among the men, but I saw no sign of it.

The force of the explosion had turned the ship completely round, the land which was on our port side, was now to starboard. The ship was built especially to withstand such a shock and was loaded with bales of cork in No.2 hold; as you know she was on her first trip.

The small boats were lowered as quickly as possible, but of course there was necessarily some confusion and delay; it was just at dusk, but luckily the electric lights did not fail.

Two ships were in sight and made straight for us in response to wireless signals; they lowered their small boats, and it was well they did so for our boats would not take the complement allotted to them in some cases; 10 men and myself were

left out of my boat.

It was not quite 7 p.m. when we struck and it was after 11 p.m. before I got on board the hospital ship OXFORDSHIRE, although actual passage in small boat only took about 15 minutes. The boat I actually left in was the last boat but one to leave the ship and the Colonel was in the last; he gave me his sword to look after, it was a devil of a nuisance to me going up and down ladders and I lost the scabbard once and the sword once, but recovered both and was able to present them to him when he reached the OXFORDSHIRE.

The other ship was another Blue Funnel vessel, she stood off farther and was not so quick lowering her boats or picking up ours; there was a heavy swell running and some boats were unable to make the lee side of the EURAMEUS and were tossing about for hours before being picked up by the OXFORDSHIRE; the last one reached us just before 3 a.m.

We had a splendid reception from nurses etc on board the hospital ship, she is beautifully fitted out, but I should not like to be on her if she struck a mine.

There was not a man lost and only one of seven dogs. I barked my shin, one man had his arm broken and one had a nasty wound through sitting on a rowlock, that is all so far as I know. The broken arm was caused at the time of the explosion by the man being blown off one deck on to another.

The plates and everything on our dining table jumped inches and the food was scattered; I went down afterwards for my revolver and the cabin was a sight to behold. One boat was let down with a run without a painter and got adrift, a seaman was thrown into the water turning several somersaults, but he swam for the boat, brought it back, came up the ladder and assisted the lowering of the next boat.

Of course the Captain and ship's officers stayed on the ship, but some of the Chinks managed to get off somehow, so the engineers and crew had to take their places stoking. No. 4 hold was leaking and if the bulkhead between 3 & 4 had given way, the ship would have sunk at once. We stood by till the morning when a cruiser (HMS MACEDONIA - Ed.) appeared and we returned to Cape Town.

The rudder of the TYNDAREUS was half out of the water which made steering nearly impossible with the tide and wind that was blowing; however, being a twin-screw she could steer with difficulty by the engines. No. 4 hold continued to leak and she was eventually, with great difficulty, towed astern first into Simon's Bay, rudder and propellers right out of the water and the main deck forward awash. She got there Thursday afternoon and even then if it had been rough she would have sunk in the Bay; however she is now safe and we may eventually complete our journey in her - I could wish nothing better, though it is after all only an ugly cargo boat.

On Friday afternoon the officers and a party of men went on board to rescue our baggage etc. We had a rude shock when we found all the cabins downstairs had been looted and every small article of value that could not be identified taken. My luck continues as I have only lost my camera, silk handkerchiefs and a few other things, besides articles damaged by water - there must have been about a foot in our cabin. My leather trunk was locked and untouched, though other peoples' locked articles had been cut and forced open. We don't know if it was the cruiser's people or people from the shore, but there's not much chance of getting anything back, whichever it was.

The divers have been at work and report that there is a hole 9 ft x 21 ft on the starboard side; there was 45 ft of water in No. 2 hold

when she came in and for every inch the bow has risen 63 tons have been taken out of the ship.

After the explosion numbers of dead fish were found all over the ship, some down in the engine room, the Colonel had one, which was thrown on to the bridge, preserved in spirit. The compasses were all damaged by the shock and had to be taken to pieces to be put right.

We have been treated splendidly by everybody since we landed collecting boxes have been round for the 'stranded battalion'. We have received pipes tobacco, cigarettes, fruit etc ad lib, motor rides and invitations. I am Garrison Orderly Officer to-day and have just received an invitation on telephone for two junior officers of the 25th to dine a few miles out tonight. The Major has organised two good concerts at the Town Hall for us last night and the night before, at which food, drinks and smokes were distributed free and ad lib. - half the battalion each night, but I went both nights. We must have looked a sorry spectacle when we marched in, some in slippers, some with no hat and some with no tunic, some in khaki and some in drill, some in helmets and some in caps and all carrying out lifebelts which we kept until yesterday.

This is a very nice place and healthy, but warm during the day just now. The fruit is splendid and cheap - beautiful grapes a penny a large bunch

The big drum was bust and one or two of the instruments slightly damaged, but we nevertheless had the band playing yesterday afternoon and I will guarantee the locals have not heard such a band for a long time.

We had a message from the King read out on parade this morning, see enclosed cutting, I suppose there have been some notes in the London papers?

Will write again shortly,
Much love from
Your most affectionate son,

SYDNEY. "

Captain S.H.T. Braham "rescued" a napkin ring, bearing the name of the ship, from the ship's dining room and the Museum hopes that his grandson may find it possible to donate this to the Simon's Town Museum. Ed.

HMS MACEDONIA - Armed Merchant Cruiser - formerly of the P & O Line shown towing the TYNDAREUS into False Bay stern first.

FINDING THE KÖNIGSBERG

Just before the outbreak of the 1914-18 war a civilian pilot, Mr. H.D. Cutler, had been giving exhibition flights, off the beach at Durban, in two ninety horse-power Curtiss flying-boats, the property of Mr. Gerard Hudson, a South African mining engineer. Before the war was many days old one of the flying-boats had been taken over by the Commander-in-Chief of the Cape Station Vice-Admiral H.G. King-Hall, and Mr. Cutler had been given a commission in the Naval Air Service. Here then was a means for finding out the position of the KÖNIGSBERG and the KINFAUNS CASTLE which had been converted as an auxiliary cruiser, was sent round to the Cape to fetch the flying-boat and her pilot. They were embarked at Simon's Town on the 6th November 1914 but soon after the auxiliary cruiser left port she ran into stormy weather, and the ailerons on the flying-boat were smashed by the heavy seas. A wireless message was sent to Mr. Hudson asking him to strip the ailerons from the second flying-boat and have them packed ready for the KINFAUNS CASTLE to take on board as she passed Durban. This was done.

A midshipman A.N. Gallehawk was appointed to be Flight Sub-Lieutenant Cutler's observer and on the journey up the coast he helped to get the flying-boat ready for use. When the party disembarked at the proposed base, the tiny island of Niororo, 18 miles off the Rufiji coast south of Zanzibar, it was found that the hull of the flying-boat was leaking and that the sun's heat upset the carburation. For two days the officers worked on repairs, and on the 22nd November Cutler, flying alone, was able to get the aircraft into the air.

November brings the north-east monsoon to the Swahili coast, with high temperatures and tropical rains. The sky was lowering as Cutler rose above the water, but he headed for the Rufiji in his first reconnaissance attempt. The flying-boat was not fitted with a compass, and the pilot made the coast too far south. Almost at one the storm broke, but Cutler flew up and down the coast vainly searching for the delta until his petrol was nearly finished, when he turned out to sea again. He could now find no trace of the KINFAUNS CASTLE and he was compelled at last to alight on the beach of an uninhabited island. Thence he was rescued by the merest chance. The crew of a captured enemy dhow reported they had seen the aircraft well south of the Rufiji, and this slender clue put the auxiliary cruiser on his track. A hole had been knocked in the hull of the flying-boat on the rough foreshore: it took two days before this was repaired, and then Cutler tried again. This time he had better luck. He made a wide search of the delta and discovered the KÖNIGSBERG about 12 miles up one of the main tideways. She was close to the bank, well hidden by the trees, but headed downstream with fires alight and all guns in position, evidently alert to take her chances of a sortie. When the pilot returned with his news he was not readily believed, as captured German charts showed no water for a ship of the KÖNIGSBERG'S displacement beyond four miles from the mouth. It was considered desirable that another reconnaissance should be made at low water, and that Cutler should be given, if the flying-boat would respond, the help of a trained naval observer. But the flying-boat, hull leaking, would not respond, and the hull of the fellow boat in Durban was sent for. Ten days passed before this arrived and was fitted, with the help of the ship's blacksmith, and then Cutler flew over the delta for the second time carrying Captain D.B. Crampton, RN of the KINFAUNS CASTLE in the observer's seat. The reconnaissance was successful and the truth of the original observation was confirmed. It had been hoped that once the German cruiser was located, the CHATHAM would be able, with the help of observation from the flying-boat, to tackle her at once, but the air report made it clear that she was well out of range of the British cruiser's guns.

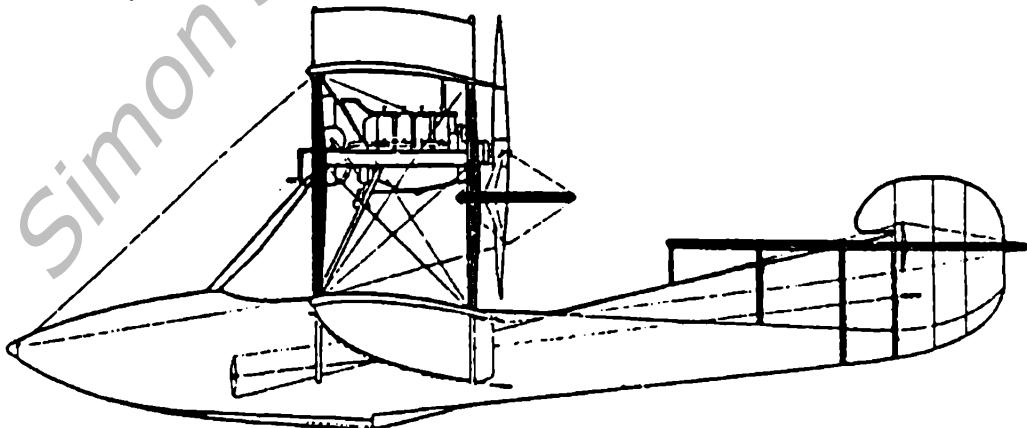
Another reconnaissance, a few days later, made at low tide to see how far sandbanks might impede the raider from coming out, disclosed that she had shifted her berth about a mile and a half into the next tideway. Meanwhile the CHATHAM, the only ship in these waters that could effectively tackle the KÖNIGSBERG if she came out, had gone off temporarily to Mombasa. If the German raider was indeed making her way down the river there was every likelihood she would escape. For a few anxious days it was impossible to get the flying-boat off the sea, made turbulent by the monsoon, but on the 10th of December Cutler took a chance offered by a lull in the weather and went off alone. The

hull of the flying-boat was now in such poor condition that leaking could not be prevented and no observer could be carried. Cutler had got no farther than a mile down the tideway when his engine failed and he was forced down in the mouth of the river, where his seaplane went aground fifty yards from the shore. The pilot pumped petrol into the top tank with the hand-pressure pump, and he was about to crank the engine when rifle fire was opened from the bank and the engine was hit and put out of action. Cutler's descent was seen from the tug HELMOUTH which was lying about 10 miles off the entrance to the Rufiji delta, and Midshipman Gallehawk was sent off in a motor-boat to rescue his pilot, although there was little hope he could arrive in time. Cutler meanwhile, unable to set fire to the flying-boat, threw overboard everything he could detach and it was not long before three Germans and about 15 askaris (native soldiers) were wading out to him. Within a few minutes he was a prisoner and the askari, under the guidance of the Germans, were dragging the flying-boat ashore. They succeeded in getting it about 30 yards up the beach and some of them hurried inland with their prisoner, who reports that as they penetrated into the bush they passed several Germans moving down to reinforce the small post on the river. A little later Cutler heard the tug's guns in action, and he learned afterwards from a German officer what had happened. The motor-boat supported by the tug's fire, dashed in and Midshipman Gallehawk, wading through the mud, made fast a line to the flying-boat. With difficulty, under continuous rifle fire, the rescuing party got the flying-boat off, and it was delivered, in a sinking condition, to the KINFAUNS CASTLE. It had been wrecked beyond repair and it was eventually given an honoured placed in the Durban Museum. So ended the first attempts to keep watch on the KÖNIGSBERG. There may have been more striking incidents in the history of naval aircraft in the two world wars; there are few which for quiet gallantry, can beat this story of an under-powered flying-boat, patched and re-patched, made fit for service first with the allerons and then with the hull of its fellow, operating in monsoon weather, from the beach of a tropical island, over jungle swamp.

Admiral King.Hall now knew what he must ask for from England before he could tackle the destruction of the KÖNIGSBERG. He suggested, besides seaplanes for bombing, a ship of light draught and heavy armament.

For those interested in reading more about the search for and hopefully the destruction of the KÖNIGSBERG, this has been written up in an earlier Bulletin.

Flight Lieutenant Cutler remained a prisoner of war until November 1917 when with other prisoners, he was left behind by the retreating enemy. During the rapid war of movement which began in the spring of 1916 the prisoners lived a nomadic life in the bush. They suffered much from fever and from lack of food and their privations in the rainy season were extreme. "Though we had a pretty hard time" says Cutler, "we could not complain much at our treatment as the Germans themselves had to live under almost similar conditions." (FROM: Great Britain: History of the Great War: The War in the Air Vol. -III by H.A. Jones Oxford Clarendon Press 1931).



CURTISS-F FLYING BOAT

DID NECHO'S PHOENICIANS LAND HERE?

Nigel Fawcett

We recently commemorated the quincentenary of the rounding of the Cape by Bartolomeo Dias and welcomed a replica of one of his caravels into False Bay when a cross was erected at Buffel's Bay to mark his possible landing there five hundred years ago.

And last year Simon's Town celebrated the tercentenary of Simon van der Stel's arrival in False Bay and the founding of the town to be named after him.

But these 'recent' historical events could well have been foreshadowed by a voyage round the Cape which took place more than 2,500 years ago, the circumnavigation of Africa from east to west by a party of Phoenicians sent by the Egyptian pharaoh Necho around 600 B.C.

Necho must have been an enterprising man. He had already dug out an old canal between the Nile and the Red Sea, thus linking the Mediterranean with the sea route to the East, a fore-runner of the Suez Canal in fact, and now, with his eye no doubt on profit from new sources of trade, he contemplated fitting out an expedition to encircle Africa and return through the Pillars of Hercules.

Africa was known as Libya in those days. It was a vague term for all the unexplored sandy wastes that made up the Sahara and lay to the south of the fertile strip of coastline bordering the Mediterranean. Homer had described the world as an island surrounded by a river called Ocean and the Greeks in Necho's day had no idea that Africa extended as far south as it does, in fact they imagined it as a rectangle running east - west. They thought that once a ship reached a point somewhere south of Ethiopia it could make a right turn and skirt along the bottom of the continent parallel to the Mediterranean coast at the top.

In the seventh century BC there existed a race of seafarers who had established themselves as the master mariners of the ancient world, men virtually without a country, just a collection of city states situated where modern Lebanon is today, who had explored the Mediterranean and beyond, probably as far as the foggy isles of Britain, and who traded wherever they went, often setting up trading posts on the way.

This self-sufficient race known as the Phoenicians, a word derived from the Greek 'phoinix' - dark red - since the Phoenicians were dyers renowned for their purple cloth - were the obvious choice for such a voyage.

The only account we have of this remarkable adventure is contained in the famous Histories of Herodotus, the Greek traveller known as the 'father of history', who was born around 480 BC in Greek Asia Minor and later reported the war between the Greeks and Persians and the birth of the Athenian empire. And who better to describe the voyage than the great historian himself, who, as will be noted, was extremely sceptical about the whole affair when told about it during his travels in Egypt. "As for Libya, we know that it is washed on all sides by the sea except where it joins Asia, as was first demonstrated, so far as our knowledge goes, by the Egyptian king Neco, who, after calling off the construction of the canal between the Nile and the Arabian Gulf (Herodotus' name for our Red Sea), sent out a fleet manned by a Phoenician crew with orders to sail west-about and return to Egypt and the Mediterranean by way of the Straits of Gibraltar. The Phoenicians sailed from the Arabian Gulf into the southern ocean, and every autumn put in at some convenient spot on the Libyan coast, sowed a patch of ground, and waited for the next year's harvest. Then, having got their grain they put to sea again, and after two full years rounded the Pillars of Hercules in the course of the third, and returned to Egypt. These men made a statement, which I do not myself believe, though others may, to the effect that they as they sailed on a westerly course round the southern end of Libya, they had the sun on their right - to northward of them." (1)

And of course it is Herodotus' scepticism about the sun on their right hand side which gives considerable weight to the claim that the Phoenicians did reach the southern hemisphere and may well have rounded the Cape.

And because they had to sow their crops, perhaps they did enter False Bay on their way, beating Dias to it by 2000 years!

The classical historian Lionel Casson, though not convinced, admits that the voyage was feasible. I quote from his "Ancient Mariners":

"There is no reason why a crew of Phoenicians could not have carried it out in the span of time and in the way Herodotus said they did. They could have started out late in autumn and, after rowing against the north-east monsoon and the current of the Red Sea, turned south beyond Cape Garafui where wind and current would be favourable. Soon they would have picked up the Mozambique current, then the Agulhas current around the Cape of Good Hope. Here they could have stopped, sown wheat in June and harvested in November, just a year after starting. Favourable current and south winds would carry them up the west coast of Africa, and the current would be in their favour along the Gulf of Guinea to Cape Palmas, although they would be held up by calms and troubled by torrid heat in this stretch. From Cape Palmas they would have to row against the north-east tradewind and the Canaries current to Morocco where they could land and sow again, at this point near the end of the second year out. They could reap in June, head for the Strait of Gibraltar, and once inside, the homeward leg, helped by wind and current, would go quickly. (2) But until the archaeologists come up with some Phoenician artefacts in South Africa we shall never know."

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NELSON'S HAIR AUCTIONED

The Cape Times of 22nd February 1988 reported from London that a lock of Admiral Lord Nelson's hair has been sold for £5,000 (R18,000) on auction in Somerset - five times higher than the anticipated value.

The 15 cm-long blond strands were put up for sale by a local descendant of Captain Jonas Rose, who succeeded Nelson as master of the vessel HMS AGAMEMNON. Captain Rose was sent the tuft of hair in an inscribed oval frame by Lady Emma Hamilton in 1807 along with a letter of authentication, which formed part of the auction lot. Unfortunately the 'heirloom' was bought on behalf of an unnamed collector and not by a Museum.

NAVAL OFFICERS' HEADGEAR



1770



1800



1837

THE VOYAGE OF THE FIRST FLEET TO BOTANY BAY 1787/1788

We have recently seen the re-enactment of the Arrival of the First Fleet en route to Australia to celebrate the bi-centenary. The Society thought it would be appropriate to record the thoughts of Captain Arthur Phillip who was in charge of the First Fleet and also Governor Elect of the new settlement in New South Wales.

Captain Phillip wrote up his journal as "A Voyage to New South Wales" a copy of which is in the S.A. Library in Cape Town. The Book has also been re-printed by Hutchinson Australia in connection with the Bi-centenary Celebrations.

"Chapter V: 4th September 1787. A prosperous course by sea, like a state of profound peace and tranquility in civil society, though most advantageous to those who enjoy it, is unfavourable to the purposes of narration. The striking facts which the writer exerts himself to record, and the reader is eager to peruse, arise only from difficult situations: uniform prosperity is described in very few words. Of this acceptable but unproductive kind was the passage of the Botany Bay fleet from Rio de Janeiro to the Cape of Good Hope; uniformly favourable, and not marked by any extraordinary incidents. This run, from lat 22° south, long. 43 west of London to lat. 34° south, long. 18° east of London, a distance of four thousand miles, was performed in 39 days: for having left Rio on the 4th September, on the 13th October the ships came to anchor in Table Bay. Here they were to take their final refreshment, and lay in every kind of stock with which they were not already provided. In this period no additional lives had been lost, except that of a single convict belonging to the CHARLOTTE, transport, who fell accidentally into the sea, and could not by any efforts be recovered.

Table Bay, on the north-west side of the Cape of Good Hope, is named from the Table Mountain, a promontory of considerable elevation, at the foot of which, and almost in the centre of the Bay, stands Cape Town, the principal Dutch settlement in this territory. This Bay cannot properly be called a port, being by no means a station of security; it is too exposed to all the violence of the winds which set into it from the sea; and is far from sufficiently secured from those which blow from the land. The gusts which descend from the summit of Table Mountain are sufficient to force ships from their anchors, and even violently to annoy persons on the shore, by destroying any tents or other temporary edifices which may be erected, and raising clouds of fine dust, which produce troublesome effects. A gale of this kind, from the south-east, blew for three days successively when Captain Cook lay here in his first voyage, at which time, he informs us, the RESOLUTION was the only ship in the harbour that had not dragged her anchors. The storms from the sea are still more formidable; so much so, that ships have frequently been driven by them from their anchorage, and wrecked at the head of the Bay. But these accidents happen chiefly in the quaade mouffon or winter months, from May 14 to the same day of August; during which time few ships venture to anchor here. Our fleet, arriving later, lay perfectly unmolested as long as it was necessary for it to remain in this station.

"False Bay, on the south-east side of the Cape, is more secure than Table Bay, during the prevalence of the north-west winds, but still less so in strong gales from the south-east. It is however less frequented, being 24 miles of very heavy road distant from Cape Town, whence almost all necessaries must be procured. The most sheltered part of False Bay is a recess on the west side, called Simon's Bay.

The Cape of Good Hope, though popularly called, and perhaps pretty generally esteemed so, is not in truth the most southern point of Africa. The land which projects furthest to the south is a point to the east of it, called by the English Cape AGULLUS; a name corrupted from the original Portuguese DAS AGULHAS, which, as well as the French appellation DES AIGUILLES, is descriptive of its form, and would rightly be translated NEEDLE CAPE. Three eminences, divided by very narrow passes, and appearing in a distant view like three summits of the same mountain, stand at the head of Table Bay. They are, however, of different heights, by which difference, as well as by that of their shape, they may be distinguished. Table Mountain is so called from its appearance, as it terminates in a flat horizontal surface, from which the face of the rock descends almost perpendicularly. This mountain rises to about 3567 feet above the

level of the sea. Devil's Head, called also Charles Mountain, is situated to the east of the former, and is not above 3368 feet in height; and on the west side of Table Mountain, Lion's Head, whose name is also meant to be descriptive, does not exceed 2764 feet. In the neighbourhood of the latter lies Constantia, a district consisting of two farms, wherein the famous wines of that name are produced.

"Our voyagers found provisions less plentiful and less reasonable in price at Cape Town than they had been taught to expect. Board and lodging, which are to be had only in private houses, stood the officers in two rix-dollars a day which is near 9/- sterling. This town, the only place in the whole colony to which that title can be applied with propriety, is of no great extent; it does not in any part exceed two miles: and the country, colonised here by the Dutch, is in general so unfavourable to cultivation, that it is not without some astonishment that we find them able to raise provisions from it in sufficient abundance to supply themselves, and the ships of so many nations which constantly resort to the Cape.

"When we consider the vast advantage derived by the Dutch colonists from this traffic, and the almost indispensable necessity by which navigators of all nations are driven to seek refreshment there, it cannot but appear extraordinary, that from the discovery of the Cape in 1493, by Barthelemi Diaz to the year 1650, when, at the suggestion of van Riebeck, the first Dutch colony was sent, a spot so very favourable to commerce and navigation should have remained unoccupied by Europeans. Perhaps all the perseverance of the Dutch character was necessary even to suggest the idea of maintaining an establishment in a soil so burnt by the sun, and so little disposed to repay the toil of the cultivator. The example and success of this people may serve, however, as a useful instruction to all who in great undertaking are deterred by trifling obstacles; and who, rather than contend with difficulties, are inclined to relinquish the most evident advantages.

"But though the country near the Cape had not charms enough to render it as pleasing as that which surrounds Rio de Janeiro, yet the Governor, Mynheer van Graaffe, was not far behind the Viceroy of Brazil in attention to the English officers. They were admitted to his table where they were elegantly entertained, and reason to be pleased in all respects with his behaviour and disposition. Yet the minds of his people were not at this time in a tranquil state; the accounts from Holland were such as occasioned much uneasiness, and great preparations were making at the fort, from apprehension of a rupture with some other power.

"In the course of a month, the live stock and other provisions were procured; and the ships, having on board not less than 500 animals of different kinds, but chiefly poultry, put on an appearance which naturally enough excited the idea of Noah's Ark. This supply, considering that the country had previously suffered from a dearth, was very considerable; but it was purchased of course at a higher expense considerably than it would have been in a time of greater plenty."

On the 12th November the fleet set sail, and was for many days much delayed by the strong winds from the south-east. On the 25th, being then only 80 leagues to the eastward of the Cape, Governor Phillip left the SIRIUS and went on board the Supply Tender; in hopes, by leaving the convoy, to gain sufficient time for examining the country round Botany Bay, so as to fix on the situation most eligible for the colony, before the transports should arrive. At the same time he ordered the agents for the transports, who were in the ALEXANDER, to separate themselves from the convoy with that ship, the SCARBOROUGH and FRIENDSHIP, which, as they were better sailors than the rest, might reasonably be expected sooner: in which case, by the labour of the convicts they had on board, much might be done in making the necessary preparations for landing the provisions and stores.

Major Ross, the Commandant of Marines, now left the SIRIUS and went on board the SCARBOROUGH, that he might accompany that part of the detachment which probably would be landed first. Captain Hunter, in the SIRIUS was to follow with the store-ships, and the remaining transports; and he had the necessary instructions for his future

proceedings, in case the SUPPLY had met with any accident. Lt. Gidley King, who was later to be appointed Commandant of Norfolk Island, accompanied Governor Phillip in the SUPPLY.

From this time on the 3rd January 1788, the winds were as favourable as could be wished, blowing generally in very strong gales from the north-west, west and south-west. Once only the wind had shifted to the east, but continued in that direction not more than a few hours. Thus assisted, the SUPPLY, which sailed but indifferently, and turned out, from what she had suffered in the voyage, to be hardly a safe conveyance, performed in 51 days a voyage of some 7,000 miles. On the day abovementioned she was within sight of the coast of New South Wales. But the winds then became variable, and a current, which at times set very strongly to the southward, so much impeded her course, that it was not till the 18th that she arrived at Botany Bay."

Captain Phillip the 1st Governor of the new colony was 49 when he sailed. He had been retired on 1/2 pay, farming in the New Forest, when recalled to Captain the 1st Fleet. He was small, frail looking but able and painstaking.

Captain John Hunter of the SIRIUS was his second in command, also aged 49 and was destined to become the 2nd Governor. Lt. Philip Gidley King was later to become the 3rd Governor of the Colony. The SIRIUS was wrecked on Norfolk Island in March 1789.

Being sent to start the new colony were 750 convicts, many of whom perished on the way. Among the 11 ships of the Fleet there were 400 seamen. The ships were SIRIUS, FISHBURN, ALEXANDER, SCARBOROUGH, CHARLOTTE, LADY PENRHYN, FRIENDSHIP, PRINCE OF WALES, GOLDEN GROVE, BORROWDALE and SUPPLY. The anchor from SIRIUS serves as a memorial to the men of the First Fleet and stands near Circular Quay, Sydney.

ROPE WORK

Rope, the term being used in its widest sense, is made from almost every pliable material, but is generally composed of hemp, manila, coir, cotton, sisal, steel, iron or copper wire, and more recently nylon and other synthetic fibres. For the present we must confine ourselves to those having their origin in the vegetable kingdom, and more especially to those made from hemp and manila.



Fig 1

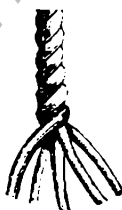


Fig 2

Fig. 1: A hawser-laid rope, which is composed of three strands laid up, generally right-handed (i.e. the direction taken by the strands in forming the rope runs always from left to right).

Fig. 2: A shroud-laid rope, also laid up right-handed, but consisting of four strands with a heart in the centre.

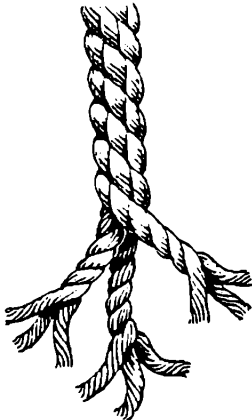


Fig 3

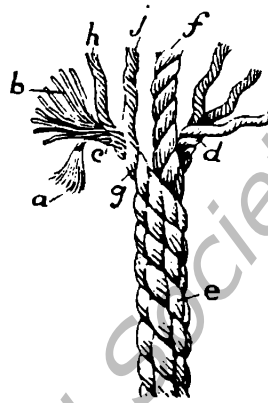


Fig 4

Fig. 3: A cable-laid rope, which is composed of three right-handed hawser-laid ropes laid up together left-handed so that it may be said to consist of nine strands.

Fig. 4: Here we show a more complete analysis of its construction. First we see the cable formed by the three ropes d, f and g, whilst the rope q is dissected to show the strands forming it - c, h and j - and in the strand c we see b, the yarn composing the strand, and a, a yarn teased out to show the original fibre.

MANILA: Made from the fibre of plantain leaves; strong, of fine appearance, smooth, runs well over blocks. Was generally used on yachts.

SISAL: Made from the fibre of aloe leaves; very white, about as strong as hemp, stands sea water well. Now issued to most grey-funnel lines.

COTTON: Very smooth and white, it will stand much running over blocks. Nowadays used mostly for fancy work; not as strong as hemp or manila. Also used for man-ropes etc.

ITALIAN HEMP: Strongest natural fibre ropes; very smooth, very nice to handle and to work; does not become hard when wet; runs well over blocks. Lightly tarred it is the best rope for running rigging. Used mainly for sheets. More expensive than manila, but lasts longer.

NYLON: Synthetic fibre. Smooth, water-resistant, elastic and attractive for any work.

Most shipboard work done today is done with synthetic fibres.

One of the few very large rope works still in existence which was built in 1786 is the Ropery in Chatham Dockyard in England. It was operational right up until 1983 when the R.N. Dockyard was closed. The Kent County Council lent financial support to Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust to completely refurbish the Ropery. There is also a Spinning Room adjoining and during the whole of the refurbishment the Ropery continued to make products. Among the first orders for the new Ropery were those from HMS VICTORY which originally was built and outfitted with flags, sails and ropes at Chatham. The Ropery is the largest building of its kind in the world, measuring more than 1,000 ft long and 50 ft. wide.

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MUZZLE LOADING CANNON, ADMIRALTY HOUSE GARDEN

We are indebted to Mr. A.J. Bateman for his research in this connection. Editor.

Research has unravelled the decorative Arabic script on the lovely cannon which stands in the garden close to the figurehead of HMS FLORA. Traditionally the story went that it was from an old slave ship.

The script revealed the names KHALIFA SAID MOHAMMAD SULTAN but in no obvious sequence. By scanning the genealogical tables of the Royal Families of Muscat and Zanzibar it was revealed that a MUHAMMID BIN KHALIFA BIN SAID BIN SULTAN BIN AHMED was the son of Khalifa who was Sultan of Zanzibar from 1888 to his death in 1890 and Muhammad himself died in 1906. Sultan Sayyid Said ibn Sultan (the grandfather of Muhammad) was the most famous ruler of Zanzibar and of the Oman. He was known as Sayyid the Great and ruled from 1806-1856. He was the first Arab sovereign to send a diplomatic mission to the United States of America. He sent Ahmed ibn Na'man as his envoy aboard the SULTANA. They left Muscat in February 1840 and sailed via St. Helena we know for certain but may also well have called in at False Bay on their way.

It is also possible that Omanis may have preceeded Diaz in calling at the Cape as they were certainly to be found all over the Indian Ocean in those early days. One of the most famous of these Omanis was Ahmad ibn Majid who wrote "The Book of Benefits on the Principles of Seamanship" and is thought to have piloted Vasco da Gama from Malindi in East Africa to Calicut in 1498.

It should be mentioned in connection with the Royal Families of the Oman and Zanzibar that the word "Sayyid" in those countries means a member of the Royal Family whereas in other parts of the Arab world the word "Sayyid" signifies merely Esquire/gentleman. The proper title of our Muhammad would have been His Highness Sayyid (Prince) Muhammad bin Khalifa bin Said bin Sultan bin Ahmed.

One wonders though why he would have had a gun cast and how it arrived in the garden of Admiralty House? Perhaps on a captured slave ship ?



Ahmad ibn Na'man. Oman's first The great Sayyid Said ibn Sultan

JACKASS PENGUIN (*Spheniscus demersus*)

or Cape Blackfooted penguin

Its Height is 63 - 68 cm. Weight: Male 3,8 kg & female 3,2k

It gets its name Jackass because of its raucous braying. It is unique to the coastal waters of Southern Africa from southern Angola to southern Mozambique.

The plumage of the adult bird is sooty black on the back with white over the thighs and abdomen and around the throat and head, the white being divided by a black strip running up the side of the body and across the throat on the mature bird.

It is very difficult to tell the sex of the birds except during the courting and egg-laying period. The lifespan is thought to be 12 years.

It seems as if the black and white front are protective colourings for the penguin. A shark approaching a diving penguin from above would not easily see its black back against the darkness of deep water, and a shark looking up through

the water to the light would not so readily distinguish the white front of a floating penguin. The penguin has been shown to feed on as many as 28 different varieties of small fish and marine animals, of which it seems to have preference for pilchards, anchovies and maasbanker, in that order. Their existence is threatened due to man's commercial egg exploitation; guano-scraping interfering with nesting and now, the heavy fishing, particularly of pilchards. However, these birds not only have a commercial value as guano-producers but they play an important part in the life-cycle of the seas in that guano provides the nitrogen on which plant plankton thrives and this in turn nourishes the fish.

For the first time in living memory, about two years ago a pair of Jackass penguins came ashore to nest between Foxy Beach and Boulders. They were closely watched by Ashley Starling and her friends to see that no harm came to them. They have now multiplied and steps have been taken to afford them some protection in the hope that they will stay. That they have chosen to come so close to habitation is in itself strange but also obviously means that our supply of fish is adequate and certainly since new measures of conservation were introduced a few years ago it would seem that there are again plentiful supplies of fish in False Bay. It is to be hoped that the large trawlers will be kept out of False Bay forever, because it was frightening to see about 40 at a time sweeping the Bay clean of fish.

EDGAR WALLACE: FORMATIVE YEARS AT SIMON'S TOWN

A.F. Moore

On 27 December 1893, at the age of 18, Richard Horatio Edgar Wallace, enlisted in the Royal West Kent Regiment and almost 3 years later was posted to Simon's Town's Military Hospital in August 1896 (1) as a Medical Orderly.

Wallace wrote of his surroundings in Simon's Town: "The hospital was situated at the end of a long avenue of eucalyptus trees, and at the mouth of a little kloof, where baboons barked all night and a waterfall provided an endless murmur of sound.... And when the spring and summer came, the kloof was a treasure-house of plumbago."

Wallace was certainly born with an aptitude and predilection for writing, and even in his boyhood days he recorded in an exercise book the adventures that occurred to him and his friends during their leisure hours of play and said proudly: "If ever I get the chance, I'm going to publish this".(1) He was a great admirer of Kipling and "frequently devoted his spare time to writing verses for canteen concerts, friends' birthdays and similar occasions, his inherited love of the theatre being very strong." (2) It will be remembered that his mother was an actress.

The influence of Simon's Town on the young Cockney was undoubtedly great. The magnificence of his surroundings quite clearly touched a chord of his receptive spirit and stimulated an urge towards a higher form of poetic expression. The man who had grown up in the slums of life appreciated his new surroundings. Indeed Wallace was in love with a young lady from Simon's Town, the daughter of Rev. W.S. Caldecott, who was to become his wife.

It is evident from the earliest days of his residence, and confirmation of this is found in the fact that in the very first of three exercise books now in the South African Library (3), which contain verse that he wrote at the Cape during the years 1896-99. This was quoted by Stephen Gray in STHS Bulletin Vol.X No. 4 July 1979. It is not laureate poetry but reveals the influence of his surroundings on the young man from London.

Indeed while he was at Simon's Town other influences impinged upon him, so much so that when the Curator of the Simon's Town Museum (Mrs. E.A. Biggs) was interviewed by the Cape Argus on the subject of Edgar Wallace, she could state with truth: "Simon's Town can also claim to have set Wallace on the path which led him to the editorship of the Rand Daily Mail and his other editorial positions. For a time he acted as assistant editor of the Simon's Town and District Chronicle." In October 1899, after he had left them, the Chronicle paid this tribute: "We feel that no small amount of the success of this paper is due to the fact that we were fortunate enough to secure the services of Mr. Edgar Wallace as assistant editor." (4)

During the almost 3 years of his association with the Military Hospital, the broad course of his future life had been established, although he had not yet discovered his real aptitude, and although, as his final verses in the third exercise book (2) reveal, he could still indulge in such immaturity as:

"I sigh for the gallant days of old
When archers clad in green and gold
Shot at the blithesome sparrow."

Rudyard Kipling's visit to the Cape early in 1898 was another turning point when Wallace made a name for himself locally when his "Welcome to Rudyard Kipling" was printed in the Cape Times and earned him a guinea. When Wallace left Cape Town he had not only dined at the City Club and been met by Kipling on a friendly and kindly footing, but had taken the first step to fame. His departure was made possible be-

journalist." (5). He was able to don civilian clothes on 12 May of that year.(1) Indeed he had already been a free-lance journalist elsewhere as well. On 17 November 1898 his first column under the heading "Cackle from the Capital" his pseudonym being the "Cackler" appeared in the Daily Dispatch of that date:

"When Parliament is drear and dull,
And nothing much is going,
Then we discuss,
With mighty fuss,
The wind that has been blowing"

It is obvious that he was still within the realm of the "Cape doctor" as the following from the same edition also confirms:

"A very good story reached me from Simon's Bay. One of our Dutch Legislators, accompanied by his wife, whilst on a visit to our Naval port, paid a visit to a man-o'-war, the POWERFUL, where they were taken in tow by a smart little middy, one of the Rothschild family, who escorted them round the ship pointing out various objects of interest, the guns, the stores, the turrets, etc. After the tour of inspection the young man went down to the gun-room and returned with some refreshments on a silver salver which he bore to the homely couple. After the lunch the time arrived for the M.L.A. to depart, and a whispered consultation between him and his good spouse took place. As they stepped over the side of the ship, the member turned and, slipping half-a-crown and a card into the hand of the astonished officer, he remarked "Here's my card, my boy, and if you should ever want to desert come straight to my farm and I'll give you a job and ask no questions."

While Wallace was in the battle zone during the Boer War he became adept at obtaining first-hand information from soldiers, wounded or other wise, for his drive and past experience in the army proved to be an open sesame; and what better place was there during his several visits to Cape Town (during one of which he married in April 1901) than from a convenient base at the Koeberg Hotel, cnr of Newmarket and Nelson streets where convalescents gathered and which was close to the Military Hospital in Cape Town,

A final vignette with a touch of journalistic humour should not be omitted. Professor Percival R. Kirby, well-known at Rhodes University some years ago, in a delightful paper on "South African Industrial and Arts Exhibition, Grahamstown 1898" to which the Rand press had sent Wallace, mentioned that among other functions, the journalist attended a Public Luncheon:

"In the Mail of December, Wallace wrote an article on 'A Cockney at the Luncheon' in which he complained that he had received only one glass of champagne which had to serve him for 5 toasts. In his comic 'Balance Sheet Showing Expenditure on Wine' he wrote: 1/2 glassful for the Queen, 1/6 each for the Royal Family and Administrator, 1/12 each for the Army and Navy and the Executive of the Exhibition'. But he nevertheless concluded with the words: 'The function was a success'.

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BRITISH VICE-ADMIRALTY COURTS

A great hue and cry recently erupted in Cape Town's newspapers when it was revealed that a descendant of Lord Johan Hendrik de Villiers (1842-1914) the first Chief Justice of the Cape Colony was offering through Christie's auction house in London the solid-silver Oar of the Vice-Admiralty Court of the Cape of Good Hope. This had passed to Lord de Villiers when the Vice-Admiralty Court was abolished in 1891, when jurisdiction was handed over to the Supreme Court. The silver Oar was one of only 7 made in the early 19th century by the silversmith William Frisbee of London. The Vice-Admiralty Court was a symbol of British authority in this country. The date on the Oar is 1806. It measures 33" (83.8cm) long and weighs 35 ozs. It is estimated to be worth £15,000 at today's auction prices in London.

In 1796 Admiral Elphinstone wrote from the Cape of Good Hope to London "we are greatly at a loss for a Court of Admiralty here" in order to regulate the trade with India and control illicit traders. The following year a Vice-Admiralty Court was established under the seal of the High Court of Admiralty. The Oar referred to above was the visible sign of the authority of the Court and was the equivalent of the mace in a civil court, and indeed the Oar was used in procession just ahead of the hangman to witness the executions of those found in contravention of maritime law.

According to records in the Cape Archives in which there is information from M.J. Prichard of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, the first Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court here was John Holland (4/2/1797), the Registrar was John Harrison (9/2/1801) and the Marshal was the renowned George Rex who came here in 1797. According to one of his descendants, George Rex had an ebony baton mounted with a silver crown as his symbol of office as Marshal of the Admiralty.



In the 1800s the Judiciary at the Cape was headed by a Court of Appeal for Criminal Cases (with the Governor as the sole judge sitting with two assessors), a Court of Appeal for Civil Cases (with the Governor and Lt. Governor as Judges), the Vice-Admiralty Court, a Court of Justice and Courts of Matrimonial and Petty Affairs.

The Vice-Admiralty Court dealt with prosecutions against the ships and goods of pirate bounty money upon the capture of piratical vessels, prosecutions for a breach of the laws for the abolition of the slave trade and prosecutions for contempt in not striking topsails to His Majesty's ships of war.

The well-known Cape Town notary public and lawyer Charles A. Fairbridge was appointed an Admiralty Proctor in 1861 and his firm still handles work on behalf of the British Admiralty Court.

According to the encyclopaedia the function of the Admiralty Court, formerly exercised by the Lord High Admiral, or by a judge holding a patent from him was to try and to give judgement in maritime cases. Since the British Judicature Acts of 1873 and 1875 which established the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Divisions of the High Court, these functions have been discharged by 2 judges, who, in addition to giving judgement in probate and divorce matters, exercise the jurisdiction of the old Admiralty Court.

in former days were discharged by 2 separate courts, albeit the judge of the instance court was usually appointed to preside over the prize court. In its capacity as a prize court the court has jurisdiction in matters of capture in port or on land if the capture has been effected by a naval force, or a mixed naval and military force. The court can also try any questions referred to it by the Privy Council concerning booty of war i.e. property captured by land forces. As an instance court it originally dealt with both criminal and civil causes, but a series of statutes transferring the criminal side of its work to other courts has rendered this branch of its jurisdiction practically obsolete. When the Central Criminal Court was established in Britain in 1836, Admiralty criminal causes were transferred to it and the Admiralty Offences Act 1844 provided that in cases where Admiralty jurisdiction would have applied, they should be treated as if they were offences committed in the country where the offender was apprehended. The Naval Discipline Act 1866 transferred to naval courts martial the authority hitherto possessed by the Admiralty Court in the matter of discipline in the navy. In the case of an abandoned vessel being found at sea, the finders were entitled to 9/10ths of the value of the vessel, whilst 1/10th was the Admiralty Droit that formerly appertained to the Lord High Admiral in early days. The Court of Admiralty for Scotland was abolished as early as 1831 and its jurisdiction transferred to other courts. Appeals from the British Admiralty courts could be made to the House of Lords and from the colonial Vice-Admiralty Courts to the judicial committee of the Privy Council in England.

From Cape Archives File CO.4844/201 it was interesting to note some of the procedure as recorded in correspondence between C. Bird the Colonial Secretary and J.H. Brand the Government Resident in Simon's Town. 30th January 1821: "I have to report that according to His Excellency's order in the letter of yesterday's date I have this morning taken possession of the Brig MARY ANN SOPHIA and have landed the person acting for the Deputy Marshal of the Vice-Admiralty Court with his Silver Oar...I transmit to you the accompanying warrant addressed to the Deputy Marshal of the Vice-Admiralty Court, or the person in possession of the Brig MARY ANN SOPHIA ordering him to quit possession of the said Brig which was sold by the Sequestrator on the 25th instant... You will deliver the warrant to the person, whoever he may be, who is on board the said brig, on behalf of the Deputy Marshal, and call upon him to conform thereto and should he resist the same you will then take the necessary steps for removing him by the Civil Power acting herein with your usual steadiness and discretion."

A later holder of the position of Marshal and Sergeant at Mace to the Vice-Admiralty Court was Commander James M. Bance RN (1782-1866) who held the position of Port Captain of Table Bay approximately 1841-1845.

We are very grateful to Mrs. Juliet Lomberg of Christie's (S.A.) Ltd for permission to reproduce their very fine photograph of the Oar from their sale catalogue. At the time of writing it had been withdrawn from sale and hopefully will return to its rightful place in the Cultural History Museum, Cape Town, which was the abode of the Vice-Admiralty Court in its heyday.

NAVAL SAYINGS:

"CHOCKFULL" - "CHOCK-A-BLOCK" : "Chock-full" is derived from the nautical "chock-a-block" which originally referred to a tackle being pulled up as far as it would go until its two blocks or pulleys were drawn together.

HMS HERMES' MOTOR BOAT, DAKAR, 7TH JULY, 1940

What follows are extracts from a report made by Lt. Cdr. R.H. Bristowe, R.N. of HMS HERMES to the Rear Admiral on board HERMES, on Bristow's return from an attack in a small motor boat on the French cruiser RICHELIEU. A copy of the report was given to Geo. Pilkington the artist and we have his daughter Mrs. Joan Cooper to thank for passing it on to the Simon's Town Museum.

After the fall of France in June 1940 the puppet regime in Vichy France assumed formal responsibility for the French overseas territories. In the strategic port of Dakar, Senegal, lying on the hump of the West African Coast, was a French cruiser the RICHELIEU which constituted a considerable threat to convoys bound for South Africa, the Middle East and the Far East. It was necessary to deal with this threat as quickly as possible. HMS HERMES which was off the coast of West Africa at the time was ordered to engage and the following action ensued.

An aerial torpedo attack on the RICHELIEU was ordered and this was to be supplemented by a night depth-charge attack by motor boat and Lt. Cdr. Bristowe was placed in charge of said motor boat. His crew were F.W. Grant (Commissioned Gunner - T), Cyril Ford, Albert Westmore (both Engineerroom Artificers), Leading Telegraphist R.E. Tuffnell, Leading Seaman P.J. Kearns, Able Seamen J. Quinn and A. Cookson and 2 Royal Marines W.S. Robinson and G.T. Youldie.

"During the afternoon it was decided to prepare for the attack. The motor boat was painted matt black all over. Glass was either removed or painted black." A volunteer crew was formed in 10 minutes so keen were the ship's complement. The boat was soon christened "The HERMES' coffin", as in funereal black this is what she resembled. Crew blackened their faces with burnt cork. "The crew manned the boat at 2100 and proceeded to the destroyer HMS MILFORD to pick up two additional depth-charges." A serious accident occurred as they were loading these when one was dropped onto the port engine and it was not discovered till later when they were under weigh, that it had cracked the cylinder head of that engine so they were left with just the starboard engine which was newly installed and had not been tested.

MILFORD accompanied the motor boat and they tried to keep up a speed of 12 knots but with "depth charges slung on the side of the boat, it upset its stability and it was a perilous trip." They had a bad shock en route when they encountered a large shape which they thought was RICHELIEU under weigh so "MILFORD challenged, and we waited for her end, but the challenge was answered correctly and as the shape approached closer we recognised it as AUSTRALIA." Their only protection as the motor boat set off from MILFORD was a Vickers Machine Gun in the bows of the motor boat. They had a compass with them but could not see it because they must show no lights, so were grateful that the Great Bear was showing and North pole star with it and this helped them to steer for Dakar, but they had dipped below the visibility plane before they were on their return.

"Goree Island loomed in sight by 0015 and not long after this we almost ran down a destroyer on patrol outside the outer boom." Speed was reduced to 3 knots to cross the boom and not leave a phosphorescent wake. They stopped the engine and slipped over boom. They thought it might be mined, however all was well. They muffled the engine and went ahead at dead slow speed. They sighted what they thought was the RICHELIEU but she was in the wrong position to that which had been given them and to their great sorrow they noticed she was d'ENTRECASTEAUX - a sloop. Fortunately the quartermaster who was on deck did not see them and they crept slowly off so as to avoid rousing his suspicion. All in all they were challenged six times on their way in to the attack. They went alongside RICHELIEU about 30 yards from her stern, sent the depth-charges over as one, the crew having been told to hang on for grim death as if they fell overboard for any reason there was no way they could be "collected".

The French quarterdeck staff stood looking at them at first not understanding that they

were enemy. When they realised, they withdrew hurriedly uttering fearful curses. The depth charges, however, failed to function much to the dismay of the boat's crew. This was possibly due to the water being too shallow. RICHELIEU quickly sent out a signal and as they retreated one Armed Merchant Cruiser hailed them and they replied "passant". When no searchlights were switched on they decided to get out at full speed but alas, again more trouble with the engine. It would not start and they lay drifting for a full 20 minutes, but luck was with them and the nearby sloop ignored them. The E.R.As worked hard changing batteries with the engine which had not originally been used at the beginning of the sortie. Also it was found that the self-starter was shorting. Finally one engine started. While they were lying there working away there was an explosion and one of the depth charges was thought to have exploded. They now made a dash for the outer boom with an auxiliary vessel of the French navy endeavouring to catch up with them. They fired a few shots at her but then decided to resume their dash for the boom. While en route to this another French auxiliary vessel showed up and they thought they were sandwiched but for some unknown reason - luck again perhaps - neither vessel continued the pursuit. They got through the nets after zig-zagging the rest of the way.

Now the great question was, how to get back to the HERMES. It was now approximately 0300 and darkness was fast receding. They decided to proceed on a north-westerly course and as they started out they heard a heavy bombardment, it was one of HERMES' Swordfish aircraft flying back after carrying out their dawn attack. They looked back at dawn to see RICHELIEU shrouded by a pall of yellow smoke. They cheered but then a number of red and green objects burst uncomfortably close and they donned their tin helmets and got on with the job of escaping undetected. They altered course after a while to the South. They decided at 0545 hours that it would be impossible to reach HERMES in her northerly position with their very restricted speed and decided to alter course again for Bathurst in Gambia. Several French aircraft flew over them but presumably because of their black colour and that they kept dead still in the boat, they were not seen from the air.

They decided they would need to do some work on the engine so they stopped after a while. As they stopped their chart blew over the side, a volunteer dived into the sea to retrieve it and as they hauled him aboard a large shark swam past the boat within 10 yards. They opened fire on it with rifles and a .455 revolver. "These were the only shots fired during the whole operation and the enemy withdrew." They then received a W/T message from HERMES that they should "stop engines" and knew then that they would soon be found and picked up. Meanwhile they decided to do some fishing. They were eventually picked up at 1200 hours after being away from HERMES for a total of 15 hours.

Lt. Cdr Bristowe closes his account by saying "The behaviour of my crew, throughout a very exciting operation, inspired very largely by Mr. Grant's imperturbable cheerfulness, was exemplary. I couldn't have wished for more cheerful, a more sporting or more loyal company, and any success which we may have achieved is entirely due to their whole-hearted co-operation."

According to our records HMS HERMES arrived in Simon's Town soon after this. The Naval Dockyard Docking Book 1939-45 records she was in dry dock from 17th August to 2nd November 1940. It says in the book "extensive repairs to bows from keel to flight deck and general re-fit." This was as a result of an unfortunate incident on the night following the attack when during a sudden dense tropical storm she collided with the Armed Merchant Cruiser CORFU. HERMES made for Freetown, then Simon's Town. She left Simon's Town in January 1942 for Ceylon. The naval base at Trincomalee was under threat of attack on the night of 8th April 1942 so HERMES was ordered to clear harbour and with VAMPIRE sailed about 40 miles south of the island. On 9th April both ships were attacked by some 50 aircraft. HERMES was sunk with the loss of 19 Officers including Captain R.F.J. Onslow and 288 Ratings. HMS HERMES was awarded a Battle Honour. A very sad ending.

THE UNION DEFENCE FORCES' BUILDINGS OF SIMON'S TOWN DURING THE 2ND WORLD WAR 1939-45

Cdr. W.M. Bisset

One of the most important projects being undertaken by the Simon's Town Historical Society is the compilation of a catalogue of the buildings in the Town.

The recent discovery of the Quartermaster General's copy of the Cape Fortress Location List of sites and buildings in the Cape Command has made it possible to fill some important gaps in our knowledge about the Union Defence Forces' buildings in Simon's Town during the Second World War. During the war the information was classified as secret. Only six copies of the Location List were made and they had been completed by 4 August 1944. The Location List was prepared by the 'Q' Section at the Castle and updated from time to time.

In view of the great interest shown in some of the remote wartime buildings which have survived all those between Glencairn and Cape Point have been included in the list which follows. An article on "The Application of Radar in the UDF during World War II" which describes the Union Defence Experimental Stations in some detail, by Captain(SAN) T.C.B. Vlok was published in Militaria 4/2, 1974.

<u>Building or site</u>	<u>Unit(s) based there</u>
Barrier, Glencairn Quarry	Cape Peninsula Rifles' guards
Scala Battery	2 Heavy Battery
Palace Barracks	2 Heavy Battery
Cape Peninsula Garrison Institute	
Ibeka Villa and Asynt Villa	Women's Auxiliary Army Services later Women's Royal Naval Service
Motor Transport Depot	11 Motor Transport Company
Supply Depot	'Q' Services Corps
Naval Nursing Home	
Naval Military Hospital	Royal Navy
Naval Magazine	Cape Peninsula Rifles' guards
Detention Barracks	Non-European Army Services
Main Barracks	2 Heavy Battery Women's Auxiliary Army Services
Married Quarters	2 Heavy Battery
Quarters	2 Heavy Battery
CL 37 The Boulders	17 Lines of Communication later 96 Base Works Company
North Battery	2 Heavy Battery
Lower North Battery	Royal Navy
Upper North Battery	2 Heavy Battery
CS 79 Rocklands & CH 33	17 Lines of Communication
Queen's Battery	46 Base Works Company later The Royal Navy
Oil Sites	Cape Peninsula Rifles
Noah's Ark Battery	2 Heavy Battery & Women's Aux. Army Services
CL 33 S. S. Hill	17 Lines of Communication

Docks & CL 40 East Wall	Royal Navy
CL 41 Al Shed }	2 Heavy Battery
CL 42 Bullnose }	17 Lines of Communication - later 1
CL 43 Cole Point	Garrison Provost Company, Military Police Corps
CH 36 Klaver	3 Native Military Corps guards
CL 39 Runciman Estate	17 Lines of Communication
CL 44 Red Hill	Military Police Corps later 17 Lines of Communication
Froggy Pond	Royal Navy
Blue Gums Fortress Observation Post	2 Heavy Battery
CS 81 Menskop Cape Point	17 Lines of Communication
CS 80 Rooihoogte and CS 82, Grootkop, Cape Point	17 Lines of Communication
Training Ground and Barracks, Klaasjagersberg	2 Cape Peninsula Rifles
Fire Commanders Post, Cape Point	2 Heavy Battery
Port War Signal Station, Cape Point	S.A. Naval Forces
Diaz Point & Da Gama (Rooikrantz) Union)	61 Coast Defence Corps and Special Signals Services
Defence Force Experimental Stations)	21 Heavy Battery
Diaz Point Battery Observation Post)	61 Coast Defence Corps and Special Signals Services
Rooikrantz)	
Beacon Buildings Cape Point	

There is a similar list for the Cape Town area but as this is out of the sphere of operations of the Simon's Town Historical Society we have extracted those which apply to the Royal Navy and seem to have fallen under the umbrella of HMS GNU.

Boston House, Strand Street	Imperial Movement Control
Old General Post Office, Adderley Street	Naval Provost Marshal
Old Training College, Queen Victoria St.	Naval Signals
Hotel Edward, Mill Street	Royal Naval Barracks
Helmsley Hotel, Hof Street	Women's Royal Naval Service Barracks
HMSAS BONAVENTURE, Dock Area	Royal Navy, later S.A.N.F.

DIAZ 88 FESTIVAL IN MOSSEL BAY

David Biggs

Five hundred years ago Bartholomeu Diaz sailed his ship into a safe anchorage and became the first European to set foot on South African soil. Much has happened since then and recently the town of Mossel Bay and its beautiful anchorage have been catapulted into the 20th Century by the discovery of oil and gas off its coastline but plans are afoot to ensure that the anchorage as seen first by Diaz will remain relatively unspoilt.

The highlight of the Diaz 500 Festival was, of course, the arrival of the Diaz caravel replica, built as nearly as possible to the design of those used by early Portuguese navigators. No detailed plans or drawings of those early caravels were available, so the builders had to make some educated guesses. The results looked good. Like the original caravel, the replica landed in Mossel Bay on 3 February. The town was en fete for the occasion - sightseers and festival goers had come pouring in for the event and accommodation was stretched to its limits.

The South African Navy had sent 16 ships to the bay while the yachts taking part in the Diaz Race arrived and the National Hobie Cat championships were being raced in the Bay. A large tent town had been erected to house the members of the S.A. Police and Defence Force present at the Festival.

Our own accommodation at Die Bakke was very comfortable - a three bedroomed thatched chalet with a spectacular view across the bay from the stoep. The STHS Spring Tour Party will be staying in these chalets.

The attractions of the festival revolved around the harbour area where the caravel was moored. Captain Emil de Souza and members of his crew were on hand to provide answers to never-ending questions from visitors as well as to pose for innumerable photographs. Other major items of interest - SAS PROTEA the South African Navy's survey ship - presented a most informative and imaginative display on Navigation (organised by Commander Mac Bisset) as an introduction to the more comprehensive display in the Maritime Museum complex which incorporates the spring which provided the original watering-place for the Portuguese sailors; the Post Office tree; the Old Mill now restored as the Maritime Museum built to house the replica of the caravel; the 18th century granary, rebuilt to the original specifications; and the Shirley building which will house an extensive shell collection. This complex will be linked by an established garden of indigenous plants.

The star attraction was a display brought to South Africa from Portugal by the National Board for the Celebration of Portuguese Discoveries 1987-2000. This is a travelling exhibition entitled "Portugal, Pioneer of Discoveries". As introduction, the exhibition programme says "In no other moment in history did a people from so small a European nation go so far or were so prominent on the stage of the world...They were men who, 500 years ago gave meaning to the recommendations of a Latin philosopher to his contemporaries: SINCE IT IS NOT GIVEN TO US TO LIVE LONG, LET US DO SOMETHING TO SHOW OTHERS THAT IT WAS WORTH LIVING. "

In addition to a Portuguese village constructed in one of the harbour sheds other Mossel Bay Museums and Communities mounted exhibitions which were well worth seeing. The Old Klipkerk housed a collection of wonderful antiques from homes in the area; there was an old fashioned farmyard in the Church grounds; Toys of Yesteryear in the Old Carpenter's Shop; A Century of Chairs in the Old Point High School Hall arranged by the William Fehr Collection in Cape Town and designed by the Port Elizabeth Museum; two temporary exhibits in the Maritime Museum "Maritime Images (Cape artists impressions of the Sea - mounted by the S.A. National Gallery and the S.A. Cultural History Museum) "An Age of Exploration and Discovery" also aroused great interest.

The climax of the festivities - a major firework display visible to a crowded foreshore - brought the proceedings to an end in which the fine weather which had attended the week long celebration turned into a fine soft rain, as the last sparks faded from the sky. A memorable end to a memorable occasion.
