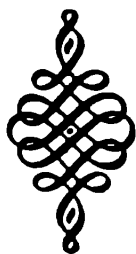




**SIMON'S TOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

BULLETIN



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JULY 1990

SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN MR. G.B. READ, CBE, AT THE 30TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN THE LECTURE ROOM, SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM, ON 15TH MARCH, 1990.

To-night as I am sure you are all aware is a rather special night in the course of which we will celebrate the Society's 30th Birthday. Although, as usual, we meet in our dual capacity as Members of the Simon's Town Historical Society and Friends of the Museum, the proceedings will take a somewhat different form to those of previous years. There will be no guest speaker but, after the formal business of the A.G.M. is concluded, the Curator will present a short slide show highlighting the achievements of the Society particularly in regard to the built environment over the past 30 years, before the celebrations start! This format will hopefully provide a little more time for the presentation and consideration of this report which, inter alia, will briefly review the past three decades, give a resume of the past year's activities and then endeavour to identify some of the main problems which are likely to confront the Society and the Friends over the next decade.

For the record, the Inaugural Meeting of the Society, under the Chairmanship of the late Mr. H.C. Willis, actually took place on Monday 22nd February 1960, in the Council Chamber. (The date of the 30th Anniversary Celebrations to-night was purposely held over to coincide with the A.G.M.). Those present at the Inaugural Meeting in addition to Mr. Willis were Mrs. Willis, Mrs & Miss Purland, Mesdames Rosser-Drummer, Williams, Calder, Vaughan, Reeve and Scott and Messrs. L.J.D. Gay, Jones, Cohen, Amlay, Chapman, Nicol, van der Poll, Wagner, Scott and Fry. It is nice to think that Eric Fry, our Hon. Auditor, is still rendering distinguished service to the Society. Following this and subsequent meetings a Constitution was published in the 1st Edition of the Society's Bulletin in January 1961. The three principal objectives were to:

- (i) collect, collate and disseminate historical information concerning Simon's Town
- (ii) preserve buildings of historical interest in Simon's Town
- (iii) establish a Museum.

In early 1970 the then Vice-Chairman Mr. B.B. Brock, convened a well attended meeting to try and provide answers to the following questions. What makes us tick? What keeps us ticking? What threatens to interfere with our ticking? Some of his thoughts on the principal activities of the Society over the first 10 years are well worth noting in the light of what subsequently happened. Here are the main ones:

Bulletin: 30 contributors produced 100 articles during the 1st 10 years: of the 30, one was responsible for 26, another for 14, a 3rd for 9 and 4 other members had produced 3 or 4 articles each. He concluded that

approx.1% of the Membership was responsible for 60% of the Bulletin or approximately 3% for 85% of the Bulletin.

Simon's Town's Unique Character: Lack of space and other constraints prevented the development of Simon's Town as a commercial seaport with the result that a large proportion of existing buildings are the original buildings of considerable historical interest which MUST be preserved. Why Dr. Brock asked, doesn't Simon's Town produce more historians?

Inter alia Dr. Brock called for

A Pictorial Record - one photographic, the other in sketch book form of all historic buildings.

A Vigilante Committee to watch over the preservation of historic buildings.

The Society's "Rooms" opened in 1963 were inadequate and stuffy. Better accommodation for the exhibits was required.

A Carefully Selected Lady with historical leanings and the appropriate talents would be a godsend (I wonder who that turned out to be !).

A Comprehensive Work (to supplement the Bulletin) based on the large amount of data lying idle must be produced if an author can be found. (He was found - DR. BROCK!)

Financially the Society was leading a hand-to-mouth existence. Membership 270 All very interesting!

In early 1980 my predecessor Alderman Gordon Wilson was able to look back over 10 years of further achievement.

In 1971 a successful campaign to preserve the town's remaining buildings

In 1973 the restoration of the Martello Tower by the S.A. Navy at the Society's urging and the creation of a small S.A. Navy Museum.

In 1973 1st Historical Week organised by the Society.

In 1976 The publication of Historical Simon's Town.

In 1976 The award of the 1st Cape Times Centenary Medal for preservation work to H.C. Willis, who unfortunately passed away before he could receive it.

In 1977 The opening of the first Museum in the Municipal complex and the appointment of Professor O. Pryce-Lewis as the first Curator.

A very much strengthened financial position. Membership 473

The rest of the 1980's brought further development:

Following the retirement of Professor Pryce-Lewis at the end of 1979 after 3 years of very hard work devoted to the establishment of the Museum, Mrs. Elizabeth Biggs was appointed Curator.

In 1983 the Historic Mile in St Georges Street was declared AN AREA OF SPECIAL HISTORICAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE.

In 1984 Michael Middleton (then Head of the Civic Trust in the

U.K.) visited the Society (through the kind offices of CAPTRUST) and proposed a Street Improvement Scheme for the Historic Mile. In the same year the Museum moved to "new" premises in the Residency.

In 1985 the Simon's Town Municipality agreed to the appointment of an Environment Officer and an Architectural Advisory Committee, following a Conference organized by the Society - THE NEED TO CONSERVE.

A further area between Runciman Drive and St. Georges Street was also declared an Area of Special Historic Significance....

In 1988 Michael Middleton returned to review the progress of the Street Improvement Scheme and the renovation and development of Jubilee Square and the foreshore immediately below. He was very pleased with what he saw with the minor exception of the Tea Room Clock.

And so to 1989 which has proved to be as busy as ever judging by the way 12 months seemed to go by without anyone realizing that they really had!.

Nevertheless a rousing finale to the 80's.

It was also a rather sad one. In the course of the year we lost 5 stalwart members. ANDREW BRENNAN who took over in an acting capacity when our first Chairman Mr. H.C. Willis died, and who maintained a close interest in our activities almost up to the day of his death. COL. NEIL HARE who rendered great service as a Trustee of the Museum. CAPTAIN GEOFF HUTCHISON who served as Custodian to the Museum from the time the Museum moved into the Residency in 1984, and very recently CAPTAIN (E) C.W.B. (BILL) SINGLETON who provided a lot of valuable historical material for the Museum archives and also Gwen Cridland. But in spite of these losses there were also some happier things to report.

THE HISTORIC MILE: The award of the Cape Times Centenary Medal to Society Member and Mayor, Nicki Holderness, for her efforts to preserve and improve the built environment, and the Institute of S.A. Architects Conservation Award to Society Member Mike Munnik for his work on the re-design of Jubilee Square and the foreshore, were matters of great satisfaction to the Society. All too often the continuing efforts to preserve the environment in this community are overlooked in favour of more eye-catching but short-lived activities elsewhere which often amount to little more than an attempt to trim an overgrown bowling green with a pair of nail scissors!

Meanwhile the campaign continues to maintain and improve the visible manifestation of the buildings and the street itself. The problem of finding less obvious places to store rubbish bags awaiting collection is being tackled vigorously. Jubilee Square is drawing in more and more visitors and the Tea Room and Shops report good business. Nevertheless although many more people now stop in Simon's Town instead of driving straight through, it is distressing to note the number of shops which fall empty from time to time as a surprising number of businesses close after a comparatively short attempt to trade in the Main Street. This is a worrying problem and every effort will hopefully be made to find a solution. Some brighter news - Runciman's Building has a new owner who seems interested in maintaining this landmark. The refurbishment of the Lord Nelson Hotel or Inn seems to be a

success and the redevelopment of the St. Georges Hotel reflects considerable credit on the developer, Society member Mr. Harold Johnson.

FINANCE: The Hon. Secretary/Treasurer will be presenting a detailed statement of the Society's accounts but you will see the position is strong even allowing for a contribution of R1,208 for the acquisition of an Amstrad P.C. now firmly installed in the Museum for the use of "Authorised" members of the Museum Staff and the Society, as well as a filing cabinet. It is becoming evident that mindful of the increase in the Society Funds, the ever growing activities for which these funds are utilized and the pressure to earn the highest rate of income possible to bolster the Society's income and thus its ability inter alia to give increased support to the Museum, the Committee should give further thought to the role and responsibilities of the Hon. Secretary/Treasurer in order to determine whether or not when the occasion is appropriate a Secretary AND a Treasurer should be appointed to provide scrutiny and control over both functions in much greater detail than was really necessary in the past.

MEMBERSHIP: Over the course of a year Membership numbers start from a figure of approx. 770, rise to approx. 800 as new members join, then fall back to approx. 770 as some existing members resign or fail to pay their subscriptions. In other words 40 new members join and approx. 40 leave for one reason or the other. Keeping accurate records is thus becoming increasingly difficult but of course it is vital insofar as the Bulletin production costs are concerned as to over-order a particular run can involve the Society in needless printing and postal expenses. This seems to be a further good reason why the posts of Secretary and Treasurer should be separated. It also seems the time is approaching next year when the Society's costs, particularly the Bulletin and to a lesser extent the Chronicle production costs, will oblige us to increase our subscriptions next year. The subject of Bulletin and Chronicle production costs are covered in the next paragraph.

BULLETIN & CHRONICLE: Recent Bulletin costs have been as follows:

July 1988	R 2.09	Printing and cover
Jan 1989	2.33	" " "
July 1989	2.50	" " "
Jan 1990	2.73	" " "

Chronicle costs are approx. 45 cents per copy.

Thus 1990 Bulletin costs are:	2 x R2.73	=	R 5.46
1990 Chronicle " "	2 x 45 cents		.90
	TOTAL		6.36

This excludes Bulk Postage on the Bulletin, say 25 cents per copy at the new rates which adds 50 cents to the above figure giving a total of R6.86 which is greater than the present single subscription of R6.00 Hence the need for an increase in subscriptions next year and of course accurate estimates of Bulletin runs. The Society can no longer afford too many spare

copies. Members' permission will be sought by the Committee to introduce the appropriate increase.

COMMEMORATIVE COVERS: The 4th Commemorative Cover "Hunt the SMS KONIGSBERG 22.11.1914" was well received but sales have not been as buoyant as previous issues but these could pick up as the series closes this year with the Simon's Town Railway Centenary 1890-1990. The Society incidentally is quite heavily involved in the planning of the Centenary Celebrations on 1st December 1990.

PUBLIC RELATIONS TOURS: The Society in its capacity as a Friend, assisted in the planning and conducting of 8 One-Day Tours for the Museum Development Fund. This is fully covered in Cherry Dilley's Friends' Report.

The 1989 Spring Tour was our most ambitious yet, comprising a 3-night-4-day Tour to Graaff Reinet and Beaufort West. To our near consternation the coach was fully booked within 4 days and in spite of one or two minor administrative set-backs i.e. 2 drivers instead of 1, a special journey to Tollgate House to collect a microphone, the Tour Party had a very interesting time in this fascinating part of the Karoo. Our grateful thanks to the A-team, and the Braai Team, the latter ably skippered by Captain Peter le Roux.

This year's Spring Tour is a little less ambitious - 2 nights away, visiting the Fishing Harbours of the south-eastern Cape, provided affordable and sufficient accommodation can be identified. The tour is planned for the week-end 5th/7th October, 1990. More details later! The Society is indebted to Member Dr. James Walton for his help in planning this Tour.

PUBLICATIONS: During the year we have managed to acquire a further limited number of copies of Historical Simon's Town but demand has been so great that we have withdrawn them for the time being until we can identify how to produce a successor volume of an acceptable but not necessarily of the same standard.

In the course of this year the Society hopes to publish a "History of False Bay up to 1795" by Dr. Anton Bekker. This is a translation of his Masters Thesis which was in Afrikaans.

THE MUSEUM: A full report from the Curator follows shortly but once again it seems only appropriate to congratulate her and her staff on another incredibly busy and successful year.

I would like to thank the Vice-Chairman Gordon Wilson, Hon. Secretary/Treasurer Dennis Kinkead-Weekes, Committee Members Nicki Holderness, Cherry Dilley, Margaret Cartwright, Nigel Farquharson, Alf. Glover, Malcolm Cobern and S.A. Navy Representative Mac Bisset.

As usual the S.A. Navy have been as helpful as ever in what for them must have been one of the most frustrating and saddest years in their history. I would like to express a special word of thanks to all who have aided our activities and particularly to Captain Peter le Roux for the assistance he has rendered to the Society during his years as Naval Officer in Command Simon's Town Base. We wish him well in whatever career he choses to pursue when he leaves the Navy. The Municipality have also rendered invaluable assistance during the year and we are very grateful for this.

Finally, what of the 1990's ? I come back to Dr. Brock's remarks of 20 years ago. Much of what he and our illustrious first Chairman Mr. H.C. Willis, envisaged, planned and subsequently set in motion, has been achieved, particularly in regard to:

The Preservation of the Built Environment

The Establishment of the Museum

The Rapid and Extraordinary Build-up of the Society's and Museum's Records and Publications i.e. Bulletin, Historical Simon's Town.

The Increase in Membership.

The Increase in Society Activities.

The Strengthening of the Society's Financial Position.

BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE !

- (i) We need more contributors to the Bulletin. The dilemma highlighted by Dr. Brock 20 years ago has probably changed for the worse
- (ii) We must encourage and train more Tour Guides as the demand for Tours of the Town increases by the year
- (iii) The Museum is going to require more volunteers to help in the Information Bureau/Shop and also with various other activities
- (iv) As I have highlighted in previous reviews, the amount of financial assistance the Museum can expect from First and Second Tier Government Sources -in real terms anyway - is likely to decrease rather than increase and therefore the Society must try to tighten its control and deployment of its finances so as to provide the maximum support possible. The Society and the Museum have always had to fight hard to survive so the prospects facing us in the 1990's, though somewhat daunting, are not very different to those we surmounted in the 1960's, 70's and 80's. And so the Society caravan moves on into the 1990s.

The Society is deeply indebted to those 20 enthusiastic members who met in the Council Chamber on Monday 22nd February, 1960.

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E. A. Biggs

A side-light to the present series of biographies on the C-in-C's is an item found in an article by C. Graham Botha on William Menzies.

Menzies was born in Edinburgh on 27th April, 1795, the son of John Menzies and his wife Barbara Laird of Dumbarton. William's father was first Solicitor of Customs at Leith, as had been his grandfather William in the years 1782-1793. William's mother died in 1799 and his only sister (Barbara) in 1806. His father lived until 1825 and father and son were much drawn together. While William was studying law they lived in George Street, Edinburgh. He was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates and became a junior at the Edinburgh bar. He was also a trooper in the Edinburgh Light Horse and a member of the Royal Company of Archers.

William Menzies came to the Cape in the vessel HOPE in October 1827 as he felt that his training in Scottish law would be valuable in a Colony where Roman-Dutch law was in force. He accepted a position as Senior Puisne Judge at the Cape.

On 23rd February 1828 Justice Menzies married, at Simon's Town, Ann Helena Christian, eldest daughter of Captain (later Rear Admiral) Hood Hanway Christian, Commodore of the Blue stationed at Simon's Town. At the time Menzies was living at "Sans Souci" at Newlands and was wont to ride on horseback during the night to Simon's Town when paying his addresses to Ann. The day before the wedding he wrote telling Ann he would arrive in Simon's Town at 8 p.m. "to be able to try on your new ring and to have an opportunity of expressing my grateful sense of the honour she has conferred on me..."

Menzies great contribution was in the laying of the practical foundation of our judicial system. He spent much time in compiling his reports and these were published in 1870 as the *Menzies Reports*.

In 1842 Menzies travelled to the Orange River and issued a proclamation on the nationality of the Trekkers north of the Orange. These proclamations stated that the Trekkers were British subjects de facto and de jure. This was later repudiated by the Governor, Sir George Napier. Menzies health was undermined by the continuous travelling on circuit, relying on animal transport. He often sat in Court from 9 a.m. - 2 a.m. without a break. He died in Colesberg, Cape, where he is buried.

He has a high reputation as an erudite judge who upheld and expounded Roman-Dutch law of which he was "the father in South Africa".

His widow Ann returned to Europe and died in 1865 at Ryde, Isle of Wight. As far as we can ascertain his children were Maj-Gen Hugh Christian Menzies (eldest son); Ann Helena (eldest daughter) who was married to Surgeon-General Stanhope Fasson; William Menzies (2nd son) Post Captain R.N. and Elizabeth Matilda (youngest daughter) who was married to Admiral H.W. Brent. There was also a son Oswald but we are not sure of his age. One of his grandsons, Leslie Menzies, who retired from the Royal Navy rejoined it in 1914 on the outbreak of the Great War.

On his headstone in the Colesberg cemetery are the words "...to the end of his days devoted his rare talents and untiring energy to the administration of Justice and the elucidation of the Law". Though he died in Colesberg where he was on Circuit, his home at the time was at Sea Point not far from the site of the Queens Hotel.

In 1798 there came to this country from Scotland a William Menzies, who at first was in the Customs here and later applied to be admitted as a Notary Public. He is thought to be an uncle of our William. (Cape Archives C.225 and 1494).

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Reference:

History of Law, Medicine and Place Names in the Cape of Good Hope by C. Graham Botha, Struik, 1962 (Simon's Town Museum Library).

HMS NEPTUNE

N. P. F.

Fifty years ago - on Tuesday 9th July 1940 - the British Mediterranean Fleet came upon a superior Italian naval force off the coast of Calabria. A sharp engagement ensued before the Italians retired to the cover of their shore batteries and land-based aircraft. Calabria was not a notable sea battle, but the leading light cruiser HMS NEPTUNE (one-time flagship of the C-in-C South Africa Admiral D'Oyly Lyon, then based on Simon's Town) sighted the Italians first and hoisted the famous flag signal "Enemy in sight" for the first time in the Mediterranean since one of Nelson's frigates shared the privilege at Aboukir Bay in 1789.

And the Midshipman of the Watch who rather hesitantly made the sighting report to the bridge is now a shortsighted and elderly Simon's Town ratepayer.

Arthur Davey

An earlier article by Professor M.G. Whisson in the Bulletin disclosed that in 1859 the Admiralty introduced 12 Kroomen from Sierra Leone to supplement its work force at the Dockyard. (Vol. XIII, No. 4, July 1985). This was the beginning of an unpublicised migrant labour system and gave rise to a limited permanent settlement. It also ensured that direct links with West Africa would be maintained until well beyond the First World War. The last death of a Krooman commemorated in the Dido Valley Cemetery was that of George Williams of HMS FLORA in November 1923.

Kroomen had been engaged on British ships since the late 1790s and before the coming of the "Simon's Town Twelve", several of them had been brought ashore to die and to be buried at sea or in unmarked graves. The earliest on record was Benjamin Jumbo, Head Krooman on HMS SOUTHAMPTON, who died at Simon's Town in 1842 and then Kroomen Half Dinner (WINCHESTER), Joe Percy (PRESIDENT) and Jack Ropeyarn (EURYDICE) who died between 1845 and 1850. Kroomen had also been employed ashore before 1859, for Thomas Dick of the Victualling Department was on the mortality list of the Naval Hospital in 1851.

The number of Kroomen commemorated individually in the Garden of Remembrance at Seaforth, Simon's Town and in the Commonwealth Cemetery, Dido Valley, Simon's Town, totals 89. To this may be added another "rediscovered" 26 whose names appear in Naval Hospital or Burial Records, i.e. 115 in all. In 1893 the Dockyard had 36 on its books, and in the previous year, before economies had been effected, there had been 80. As the Cape Station was a relatively healthy one, we may be sure that hundreds completed their three-year contracts and then took ship back to West Africa - the normal practice. A sprinkling who married local women took their discharge or were pensioned off at Simon's Town. In 1893 there were 4 resident naval pensioners in that category. The register of burials kept by the Sexton of St. Francis' Church shows that wives of Kroomen were buried in 1859 and 1861. Other reminders of those who became permanent residents are the graves in the Dido Valley Cemetery of George Sawyer and Susan Williams who died in 1915 and were both children of Kroomen.

The Kru were a cluster of tribes, linguistically linked, who lived in the south-eastern region of what became the independent black republic of Liberia in 1847. However, the writ of the Liberian Government based on Monrovia ran feebly in the outlying parts. As late as 1893 a married Krooman, Flying Jib No. 2, resident in Simon's Town, declared emphatically to a Government Commission that his country was not a part of Liberia: "It is a country by itself". Whilst the Kru villagers cultivated yams, sweet potatoes and rice, this was clearly women's arena of toil.

The Kru men travelled far afield, usually without their wives, and found work opportunities in neighbouring Sierra Leone (British) and the Ivory Coast (French). They were skilful boatmen of the West African surf and in the early 19th Century established an ethnic quarter in Freetown, Sierra Leone, known as "Krootown", which served as a recruiting centre for seafarers, over which function they created a virtual monopoly.

The focus of interest in the Kroomen has often been their curious names. It is much more important to recall that they were a remarkably versatile and vigorous constituent of our population. Mr. F.H.S. Hugo, Mayor of Simon's Town, a member of the Divisional Council and of the Licensing Board, extolled their virtues before a Cape Government Commission in 1893; they were well-behaved, non-drinkers and cleanly in their habits; they made excellent servants and were unsurpassed as workmen. Moreover, after service on men-of-war they could speak English fluently. He likened them to "the old Mozambiques who made such good servants to the farmers". James Pigott of the Royal Navy, bosun at the Dockyard, also had high praise for them - they were intelligent, well-behaved and sober. He had also seen them at work on ships and in the docks at Freetown and knew that they were in demand as bearers for inland expeditions. During his whole career they were the best men for hard work that he had encountered.

Hard work it was indeed at Simon's Town as it included mooring, clearing coal from lighters and the watering and coaling of ships. On board they were stewards, cooks and carpenters' mates, as well as deck-hands. Jack Wade, who died in 1860, was a servant attached to the staff of Admiralty House.

An unusual example of a trade skill superior to manual labour was that of Francis Gibson, shipwright apprentice of HMS BOSCAWEN who was also rated as a Boy, Class 2. He was 16 when he died in 1858 and the inscription on his original gravestone, presently exhibited in the Simon's Town Museum, shows that he was educated at the Missionary School, Sierra Leone. Like other ratings, Kroomen followed where duty called as is evident from two examples taken from the BOADICEA: L.T. Dow died of wounds received at Majuba in 1881 whilst serving with a naval contingent in the 1st Anglo-Boer War and Ben Sancho's last resting-place was Salamander Bay (Saldahna area) in the following year.

The revealed demerits of the Cape's Kroomen were in lower key. It was said that autocratic tribal habits sometimes led them to beat their Cape-born wives and that those returning to Freetown tended to leave "grass-widows" behind; however, successor Kroomen seem to have taken the bereft "widows" into their domestic establishments.

Tongue-twisting tribal names were not acceptable on Her

Majesty's ships. The Medical Officer at Freetown was probably responsible for the bestowal of many of their adopted names. To judge from the surnames on record at Simon's Town many of them were familiar British labels like Andrews, Baker, Brown, Cooper etc; others had a patriotic or nautical flavour. Three John Bulls were buried at Simon's Town, a Tom Bowling, R. Maintop, John and James Neverfear and two Jack Pursers. Famous men were the obvious inspiration for the names of John Wesley, George Washington and Harry Lauder (last-mentioned died in 1918) and there was a touch of realistic humour in Black Travel. Physical attributes probably accounted for Black Whale's unflattering name and in Dick Deadeye, Jim Doe, Tom Dollar and John Sambo one surely detects echoes of the American influences of Liberia. Cruel humour, even by the standards of a century ago, awarded Tom Cockroach, Tom Peasoup and two Jim Crows their disparaging surnames.

"Kroomen" and "Krooboyas" were terms in general use during the 19th century, but "Krumen" was the alternative and is now the accepted scholarly designation. The appellation came to be associated with seamen drawn from a long stretch of the West African coast. After all, Freetown was nearly 500 kilometres distant from the Kru homelands. The muscular, stocky Kroomen were held in such esteem that they were also employed in the Congo Free State of Leopold II, in Fernando Po (Spanish), the Gold Coast, Nigeria and even British Honduras in Central America. From about 1830 they were a part of the Royal Navy's component of the garrison of the island of Ascension where their barrack area was also known as "Krootown".

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Roll of Honour, Garden of Remembrance, Seaforth, Simon's Town, supplemented by church registers of deaths and burials and naval hospital registers kept in the Public Record Office, Kew, England.
 "Krumen, Croomen, Kruas or Croos", Encyclopaedia Britannica, 9th ed., Vol. XIV, Edinburgh, 1882.
 G.39/1893 Cape of Good Hope. Report of the Labour Commission.
 Sir Harry Johnston: Liberia, 2 vols, New York, repr. 1969.
 D. Hart-Davis: Ascension-the Story of a South Atlantic Island, London, 1972.

From: General Instructions and Local Orders
 for the Squadron & Naval Establishments
 on the Cape of Good Hope & West Africa Station : 1884

"SIMON'S BAY: Divine Service will be performed every Sunday morning at the Naval Yard. The Church Pendant will be hoisted at the Flag Staff at 10.15 and the Service will commence at 10.30. The crews of all ships not bearing Chaplains are to be sent ashore in charge of a Commissioned Officer to attend. At the Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Churches, also, Divine Service commences at this hour."



A Krooman at Simon's
Town in 1888
(Photo: Simon's Town Museum
Collection)

THE SIMON'S TOWN RAILWAY LINE

D.M. RHIND

The railway to Simon's Town was opened on the 1st December 1890 and for the first time the naval base was linked to Cape Town and the rest of the country by an easy and reliable means of transport. As early as 1687 Simon van der Stel had led an expedition to try and find a wagon route along the coast of False Bay from Kalk Bay to Simon's Bay, now Simon's Town, which was to become the official winter anchorage for the ships of the Dutch East India Company in 1742.

Not only was the coast-line steep and rocky but the stretches at, what are to-day, Fish Hoek and Glencairn, had to be traversed along the beach and travellers were often beset by quicksands that caused wagons to capsize and swallowed up the oxen and horses which were with them. A partial solution to this problem was the track over the mountains, now known as the Ou Kaapse Weg, but this was not then a viable proposition as a supply route for the developing naval base at Simon's Town.

With the advent of railways and the building of the line to Wynberg in 1864, it became obvious that it should be extended to Simon's Town as soon as practicable so that, if for no other reason, the troops stationed at Wynberg should be able to reinforce the garrison at Simon's Town with the least possible delay. Agitation for the building of this extension of the line grew as the years went by, particularly once the line had

reached Kalk Bay, just six miles away, in 1883. The delay was occasioned by a number of factors including the need to give priority to lines to the North and the perennial shortage of Government funds. Finally, however, the decision was taken and construction on the extension of the line from Kalk Bay was started.

On the 7th November, 1889, the Minister of Public Works in the Cape Government, Col. Schermbrucker, ceremoniously turned the first sod for the extension and entertained the invited guests to luncheon at the King's Hotel in Kalk Bay. The report of the event and all the numerous speeches occupied two columns in the next day's Cape Times but unfortunately for the Minister a similar ceremony had been performed on the same day by the Governor of Natal at Ladysmith, where a "splendid pavilion of wood and canvas had been erected by the Railways, handsomely decorated with flags of all nations and shields with devices". The band of the 64th Regiment had been in attendance and a salute of 19 guns had been fired when the Union Jack and the flag of the Orange Free State were raised. The Kalk Bay affair was compared unfavourably by the Editor of the Cape Times, who derided it for the "slovenliness with which it was organised".

The opening party and the invited guests left Cape Town station on the ordinary train at 10.35 a.m., a saloon carriage having been attached to it for their convenience, and reached Kalk Bay at about 11.30 for the ceremony which was to commence at 12 o'clock. According to the newspaper "the weather was most propitious to those who attended; a gentle breeze blew in from the sea, and as one watched the waves come rolling in - just near enough to the railway track to be pleasant - one could only envy the happy lot of those Cape Town citizens who are enabled to pass a portion of their time at this pleasant and healthy watering place, so conveniently near to the metropolis, where one can 'sniff the briny' and fancy himself in Devon or Cornwall, so English-looking is the scenery formed by the hills in the background and the sea in front". So it was a nice day, everything went well and all present enjoyed themselves, notwithstanding that the Editor of the Cape Times found two causes for complaint, though whether either constituted "slovenliness" is a matter of opinion.

His first complaint was that, because of the lack of grass at the actual spot, "some few yards from Kalk Bay station and near the roadside", where the ceremony was to take place, some enterprising official had sought to solve the problem of turning a sod in the middle of a sandy beach by embedding in the sand, "the requisite sod" which had been brought from Newlands the previous day and kept watered overnight. The Editor was even more incensed because the Minister had described the event as a "nice little railway party" and the Mayor of Cape Town and the local Members of Parliament had not been invited.

Nevertheless, promptly at 12 o'clock noon the Minister

literally turned the first sod into a wheelbarrow nearby and trundled it down the plank, shot it out on to the embankment that is to be saying, "I now declare this sod properly turned". In his speech after the luncheon at the King's Hotel where a "well prepared repast was served" the Minister said that he thought the line could be completed in four months but the Engineer had advised him that the work would take six months and he therefore, promised solemnly that "six months hence the railway whistle should be heard in Simon's Bay. The "nice little railway party" included the Minister and his wife and daughters, the Colonial Secretary, Admiral Wells from Simon's Town, the General Manager of the Railways and other senior railway officials, local clergy and representatives of the Simon's Town Municipality. After innumerable speeches and toasts the Minister and his party returned to Cape Town by the 3.40 p.m. train.

Work on the six miles of track started immediately under the overall control of Mr. H.J. Pauling, the Engineer-in-Chief of the Railway Department. Mr. Noad was the District Engineer who, with his Engineers Messrs. Wise and Bishop, actually supervised the construction. The Clerks of Works were Messrs. Barclay and Picton. The construction was undertaken by Messrs. W. Wilkinson & Son who built the section from Kalk Bay to Fish Hoek, the Government built the next section, with the exception of a piece in the middle which was built by Messrs. Storrier & Wheeler. Of the hundreds of men engaged on the work there were a number of skilled artisans, masons and suchlike who had been brought from overseas and this caused the inevitable criticism that the work could have been done by people already in the country.

When the Minister's glib promise to complete the line in six months proved hollow, there was a series of letters in the Cape Times, all signed by John Walker, Mowbray, condemning the manner in which the construction was being carried out and this led to a reply by Thomas H. Wheeler, Contractor, on 1st July 1890, in which he said "I should like to know who the said 'John Walker' is: also if he is a competent man to express an opinion on the matter. As a contractor on this line I beg to contradict all his statements." The line in fact proved very difficult to build because of it's location. It had been intended that on leaving Kalk Bay station the line would cross directly over the beach but, because this would have prevented fishermen from pulling their boats up out of the reach of high tides and storms, public pressure obliged the Railways to raise the line on to a masonry viaduct and construct subways large enough for the boats to be dragged under it. For the whole of its length the line runs close to the shore-line and in parts it forms a sea-wall with the waves breaking directly over it and disrupting traffic on occasions.

Eventually the line was completed on 20th November 1890, and the General Manager announced that the line would be opened for passenger and goods traffic on 1st December 1890. On 24th

November 1890, Mr. A. Difford, the Secretary of the General Manager's Office, advertised for tenders "for the collection and delivery to and from the Railway Station, of Goods and Parcels in the Town of Simon's Town." The contract was to be for three years, extendible to five years by mutual agreement. Tenders had to be received by noon on Saturday the 29th November 1890, which certainly did not leave much time to award the contract, notify the successful tenderer and for him to harness up his horse and cart ready to start business on the following Monday morning. Perhaps it was just as well that Monday's trains were more concerned with the official opening ceremonies than with Goods and Parcels. On the 26th November 1890, the Chief Traffic Manager, Mr. A.W. Howell, published the timetable for the Summer Service for the line to Simon's Town. The opening trains were the 9.35 a.m. from Cape Town and the 11.49 a.m. from Simon's Town. It is intriguing to note that "the 5.5 p.m. train will start at 5.10" but there is no explanation for this apparent quirk. |

CAPE GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

OPENING OF LINE TO SIMON'S TOWN.

Alterations and Additional Trains between Cape Town and Wynberg
coming into operation on 1st December, 1890.

SUMMER SERVICE.

The following Trains will run through to Simon's Town:—

DOWN TRAINS.

Leaving Cape Town 8.5 and 9.35 a.m., 12.5, 2.5, 4.10, 5.10 and 6.15, and on Wednesdays the 11.20 p.m. On Saturdays 1.0 and 11.20 p.m.

UP TRAINS.

Leaving Simon's Town 7.43, 9.38 and 11.49 a.m., 1.42, 4.19, 5.54 and 7.48 p.m., and on Wednesdays, 10.17 p.m. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, 2.29 and 10.17 p.m.

WYNBERG LINE.—DOWN TRAINS.

The 4.12 and 5.8 p.m. Trains will start at 4.0 and 5.0 p.m. respectively, stopping at all Stations to Rondebosch, and running through between Rondebosch and Wynberg. The 5.5 p.m. Train will start at 5.10. An Additional Train will leave Cape Town at 2.35 p.m. on Saturdays, stopping at all Stations to Wynberg.

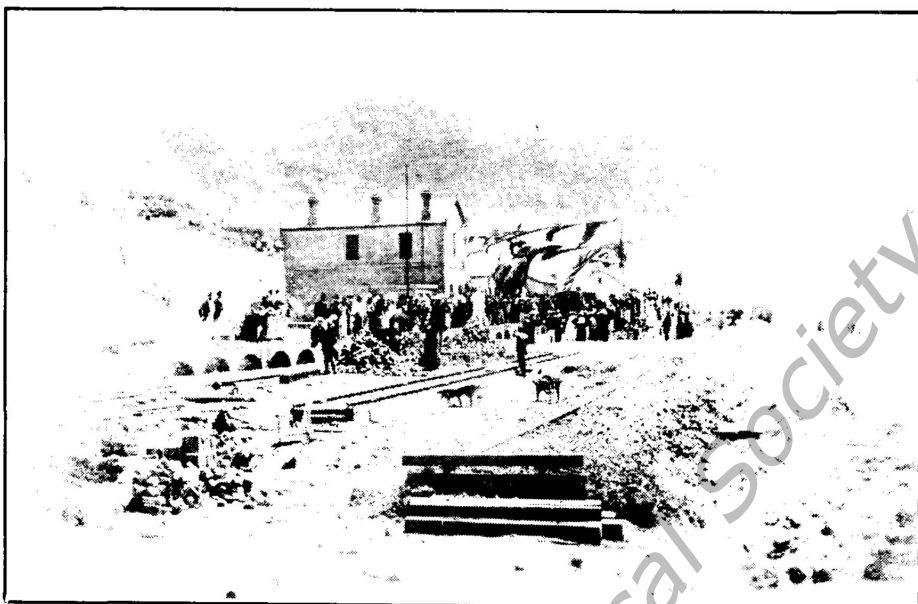
UP TRAINS.

The present 6.8, 10.25, 11.5, 4.15 and 6.45 will leave at 6.25, 10.30, 11.10, 4.45 and 6.50 respectively. An Additional Train will leave Wynberg at 5.9 a.m., reaching Cape Town at 5.40 and Wynberg at 8.45 a.m., reaching Cape Town 9.15. The present 1.50 p.m. Train, ex Wynberg, on Saturdays will leave at 1.15. On the Morning of the 1st December, the Trains timed to leave Simon's Town at 7.43 and 9.38 a.m. will not run between Simon's Town and Kalk Bay, nor will the 8.5 Train, ex Cape Town, run beyond Kalk Bay. The Opening Trains will be the 9.35 a.m. from Cape Town and the 11.49 a.m. from Simon's Town.

A. W. HOWELL,
Chief Traffic Manager.

Chief Traffic Manager's Office,
26th November, 1890.

1016n



The opening train arrives at Simon's Town station at 11 o'clock on Monday 1st December 1890, headed by a 2nd Class 'Wynberg Tank' locomotive of the Cape Government Railways. Note the locomotive turntable under construction in the l.h. foreground of the photograph. (Photo: U.C.T. Libraries)



The band of the East Yorkshire Regiment having arrived on the 1st train from Wynberg, falls in in front of the Simon's Town station ready to head the procession of Foresters and school children to Mr. Hablutzel's field for sports and refreshments. (Photo: U.C.T. Libraries)

By now the impending arrival of the railway was making itself felt in the affairs of Simon's Town in several ways. For instance on 2nd October 1890 the Cape Times announced the result of the Municipal election held in Simon's Town; an election held just previously having been set aside by the Supreme Court because of the illegal manner in which the polling officer had recorded the votes. The result of this new election was William Runciman 48; J.E. Storrier 33, and C.R. Boon 32. In the previous election Storrier had come first and Runciman second. This was no doubt the Mr. Storrier who, with Mr. T.H. Wheeler, was the contractor for part of the new line. In reporting the election the Cape Times said that it "hoped the Council will set earnestly to work and realise the increased importance of the town, with the railway an established fact, by at once proceeding with the building of large reservoirs to augment the water supply during the dry season, to improve the drainage, and to cleanse the fine beaches of the filth that is at present deposited on them."

A week later "Viator" was writing to the same paper that "when riding into Simon's Town the other day, upon my left hand I saw Admiralty House, and as beautiful a picture of the sea and land as one could hope to enjoy; but upon my right, two minutes afterwards, what I call a perfect disgrace to the Municipal authorities, viz. a large tumble-down wooden shanty, propped up by poles, and which, upon enquiry, I found was used as a dirty stable for cows and horses. There were heaps of dung and filth around it, and that bordering upon the main road of our boasted naval station! but now that the railway is about to be opened it is really to be hoped this disgrace to Simon's Town may be wiped away."

Notwithstanding these criticisms the Cape Times of the 26th November 1890 referred to Simon's Town as "the pretty naval station" but took the opportunity to remark that Col. Schermbrucker's promise of completion of the line within six months had not been borne out. It noted that the original estimated cost of £36,000 for the six miles of line was more likely to be of the order of £80,000 (in fact a further amount of £47,500 was authorised) and that if the line had a weak point it undoubtedly appeared to be the nearness of the metals to the sea which would result in high maintenance costs.

It was reported that Simon's Town station, which had been built by Messrs. Wilkinson & Son, was "a solid, substantial-looking structure, well adapted for the purpose for which it was designed. It contains a suite of rooms for the use of the Stationmaster, waiting rooms, an airy booking-office, porters' rooms etc. The gauge of the line, like that of the other Colonial lines, is 3ft 6ins. The only station on the line is the terminal station at Simon's Town but possibly two sidings may hereafter be made, and used by passengers."

The programme for the opening of the line was published on

Saturday 29th November 1890:

"The opening train leaving Cape Town at 9.35 a.m. will arrive at Simon's Town at 11 a.m. when a member of the Ministry will declare the line open.

The Friendly Societies and school children will be marshalled at the Post Office by 1030 a.m. and proceed to the Railway station, proceeded by the band of HMS RALEIGH.

After the line has been officially declared open, the school children will sing the National Anthem, and then enter the carriages for a trip to Kalk Bay, returning at 12.20. They will then march to Mr. Hablutzel's field, where sports and refreshments will be provided for them.

The Admiral has kindly promised to provide three steam pinnaces for the convenience of the friends of the Simon's Town people who may wish to visit Her Majesty's ships between 11.30 a.m. and 12.50 p.m.

Luncheon at the British Hotel to invited guests at 1 p.m.

The Town will be decorated throughout the day, and will be illuminated at 8 p.m. and during the evening exhibitions of fire-works will be worked.

The Admiral will cause the ships in harbour to be illuminated at 8 p.m., the flagship firing a salute, and all the electric lights will be worked.

A special train for the convenience of visitors will leave Simon's Town at 10.17 p.m.

In the event, the arrangements worked well and on Monday 1st December 1890 the line was duly opened "amidst popular rejoicings of a heartiness and extent unheard of in the previous history of Simon's Town." The opening train arrived about 11 o'clock at Simon's Town station which had been decorated with flags and banners and "the platform was crowded with ordinary staid-looking Europeans, gorgeously-attired Malays, whose Eastern apathy was not proof against the reigning excitement; honest British Tars and red-jackets, Kroomen from Sierra Leone dressed in sailor clothes, and with merry good-humoured faces; hundreds of happy-looking children, who set up the National Anthem in brisk time, and many representatives of the Order of Forestry, under Chief Ranger Lankester." As the train arrived "a halt was made, whilst two officials drew a tape across the metals, and then, at a given signal, the engine steamed ahead, snapping the tape, and then entering the station premises." Amidst loud and hearty cheering, Mr. C.J. Rhodes stepped from the train and declared the line open.

The opening train, which was full on leaving Cape Town station, picked up the band of the East Yorkshire Regiment, for which a carriage had been specially reserved, at Wynberg. This train

was followed a few minutes later by a second to accommodate all those who could not get seats on the first one, however, some hundred or more who were waiting on the platform at Wynberg, and who were determined to be at the opening of the line, took the opportunity to squeeze themselves into the already full first train when it stopped for the band. Simon's Town itself (and no doubt the offending stables) was hidden by masses of bunting and floral designs and near the Admiral's House was a triumphal arch with the word "Welcome" on it. "The principal street, containing the Post Office, the hotels, the Naval Club and the leading stores was scarcely recognisable in it's gay attire, and the tenants of practically all the buildings in the place, from the railway station to the charming villa which appears to be the end of habitable Simon's Town, showed their sympathy with the advancing fortunes of the town by adding, with the greatest generosity and good will, their quota to the general effect, which was pleasant and picturesque in the extreme."

Meanwhile at the British Hotel, a large company sat down at 1 o'clock to a luncheon "which was excellent as to quality, and, under the circumstances, exceptionally well served." The Mayor of Simon's Town Mr. F.H.S. Hugo, presided, supported by the Hon. C.J. Rhodes, the Hon. J.X. Merriman, the Hon. J. Rose-Innes, Admiral Nicholson, Mr. A. Ohlssen, Dr. C.P. Smuts, Mr. Horne, the Rev. Father Meagher, the Rev. Mr. Eedes and many others. Mr. W. Runciman Jnr and Dr. Clarke were the vice-chairmen. Apologies were received from His Excellency the Governor, the Mayor of Cape Town and others.

This time the Editor of the Cape Times could find no cause to complain of the "boorishness" with which the ceremony was prepared or the "slovenliness" with which it was organised.

The promised illuminations in the evening took the form of Chinese lanterns and were deemed exceedingly attractive and Simon's Town "presented quite a fairy scene". The last train from Simon's Town that night required two engines and 25 carriages to accommodate all the visitors who had come to enjoy the festivities which continued on until midnight.

The arrival of the railway undoubtedly brought a measure of prosperity to Simon's Town and in the following year no less than 36 lots of land were sold on the hillside; however, the suggestion made by Mr. A. Ohlssen in his speech at the luncheon at the British Hotel, that the railway should be continued on a further 4 1/2 miles to Miller's Point has never been acted upon.

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References:

Cape Argus: 8.11.1889, 2.12.1890. Wynberg Times: 1.12.1890

Cape Times: Between 8.11.1889 and 2.12.1890

Burman, J.: Early Railway at the Cape and The False Bay Story.

Tredgold, A.: Bay Between the Mountains.

Dear Sir,

Having at the request of a number of Townspeople allowed myself to be nominated for the forthcoming Town Council Election, I take the liberty of placing my reasons for doing so before you. As a young man whose home is in the Town and who will probably have to spend a large part of my life here, I am greatly interested in its progress and I do not think that the present Council do all they might to further that progress. As far as the gentlemen opposed to me are concerned I wish to state that I have no personal feeling against them and would like to have all personal matters put aside during the election. In any small Town it is only natural that sentiment should play a large part in public matters, but I would ask you not to let it sway your judgement on this occasion. I ask you to carefully consider which of the candidates are likely to do most to further the progress of the Town we live in, and then to vote to the ones you think will. I briefly place before you the main points on which if elected, I propose to work, and in considering them please compare against them, the steps taken in this direction during the past number of years by the present Council, and also the enormous progress made at the other False Bay towns:-

The institution of a proper & efficient system of road-making and as soon as possible without excessive expenditure to Tar-macadamize the Main Road and thus save the enormous annual expense of patching

To obtain particulars of an Electric Light Scheme as soon as they can be obtained, and submit the most favourable of such to the ratepayers for their approval.

To work in any direction which may be for the benefit of the whole of the ratepayers; amongst these matters stand: The "Drainage Question". The provision of better facilities for recreation of our inhabitants, children and visitors. We are convinced that with a little encouragement which they do not now get, a number of additional visitors will come to the Town during the season and thus increase the revenue.

I am standing in company with MR. R. GODSIFF of Seaforth and we are resolved to support one another on any matter affecting the PROGRESS & WELFARE of the district. We are holding a PUBLIC MEETING on Tuesday 26th instant at 8 p.m. in the BOYS MISSION SCHOOL and will define our policy thereat and reply to any questions that may be put to us and we ask you to make a special effort to be present. Also we ask you to make it your business to attend the POLL ON MONDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER and record your vote for PROGRESS.

I REMAIN, YOURS FAITHFULLY,

L.C. GAY.

From:

L.C. Gay Papers in the Simon's Town Museum.

ARTISTS IN SIMON'S TOWN THROUGH THE YEARS

E.A. Biggs

Part I

The Museum possesses many works of art on Simon's Town - a town that has attracted and still attracts artists because of its scenic beauty. Many of these painters in a pre-photographic age give an idea of the growth and life of the town and, when used in conjunction with old maps and charts, are an invaluable reference tool.

Part I deals with artists and draughtsmen who visited Simon's Town in the Dutch East India Company period.

OZIAS HUMPHREY (1742-1810)

Ozias Humphrey was an English miniature artist and a friend of Romney and Blake. He called at the Cape in May 1785 on his way to India where he worked from 1785 to 1787 before returning to England. His diaries are in the British Museum collection and contain many sketches of the Cape. He gave up his painting owing to failing sight and eventually went blind.



Foreground: Widow Hurter's Boarding House.
Known to-day as Admiralty House.

(Picture: British Museum)

Frederici was recruited as a soldier and gunsmith by the VOC and arrived at the Cape in 1784. There was at that time an increase in cartographical activity at the Cape and Frederici was employed as a military surveyor. He married Sophia Maria Elizabeth Bauermeister in 1789 and they had three daughters.

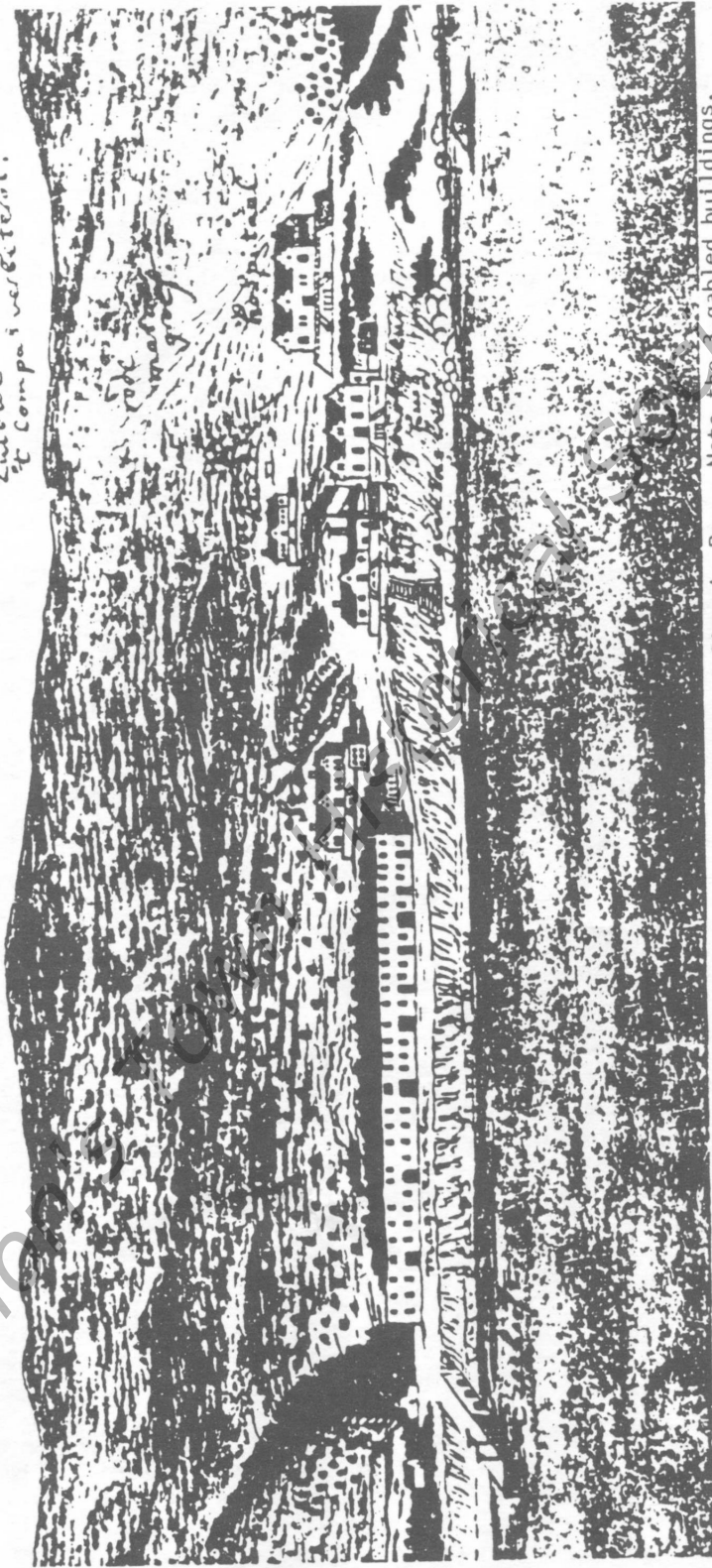
In 1788 he drew a map of the coastal districts between Table Bay and St Helena and went on an expedition from 1789 - 1790 to map the area between Cape Agulhas and Algoa Bay. This map "Caarte van de zuydelijken oever van Afrika..." is regarded as the best of the southern Cape coast produced in the 18th and early 19th century. It was used by Sir John Barrow to compile the first general map of the Colony.

As an artist he was renowned for his detailed drawings of troops, ships and battle scenes. Two of his watercolours, one on Cape Town and the other titled "Shipping at Simon's Town" (1798) are in the Fehr Collection while two of his battle scenes - "The Battle of Muizenberg" (1795) and "The capture of the Dutch Fleet in Saldahna Bay" (1796) are in the Mendelssohn collection.



Simon

view of the
at Compas's residence.



Panorama of Simon's Bay - Note the gabled buildings.

Artist: ROBERT JACOB GORDON (1743-1795)

(Cape Archives)

Robert Gordon came from a Scottish family which had settled in Holland before his birth. At 15 he joined the Scottish Regiment in Holland as a cadet and studied natural science at the Academy in Haardewijk.

He came to the Cape on the ship HOLLAND in 1773. In May of that year he travelled around the Peninsula in the company of F. Masson and C.P. Thunberg. He returned to Holland the following year taking a number of Springbok for presentation to the Prince of Orange for his collection.

In 1774 he was promoted to Captain and transferred to the Cape Garrison. He received promotion to Colonel in 1780 and became Commander of the garrison.

Gordon undertook four important journeys, the first from 1777-1778 in the company of the botanist William Paterson and the artist J. Schumacher. They travelled through the Camdeboo region looking for the so-called Groot Rivier. They came within 48 km of the river when they turned south to the Agterbruintjieshoogte. They again went north passing the present day Cookhouse, along the Tarka river to Cradock, via the Vlekpoort river to Hofmeyr. Eventually on 23rd December 1777 they reached the river south of the present-day Bethulie where the river makes a bow. Gordon is acknowledged as the first true discoverer of the river he named Orange in honour of the Dutch Royal house. The first drawing of the river was made by Schumacher with an accompanying text by Gordon giving a commentary on the country, plant life, climate and general geographical features including details of the indigenous people encountered. They returned via Algoa Bay and the Southern Cape.

The second journey was in 1778 when Gordon accompanied the Governor, J.A. van Plettenburg, to the eastern boundaries of the colony where the Plettenberg beacon marking the boundary of the Colony was placed, inexplicably, 48 km south of the Orange and not at the natural boundary of the river. Recent research has uncovered correspondence from Gordon in which he explains that the Governor was only prepared to have the boundary at a distance of a five-day journey from Cape Town as he feared Bushmen raiders. In October Gordon left the Governor's party and continued his journey in a north-westerly direction. He returned to Cape Town via the Gamka river, through the Great Karoo and along the Swartberg, Elandsberg and Witteberg through present day Laingsberg, the Klein Roggeveld and the Hantam.

His third journey was of great significance and he set off in 1779 to find the mouth of the Orange river and to investigate the possibilities of a harbour either at its mouth or elsewhere along the West coast. He was able to determine the westwards course of the Orange and encountered the Griqua tribe.

His final journey was from November 1785 to March 1786 to the Eastern Cape. He travelled as far as the mouth of the Boknes river. During this journey he found the remains of a padroa left by Diaz in 1488 at Kwaaihoek.

Gordon took his own life in 1795, disillusioned by a quarrel with the Commander of the Dutch forces after the Battle of Muizenberg.

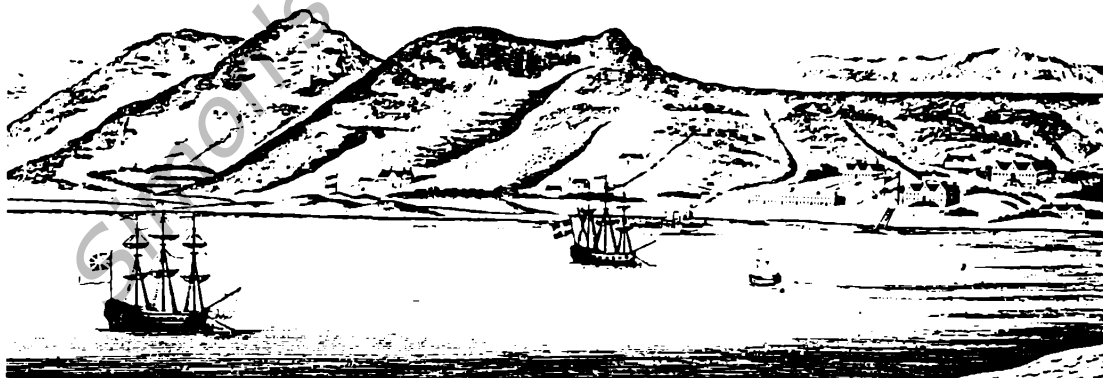
JOHANNES SCHUMACHER (fl. 1770-1789)

Schumacher was a soldier and artist of German origin. His dates and parentage are unknown. It is known that he sailed in the VLISSINGEN from Holland as his name appears in the Cape Muster Rolls as a soldier on that date. He was in the company commanded by Col. Robert Gordon from 1778-1781 and is shown as an assistant in the armoury from 1782-1789.

Schumacher travelled extensively with Col. Gordon to the Bethulie area (1777-78), Calvinia (1778-79), the Orange River to Prieska (1779-80), and from Kwaaihoek to Algoa Bay (1785-86). Many of his drawings in the Swellengrebel family records at Breda, Holland, resemble closely those held in the Gordon Collection in Amsterdam and it is uncertain just how many of the sketches attributed to Robert Gordon were actually executed by Schumacher.

He accompanied Hendrik Swellengrebel (son of the Governor) on his travels in 1776 to the Eastern Cape and compiled a pictorial record of the journey.

His drawings are accurate scenic works most of them recording for the first time views of the Cape interior. His topographical drawings are accurate but have a naive quality.



De Baai Fals

(Picture; Cape Archives)

DIRK DE JONG (fl. 1779-1802)

De Jong was a Dutch artist and engraver. Two of the plates in the book written by Cornelius de Jong "Reizen naar de Kaap de Goede Hoop" (Haarlem, F. Bohn, 1802) contain engravings from drawings made by Dirk de Jong and carry the inscription "D. de Jong, ad.viv.del." and show that he must have been at the Cape. Cornelius de Jong sailed from Simon's Bay in May 1795 and the watercolours were probably drawn before his departure.

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(Picture: Cape Archives)

1795

From: General Instructions and Local Orders for
the Squadron & Naval Establishments on the
Cape of Good Hope & West Africa Station : 1884

"A naval prison has been established on board Her Majesty's Ship FLORA for the confinement of offenders against the Naval Discipline Act. In the case of men sentenced to be dismissed from Her Majesty's service, at the expiration of their term of imprisonment, the Senior Officer may send them to the Breakwater Convict Station, Cape Town; but no man who is to be retained in the service is, under any circumstances, to be sent there.

Men having still six months' imprisonment to undergo, when an opportunity offers of forwarding them to England by a Government vessel, are invariably to be sent home."

O. Pryce-Lewis

Part I

John Osmond's origin is obscure. His family was unable to identify his parents but believed his birthplace to have been Gosport, Hampshire, across the bay opposite Portsmouth and that his birthdate was June 1769 (1). The Muster Roll of HMS LANCASTER, where he is shown as "Carpenter", states that he came from Port Warrent (2). It is probable that his case has many parallels in that he was the product of a liaison of a Gosport woman and an officer awaiting a posting, a favourable wind or orders to sail. He may have had a well-born father.

At an unknown date he was pressed into the service of HMS TERRIBLE from which he transferred to the Muster Roll of HMS LANCASTER, flagship of Rear-Admiral Sir Roger Curtis, on 3rd May, 1799. There he appears as "Orsmond", with an age of 30 years (3).

Osmond's association with Simon's Town commenced on 9th December 1799 when LANCASTER took up station here. Aboard he exhibited outstanding skill and initiative, so much so that he was posted ashore and in the capacity of Master Shipwright appointed to be Officer in Charge of the Constructive Department (4).

While so employed he was prohibited from undertaking private commissions. However, he came to an arrangement with Jan Michiel Endres, a local inhabitant, who had the use of a cutter LOUISA, the loan place "Buffelsfontein" (5) and a number of slaves. Inter alia, this man was engaged in the minor repair of small craft. Osmond put such private work as came his way into Endres' hands to their mutual profit (6).

Also during these early days, Osmond courted and won the hand of Margaretha Johanna Rossouw, daughter of the late Gideon Rossouw and his now wealthy widow. A large dowry accompanied the bride to the altar at the close of 1802 (7). The union proved highly profitable to the groom and his mother-in-law who sought and acted upon his shrewd advice in profitable land and property deals.

Margaret, as she became, was given away at or nearly at the giving over of the Colony to the Batavian Republic (8). Osmond may have lost his job in the dockyard when the government changed or resigned his post in order to have more scope for financial and other dealings in the public sector. Little is known of his activities during the Batavian Republic beyond two events involved with Endres.

Osmond needed Endres' assistance in attending to small jobs while he engaged in consolidating his position in the town. It was convenient to have a "fall guy" around. Thus it was arranged that Endres, who had had experience as lodging house keeper, general dealer, carrier between coastal ports, ships' victualler and repairer, albeit without much success or business integrity would, with his backing, go into business in those lines. For the purpose Endres bought the larger part of Kirsten's Buildings entirely on borrowed capital, of which Osmond's contribution was 20,000 gulden, $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total amount (9). The two men never became partners in business. Osmond saw to it that Endres took all the risks.

Three months after Endres took possession of his new home, a privately owned ship, JOHANNA MAGDELENA, under jury rig, entered Simon's Bay. On the pretence that the vessel was in danger of grounding, Endres performed a "salvage". As a reward for his thoughtfulness, but not for saving the ship, he was awarded the repairs to the ship. At first his prices were reasonable but later not only were they increased outrageously but he claimed salvage money. In these later developments Osmond may have exerted an important influence. The owners repudiated Endres' claims.

The owners agreed to put the dispute before an arbitration court. Endres nominated Osmond as one of the members. He, not unexpectedly, declared Endres' claims to be far too modest. The owners' nominee took the contrary view. Deadlock ensued and Alexander Tennant, friend and business colleague of Endres was appointed to resolve the issue. He considered Osmond's estimation too high and the owners' nominee too low. Endres' charges he considered to be completely reasonable. The owners flatly refused to accept the court's finding, whereon the case was brought before the Court of Justice where eventually the salvage operation was found to be fraudulent.

After these expensive manoeuvres Endres was left the sole loser. Osmond earned his fees as arbitrator as did the other arbitrators, while the owners sailed away without having to pay for some of the repairs to their vessel (10).

Apart from the salvage affair, little definite is heard of Osmond during the period of the Batavian Republic, beyond his acquiring two sons, of whom more later. We may not doubt however, that at that time he set out on the long and successfully traversed road of speculation in property.

The Second British Occupation in January 1806, radically changed the pattern of events at Simon's Bay. Command of the seas after Trafalgar resulted in an increase not only in the number of ships in need of repair calling at the Bay, but the arrival of prizes of war often in a similar condition or suitable for conversion to other uses than those for which they were

originally built. Repair facilities at the naval establishment were manifestly inadequate and the supply of ships with a variety of necessities erratic in performance. When these deficiencies became known, ship masters preferred to put in at Table Bay to the detriment of the wellbeing of the growing town at Simon's Bay and to John Osmond in particular. Early in 1806 he despatched a Memorial for the Governor's attention, requesting permission to establish a private dockyard (11).

The Constructivist: The purpose of the dockyard was stated to be the repair of ships and to supply them with every need. Several storehouses near the beach would be required in the light of the small capacity of the naval stores. His prices would be lower than those of the Navy. He would supply merchantment and naval vessels in case of necessity.

It is likely that this proposal was thrown like a tennis ball from one institution to another both naval and civil, thus it was not until 27th December 1806, that a memorandum signed by Captain Benezet, advised that the project to be situated on the Steenbras side of Cole's Point be not approved. He argued that a dockyard was certain to require heating facilities which, as naked flames were involved, constituted a danger to the landing of powder on the shore of the same bay, albeit some distance away. The matter was referred to a committee comprising representatives of the Burgher Senate, the Inspector of Lands and the Government Surveyor. The site was inspected and disagreement with the Captain's recommendation expressed on grounds that it was customary for the local inhabitants to douse all fires when powder was to be landed. Despite the Committee's opinion, the naval view prevailed. Osmond's application was refused (12).

While awaiting the Governor's decision concerning his request, Osmond performed a number of operations to do with ships, as much to indicate to the authorities his indispensability in that line of business as to earn an honest penny. Only a few of these instances have come to light.

The event leading to the first of these had its beginnings in Bombay when on 1st July 1805 BRUNSWICK, a merchantman owned by the Honourable East India Company, sailed under Captain James Ludvic Grant for China. Off Calle in Ceylon, the ship was taken by MARENGO, 80 guns, and LA BELLE POULE. Captain and crew went aboard MARENGO and a prize crew was put aboard BRUNSWICK with orders to rendezvous with the squadron at the Cape, then neutral territory. Meeting was effected in Simon's Bay where, due to inattention to the chafing which takes place in a ship's hawse, BRUNSWICK'S anchors parted and despite staunch efforts on the part of the crew to avoid stranding, but with sails in tatters, she drifted ashore. It was 2nd September 1805.

On 26th February of the following year the Governor was informed

that Osmond had bought the wreck (13). His Excellency immediately caused him to be informed that he must consider himself answerable to the Honourable Company for the purchase of their ship and goods. From whom the Governor presumed the vessel had been purchased if not the Company, is not known. The report was probably incorrect for on 16th June 1806, Messrs. Kieswetter & Co., auctioneers of Cape Town, put the wreck and its cargo up for auction. 300 to 400 bales of kapok and 60,000 to 70,000 lbs of sandalwood comprised the cargo.

Osmond and others, as a consortium, purchased all that was offered although what action to store or protect their acquisition is unknown. Whatever their methods may have been, they certainly would need not only to keep the kapok in good condition but to dispose of it quickly for it soon deteriorates. After some months they found a provisional purchaser in Captain John Dodge, Master of an American ship JOHN OF SALEM, who wished to buy the wreck and its entire cargo if he was permitted to export the kapok to America. Exports were strictly controlled lest they find their way into enemy hands. Government permission was sought by the proprietors on 7th February 1807 (14). By return of post permission was granted on condition that a bond, undertaking that the material would not be taken other than to America, be furnished. The consortium readily complied and the purchase was confirmed. The American made a good bargain by acquiring the wreck, for the ship had incorporated a quantity of valuable ironwork.

In February 1807, the accounts of Messrs Kieswetter & Co. were closed. They reveal that the auctioneers had employed some, if not all of the labour involved in the salvage, charging the consortium accordingly.

BRUNSWICK and its cargo were not the only items put up at the sale. The wreck of the Batavian 'Ship of the Line' BATO, 70 guns, destroyed in Simon's Bay by order of General Janssens to prevent her falling into the hands of the British invaders in January 1806, together with all her ironwork and rudder, was knocked down to Osmond, Endres and others. In 1809 at the sale of Endres' effects, Osmond purchased his share (15).

A further recorded instance is an earnest request by Osmond of Henry Roselt on 9th September 1806, for the arrest of a small boat whose ownership was not properly established. It had been in the possession of S.N. Sertyn (Old Simon was Osmond's colloquial expression). [Sertyn lived at Palace Barracks, ran a bakery and small shop and kept a boarding house]. Osmond claimed that the boat had come from the wreck, south of Hout Bay, of a French privateer, NAPOLEON, and had witnesses to prove his contention. He said that he did not doubt Sertyn's statement concerning the boat's origin but ownership was another matter, for he, Osmond, was the agent of Mr. Rex (presumably George Rex of Knysna) and everything of the NAPOLEON belonged to him. The question of ownership had not been answered, yet that

very evening he had seen the boat taken aboard HOLSTEIN, then about to weigh and depart the country. The event was highly suspicious and the arrest should continue until the matter was clarified (18). Whatever the outcome of the affair and that is not recorded, here is a typical case of Osmond's jealous guard over property rights exhibited by him over and over again.

In the time during which he had no dockyard of his own, Osmond was compelled to land heavy articles and equipment on the wharf under the control of the Port Captain, at that moment, Lieutenant Ross R.N. That officer insisted on upholding the regulations governing the use of government property without fear or favour, much to Osmond's annoyance. A clash of personalities emerged from two incidents in rapid succession. On both occasions Osmond complained to the Governor of arbitrary behaviour on the part of the Lieutenant. His Memorials are closely dated, the first on 8th May and the second two days later.

In the first instance Osmond left two anchors on the wharf in a manner contrary to the regulations. The Port Captain confiscated them. The second incident has, probably, connection with the first, for an anchor is also involved. Osmond had put a buoy and a rope on the anchor of a large ship with the intention of weighting it and bringing it ashore. Had he done so immediately all would, probably, have been in order but, by delaying, he contravened some part of the regulations. The Lieutenant had the anchor weighed and brought it and Osmond's equipment ashore confiscated.

The enraged Osmond demanded the return of his property. When that was refused he appealed alleging prejudice on the Lieutenant's part. The Governor replied to both complaints that if he thought fit to do so he could proceed against the Port Captain in the Court of Justice, which was a body perfectly competent to rule in a case of this kind. As for himself, he wrote, he had no intention of interfering in private quarrels between the two men. Osmond took no further action. He lost his anchors.

References and notes:

1. Death notice: CA.M00C 6/9/42, Vol.42/20, May 1847, No.8968 gives Gosport as birthplace. Joint wills 16/12/1802 and 9/3/1832 give Portsmouth.
2. Public Records Office, Kew, England: ADM 35 and 36. When Osmond enrolled on LANCASTER he was on the books of Portsmouth Dockyard therefore a Warrant Officer at a port.
3. According to Godfrey Charles Mundy writing in 1832, Osmond was carpenter aboard HMS SCEPTRE (Date not given). [HMS SCEPTRE was wrecked in Table Bay in the great storm of 1799 Editor.] Even if he was so informed by Osmond himself, it cannot be true unless LANCASTER'S Muster Roll, which shows that he entered that ship directly from TERRIBLE is false.
4. Fisher, E.F.S.; 1966, Names of Office-Holders in the Establishment of the Royal Navy at Simon's Town.

5. "Buffelsfontein" is the tract of land with the restaurant as its centre now forming part of the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve.
6. Pryce-Lewis, O: "When First We Practice", pp 88, Simon's Town Historical Society, 1989.
7. The actual wedding date is unknown. See Item 1 above for joint will.
8. Theal, G.Mc: History of South Africa, 1795-1872, Vol. 1, p.118, gives 1 March 1803, as date on which Cape was handed over to the Batavian Republic.
9. Item 6 above, p.96 et seqq. gives a full account of Endres' career in relation to the premises he purchased from J.P.Kirsten.
10. Item 6 above- gives a detailed account of the JOHANNA MAGDELENA affair.
11. Leibbrandt Precis 1715-1806, Vol 11, pp.877-8.
12. Same as 11 above.
13. C.O. 4821/42 and C.O. 3861/14.
14. C.O. 3861/14.
15. Same as Item 6 above; Appendix E.
16. S.M.T. 10/2/48
17. C.O. 4823/214 and S.M.T. 10/2/69.

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FLAG OFFICERS OF THE CAPE Part IV

Vernon White

Sir Charles Stirling 1807

Sir Josias Rowley 1808

Albermarle Bertie 1808

Sir Robert Stopford 1811

Sir Charles Tyler 1812

The Great War of 1914-1918 is recorded in history as World War I, but in reality the first war of global dimensions was the on-going one between the British and French in the years 1792-1815, which saw military and naval actions from Java to Martinique.

It is in the midst of this conflict that our narrative begins, with the invasion of Portugal and the occupation of Lisbon in 1807 by a French Army under General Junot, and the consequent departure by sea of the Portuguese Queen Maria I, her Regent son, members of the Court and Portuguese Government who sailed for Brazil in November 1807 in a convoy escorted by ships of the Royal Navy commanded by Admiral Sir Sydney Smith. The occupation of Lisbon not only determined the British Government to bring the fight to the French on their Spanish doorstep, but to wrest from France all her colonies, and once and for all to put an end to French threats to British domination of the Carribean, India, Australia, and the East Indies.

It was against this background and with increased naval activity in the South Atlantic, that Rear Admiral Sir George Murray was appointed C-in-C South America in 1807. (See Vol. XVI No. 1 January 1990 for full details of his career). Whilst on the South America Station his headquarters were in Rio which was to remain a base for the Royal Navy until 1875. In the South Atlantic H.M. Ships not only had the responsibility of protecting the South American sea route to the East Indies, but were given the additional task of suppressing the slave trade declared illegal by a British Act of Parliament in 1807.

It was in that year too that Freetown, Sierra Leone, became a base for the Royal Navy engaged in putting down the West African slave trade. The town took its name from the settlement of 1200 negro slaves who were sent there after being freed by the British during the American revolution.

Simon's Town also served as a base for H.M. Ships involved in the suppression of the slave trade over a long period of time. It was only after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, that the strategic importance of the Cape began to diminish.

With the departure of Sir George Murray in 1807, **REAR ADMIRAL SIR CHARLES STIRLING** was appointed C-in-C Cape of Good Hope. The son of Captain Sir Walter Stirling KT. RN he had entered the Royal Navy at an early age, as was the custom in those days. His family lineage was from Henry, 3rd son of David, Earl of Huntingdon and brother of King William the Lion, who assumed the name of Stirling in 1165, after his birthplace. Unfortunately the Museum does not have a photograph of Admiral Stirling.

In 1778 Charles Stirling was promoted a Lieutenant, whilst serving in the West Indies, and 2 years later after the capture of Charleston was appointed a Commander. In that rank he served successively in the AVENGER, VULTURE, SAVAGE and TERMAGE. Achieving Post Rank in 1783, after various appointment and action at sea, he became Commissioner of the Navy in Jamaica in 1802: Three years later he was made a Rear Admiral and in August 1806 whilst flying his flag in HMS DIADEM (Flag Captain, Captain S. Warren RN), Sir Charles was sent to the Rio de la Plate to supersede Commodore Popham. For leaving the Cape with his fleet for South America, without orders from the Admiralty, Popham had been recalled to England to face a Court Martial.

In February 1807 Sir Charles Stirling participated in the reduction of Montevideo, and was subsequently appointed to succeed Sir George Murray at the Cape. His stay here was uneventful, being in the nature of an appointment between commands, and he returned to England in 1808. He was made a Vice Admiral in 1810 and in the same year was given the freedom of the City of London. It was after that, that fate took a hand which led to his own Court Martial.

It happened that Sir Charles returned to his old station in Jamaica as C-in-C in 1811, but his appointment was short-lived as Jamaica was amalgamated with the North American Command in 1812. Sir Charles then became 2nd in command to Admiral Sir J.B. Warren, but returned to England in 1813. In 1814 he was court martialled in Portsmouth on a charge of accepting payments for escort duties whilst in the West Indies. The case against him was not proven, but he was adjudged to be part guilty in consequence of which he was placed on half-pay and barred from future promotion. Sir Charles, born in 1760, died in the village of Chertsey, Surrey in November 1833. His mother was Dorothy, daughter of Charles Willing of Philadelphia, North America, whilst his elder brother Walter, a London Banker, was made a Baronet in 1800. Sir Charles' wife, Charlotte, was the 2nd daughter of Andrew Grote, also a London Banker.

In 1808 after the return of Admiral Sir Charles Stirling to England, Captain Josias Rowley RN in HMS GRAMPUS assumed command of the Cape station. Born into a naval family in 1765 (his elder brother was Rear Admiral Samuel Rowley) Josias went to sea at the age of 14 and became a Lieutenant by the age of 18 years. He was appointed a Commander at 28 years of age and achieved Post Rank in 1795. He was only on the Cape Station for 1808, after which he commanded a R.N. squadron blockading the French Indian Ocean Islands, whilst flying his Commodore's pennant in HMS BOADICEA (34 guns).

Incidentally, one of his Captains was the notorious Captain Nesbit Willoughby in HMS OTTER. Willoughby had been court-martialled no less than five times for various reasons, the last being cruelty. Sir John Fortescue, the military historian, described him as "the most insatiable fire-eater in the King's Navy." He made Bligh seem like an angelic choirboy by comparison.



Captain Josias Rowley

Josias Rowley who also commanded the BRAAVE (40 guns), IMPERIEUSE (38 guns) and the RAISONABLE (64 guns), saw action in the West Indies, Rio, Cape, the Mediterranean and in the Indian Ocean. He became a Baronet in 1813, and was honoured during his naval career with the KCB, CGMC and GCB. Between 1818-1821 he was C-in-C Irish Coast, during which time he was made a Freeman of the City of Cork. Subsequently he became C-in-C Mediterranean 1833-1837 and in 1837 was made a full Admiral. His final post was as Equerry to the Duchess of Kent in 1840. At the age of 77

years he died in October 1842 at his mother's family home in Mount Campbell, Ireland.

Rowley was followed by **VICE-ADMIRAL ALBERMARLE BERTIE** who was C-in-C from 1808-1811. In November 1810, whilst flying his flag in HMS LEOPARD (Flag Captain J. Johnstone RN), Admiral Bertie commanded the invasion fleet of 70 ships, carrying a large force under General Abercromby, which took the island of Mauritius from the French. From that year onwards Mauritius remained a British colony for a century and a half until it was granted its independence.

Two months after Mauritius had fallen, a fact unknown to the French Government in Paris, 3 French frigates, each of 40 guns, and carrying a few hundred troops as reinforcements, approached the island. They were the frigates RENOMNEE, CLORINDE, and NEREIDE, which departed hurriedly for Madagascar as soon as they discovered the British were in occupation of Mauritius.

Vice Admiral Albemarle Bertie

As soon as the French ships were sighted 2 British frigates HMS PHOEBE (36 guns) and HMS GALATEA (36 guns) and the sloop HMS RACEHORSE (18 guns) as well as HMS ASTROEA (36 guns) (Captain Charles Schomberg) put to sea and pursued the French ships, intercepting them off the Malagasy coast. In the battle which followed the French suffered heavy casualties. RENOMNEE struck, the CLORINDE made off and returned to France, whilst the NEREIDE managed to escape towards Madagascar. Captain Schomberg continued with a distinguished career in the R.N. later to become himself C-in-C of the Cape.



It is interesting to note that Vice-Admiral Bertie was also when a Post-Captain, one of 10 other naval officers of equal rank (including Sir Roger Curtis C-in-C here 1799-1803) who constituted the Naval Court Martial in HMS DUKE, appointed to try the Bounty Mutineers during the time Lord Hood was C-in-C Home Fleet.

In 1811 a Rear Admiral of the Red, **Sir Robert Stopford KCB, GCB, CGMC, KRE, RN** was appointed C-in-C Cape of Good Hope in

succession to Vice-Admiral Bertie. Born in 1768 he was the 3rd son of James, 2nd Earl of Courtown, and Mary, the daughter of Richard Powys of Hintlesham Hall in Suffolk. His two elder brothers were James George (the 3rd Earl) and the Hon. Sir Edward Stopford GCB. KTS., a Lt. General in the British Army.

When Robert Stopford was 12 years old he entered the Royal Navy and after varied appointments and actions at sea, he achieved Post Rank in 1790. A veteran of San Domingo, Rio, and Copenhagen (as one of Nelson's Captains) he was instructed in November 1806 to proceed to Porto Praya to rendezvous with Rear Admiral George Murray. As the Admiral did not arrive as planned, Captain Stopford proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope in HMS THESIUS (74 guns) and from there sailed for England.

After 2 years in Englishwaters he was promoted a Rear Admiral, and was under orders in 1810 to return to the Cape to take over command, when he was selected to supersede Commodore William Broughton, the naval commander of the invasion fleet conveying General Auchmuty's troops to Java. The Admiralty had decided that an officer with more decisive ability than Broughton was required for the expeditionary fleet, but the untimely death of Admiral William O'Brien in the West Indies, led to Stopford being re-appointed to that station which delayed his arrival in the Cape until 1811.



Rear Admiral The Hon. R Stopford

Admiral Sir Robert Stopford flying his flag in HMS LION (Flag Captain Capt. R. Rolles RN) only remained here until 1812, when he returned to England. In 1825 he became a full Admiral, was C-in-C Portsmouth 1827-1830 and C-in-C Mediterranean 1837. He ended his career as Governor of the Royal Greenwich Hospital, having declined to accept a peerage which was offered to him. He was married to Mary, daughter of Capt. Robert Fanshaw RN, Resident Commissioner of Plymouth Dockyard. From the marriage there were 3 daughters and 3 sons, two of whom followed their father into the Royal Navy.

From 1812-1815 the C-in-C Cape of Good Hope was REAR ADMIRAL CHARLES TYLER GCB RN who like his predecessor Sir Robert Stopford had served under Lord Nelson and who distinguished himself at the Battle of Trafalgar in command of HMS TONNANT. Early in the action HMS TONNANT fought and defeated a Spanish

vessel, then engaged the ALGESIRAS, flagship of Admiral Magon. An unfortunate shot fired by the ALGESIRAS split the rudder of the TONNANT causing her to swing across the bows of the French ship, which rammed TONNANT amidships. The ALGESIRAS ended up over and above the TONNANT's main deck with her bowsprit in the latter's mainmast rigging. By all accounts the TONNANT was in an unhappy situation, but she had the advantage of being able to fire her whole starboard broadside whilst the Frenchman could only bring a few of her for'ard guns to bear. With both ships locked together Admiral Magon placed musketmen in the tops, from where they poured a murderous fire onto the upper deck of the TONNANT, when Captain Tyler was shot and badly wounded in the thigh. The French then attempted to board Tyler's ship but were cut down by grape shot fired from TONNANT's forecastle guns, and by musket fire from her Marines. The end of the action came when all 3 masts of the ALGESIRAS collapsed having been shot through below decks by the British gunners. At that moment a Lieutenant from the TONNANT with 60 men boarded the Frenchman and took possession. At the foot of the poop ladder they found Admiral Magon lying dead, having succumbed to wounds received earlier in the action. For his distinguished conduct in the battle Captain Tyler was awarded a gold medal. After Trafalgar he became second in command at Portsmouth and was promoted Rear Admiral in 1808.

In 1807 a Russian naval squadron under Admiral Senavin had shattered the Turkish fleet off Lemnos, but before the victorious Russian ships could make their way back home to the Baltic, war broke out between England and Russia. Whilst on passage the Russian ships had to seek shelter in French occupied Lisbon, where they were blockaded by the Royal Navy. Realising their position was hopeless, the Russians surrendered in December 1808 and were escorted to Spithead by ships under the command of Admiral Tyler.

Between 1812-1815 Tyler was C-in-C Cape of Good Hope and was promoted Vice-Admiral in 1813. Honoured with the KCB in January 1815, he was made a full Admiral of the White in 1825 and a GCB in January 1833. Tyler died in the Spa, Gloucester, in September 1835 having spent a long and eventful career in the Royal Navy which he first entered as a Captain's servant in HMS BARFLEUR in 1771. He was survived by his 2nd wife, Margaret, daughter of Alexander Leach of Corsair, Pembroke, and 2 sons; Charles, born of the earlier marriage, who was a Captain RN and died in Bruges in 1846, and Sir George Tyler who also served in the Royal Navy. Tyler came from a military family, his father being a Captain in the 52nd Regiment, his mother being the Hon. Anne Roper, daughter of Henry 8th Lord Teynham.

His son George entered Royal Naval College in 1806, and became Flag Lieutenant to his father in HMS LION (36 guns) in February 1813 on the Cape Station. When his father returned to England in 1815, Sir George saw service in the sloop HMS HARPY as a Commander. He was promoted to Post Rank in 1822, and served as Lieutenant Governor of St. Vincent from 1833 to 1840. In 1852

Sir George Tyler was promoted a Rear Admiral and in 1857 a Vice-Admiral. He married Harriet Margaret, daughter of the Rt.Hon. John Sullivan of Richings Lodge, Bucks, a granddaughter of the 3rd Earl of Buckinghamshire, who bore Sir George 7 sons and 4 daughters.

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DO YOU KNOW THIS MAN?

IF YOU DO, PLEASE CONTACT MRS BIGGS, CURATOR, SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM, 'PHONE 021-86-3046 or P.O.BOX 56, SIMON'S TOWN.

