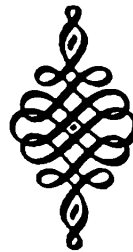


SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



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JULY 1992

**SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN MR G.B. READ, CBE, AT THE 32ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN THE LECTURE HALL, SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM, ON 19TH MARCH 1992 AT 7.30p.m.

The proceedings this year will differ slightly in pattern to those of last year. Because there are several important issues which should be aired it is proposed to hold a rather longer AGM than has been the custom in the past; there will be no lecture but instead I propose to host a small reception for the Members and Guests attending the meeting.

Members again meet in their dual roles as Members of the Society and Friends of the Museum and it is again appropriate to remind Members of the rationale behind this concept which not surprisingly is still the cause of some confusion particularly in the case of new members. It dates back to 1981 when plans were beginning to develop for the move from the first Museum on the Municipal premises to the "new" Museum - if that is the term - in the Residency. At that time in order to qualify for financial assistance from the Provincial authorities, a Museum was expected to demonstrate that it could obtain financial backing and support from the community it served. It was considered the best way to achieve this was to make all members of the Society automatically Friends of the Museum. One of the Society's principal objectives in its original prospectus - though by no means the only one - was the establishment of a Museum and indeed it played a prominent role in its foundation. It was also resolved to pay a certain percentage of all subscriptions (not less than $\frac{1}{3}$) to the Museum. Additionally, a set of simple, easily identifiable accounts would be maintained to cover the Friends' Fund Raising activities. Whilst it is probable the Provincial authorities no longer require to be convinced about the effectiveness of our Fund Raising activities, it would be near disastrous if the Museum lost the annual subsidy from the Province because of failure to provide formal proof and therefore it is proposed to continue the present system. Because of severe Budget restraints it seems highly unlikely the Provincial Authorities will be able to increase the subsidy for sometime to come in spite of constantly rising costs, inflation etc and this surely emphasises more strongly the important role of the Society and the Friends of the Museum.

It has been a very busy year once again and an account of the Society's activities appear below together with some comment about future plans. As is invariably the case, the past year again had its sadder moments. The Society particularly mourns the passing of Commander 'Monty' Banks, Captain Roy Wilson, Norma Bult, Audrey Wheeler-Hall, very recently Dave Davies and of Ted Prior who audited the Friends' accounts for some years. The Friends Representative will doubtlessly pay tribute to his work later in the proceedings.

To turn to the subjects of importance:

HISTORIC MILE:

A number of Members have mentioned to me from time to time that they think the state of the Historic Mile is deteriorating. On certain days perhaps after a minor hiccup in refuse collection or the sight of a building contractor at work on one of the main buildings with all that goes with it in the form of debris, building rubble etc., this may seem so. However, I think it is only fair to reflect that over a period of 15 years the following buildings have been refurbished and/or restored i.e. Whytes, Willets, Central Hotel, Prince Alfred Building, E.K. Green, Lord Nelson Hotel, Civic Centre, Criterion Craft Centre, not to mention the imaginative and very successful redevelopment of Jubilee Square. Work is in progress on the old British Hotel, Standard Bank building and Runciman building, in which we understand an Armacor office will be located on an upper floor and a coffee shop on the Ground Floor. This has been quite an achievement and certainly reflects very steady if not spectacular progress. There are still eyesores it is true - the Rennick Building - unhappily the first on the right hand side of St Georges Street as you enter Simon's Town is a disgrace and an embarrassment to Walking Tour Leader Audrey Read who usually tries to divert the walkers' attention to Admiralty House garden when they are passing! For the record the Council have made very serious efforts to force the present owners to rectify matters but have been frustrated by what appears to be an internal family legal impasse. ABC Building is deteriorating and it is to be hoped something is done before the deterioration becomes serious. There is the perennial case of the Post Office building but the resolution of that problem must surely await the successful finalisation of the Jubilee Square Fore-shore Development plans, hopefully to the general satisfaction of the residents which is not quite the case at the moment.

50-YEAR RULE:

Whilst on the subject of the Historic Mile there is a potential development which could seriously affect the preservation of Simon's Town's Historic Buildings. As many members are aware the existing legislation protecting the built environment provides inter alia for the protection of buildings of 50 years or more. This has been of great value in the fight to protect the built cultural environment. In the absence of detailed lists etc, all that has prevented buildings of 50 years or more from being demolished, has been the 50-year rule which requires that the National Monuments Council must give a demolition permit if they consider the building concerned is not worth saving. It has come to the Society's notice that the regulations relating to the 50-year rule have not been drawn up and unless this is done the 50-year rule cannot be implemented. Members will probably remember that the developers of the old Marine Hotel at Muizenberg recently used this loophole as a legal cover to knock down a part of the building which was listed. It further emerges that there is a move by some Government Officials not to draw up the necessary regulations and advise the Minister to abandon the rule completely. The Society believes the results could be disastrous and has written to the Minister to request that the rules be drafted and subsequently promulgated as quickly as possible.

ENVIRONMENT OFFICER:

During the 8 1/2 years or so he was Environment Officer in addition to his responsibilities as Civil Defence Officer, Vice-Chairman Nigel Farquharson made a very considerable contribution to the campaign to improve the Historic Mile and the Society wishes to place on record its appreciation for all he did. It is probably one of the most difficult and sensitive posts in our Municipal organisation and we wish Nigel's successor Commander John Page well in his new post. Still on the subject of environment, the Society awaits the Council's disclosure of it's revised plans for Red Hill.

OLD BURYING GROUND:

Your Committee has been somewhat concerned to note a deterioration in the condition of the Old Burying Ground at Seaforth and indeed in the Garden of Remembrance too. In regard to the latter, one of our Vice-Presidents, Dr. Arthur Davey is a member of the British War Graves Committee National Monuments Council and he highlighted the deterioration at a meeting of the Committee in Kimberley at the end of February and we await the results of their deliberation. Turning back to the Old Burying Ground, your Committee is now giving consideration as to what should be done and what funds might be required to cover some basic tidying, minor maintainance and restoration work. Obviously we cannot afford to be too ambitious but it is felt that even a modest but continuing effort could make quite a difference. Vice-Chairman Nigel Farquharson who was closely involved in the work undertaken some 3 - 4 years ago is currently studying the matter. Society members will be pleased to hear of fellow member Mrs. Raimondo's plans to restore 6 Brewitt family tombstones in the Dutch Reformed section of the O.B.G. Perhaps other families with relatives buried in the O.B.G. might consider following her example.

FINANCE:

The Hon. Secretary/Treasurer will make his final report on the Society's financial position in his capacity as Secretary/Treasurer. As from 1st January 1992 as forecast in previous reports, the roles will be split. 'D' Kinkead-Weekes will remain as Secretary whilst 'Cas' Colgate will take over as Hon. Treasurer. As you will hear, 'D' hands over a very strong financial position and on your behalf we would like to thank 'D' most sincerely for the very great contribution he has made to the Society's affairs during his years as Hon. Treasurer. When he has delivered the Treasurer's Report, Cas Colgate will report on the initial measures he has taken in regard to the redeployment and investment of the Society's Funds.

MEMBERSHIP:

As was the case last year membership numbers continued to oscillate between 780 - 820 or to put it another way approx. 5% of the Membership changes over a 12-month period.

BULLETIN & CHRONICLE: /.....

BULLETIN & CHRONICLE:

It is foreseen that costs will continue to rise i.e.

		1991 Actual	1992 Estimated
2 Bulletins	R	6.53	7.50
2 Chronicles		1.00	1.10
Postage		1.40	1.60
		-----	-----
	R	8.93	10.20

Estimated Bulletin production costs increase and estimated postage increases for the second half of 1991 were understated in my previous report. The above figures reflect estimated cost increases for 1992 of approx. 14% probably 2 - 3 percentage points below the true cost of inflation. Two major conclusions can be drawn from the above figures. First we must get our printing runs as close as possible to actual readership numbers. Secondly the incoming Committee will have to consider an increase in Members' subscriptions for 1993.

PUBLIC RELATIONS TOURS:

The Society in its capacity as a Friend continued its efforts to assist the Museum Development Fund with the organisation of One-Day Tours and of Walks. These activities will be fully covered in Cherry Dilley's report: the Society's thanks go especially to Audrey Read and also to 'Cas' Colgate, Alf Glover, Sue Kinkead-Weekes and Shirley Jackson.

SPRING TOUR:

The 1991 Spring Tour was probably its most ambitious yet and the last long one for some time ahead for reasons which will be explained later. It comprised 3 nights and 4 days based at the Mineral Baths at Citrusdal. Bookings were received in record time and every seat on the bus was sold within 36 hours! The previous year it took 48 hours! The Tour included the Wheat Museum at Mooresburg - for those members who have not seen it it is well worth a visit, and other historical and interesting places up the West Coast as far as the Olifants River. The Society's grateful thanks go to Audrey Read and her 'A' Team and to Bill Damarell who excels at washing pots and pans in case you don't know! Happily very little went wrong in spite of the length of the tour. This will probably be the last of the 3 night 4 day tours for some time as 1992 is a Leap Year and October 10th (a public holiday) falls on a Saturday. In 1993 it falls on a Sunday so 1994 is probably the first year when another long tour will be possible. Furthermore we have a Tour Party from the UK visiting the Museum on Monday 12th October so we will probably schedule the 1992 Spring Tour for the week-end of 2nd - 4th October and hopefully visit the Montagu area.

PUBLICATIONS:

The Society publication "History of False Bay up to 1795" by Dr. Anton Bekker is now starting to move steadily: happily a growing number of schools appear to be the ultimate purchasers.

RESEARCH: /....

RESEARCH:

Jack Wilkinson is in contact with the Library of Parliament, the UCT Library and the Archives and in conjunction with Margaret Cartwright will co-ordinate a list of possible subjects worthy of investigation. I would appeal once again for Members to come forward to help with Research. Please contact the Hon. Secretary if you feel you are able to help.

ORAL HISTORY:

Closely allied to research is the Society's plan to try and implement an Oral History project to record on cassette as much as possible of the reminiscences of the Senior Citizens of their lives and times. 'Cas' Colgate and the Curator will make a short presentation of what has been achieved to date at the end of this Report.

MUSEUM:

Again this has been a very successful year for the Museum. A full report from the Curator follows.

It remains for me to thank the Committee Vice-Chairman Nigel Farquharson, Hon. Sec./Treasurer 'D' Kinkead-Weekes, Margaret Cartwright, Joy Cobern, Bobby Wise, Liz Biggs, Cherry Dille, Cas Colgate, Jack Wilkinson and Mac Bisset whose contribution is always of value. The South African Navy have been most helpful. I would like to thank the outgoing Mayor Alderman Nicki Holderness for all the assistance she has rendered to our Society and to welcome our new Mayor Councillor Charles Sanderoff who takes over at a very critical time in Simon's Town's affairs. We wish him every success. We also welcome the Municipal representative Councillor Pauline van Eck to the Committee.

As I have remarked on several occasions the great strength of this Society has really been the enthusiastic and most effective participation of its Members. With one outstanding exception, the Goldfields of South Africa's large donation of approx. R60,000 - we have had to raise more modest monies for the Museum through our own local initiative on a continuing basis. This has been over and above of course the most welcome subsidies from the Cape Provincial Administration. In the new South Africa, however you wish to define it, inevitably the Society will have to depend more and more on its own human resources and that means you. It is exactly the same situation that faced our founding fathers in 1960 i.e. Messrs Willis, Brock, Chapman et al. I am confident your Society will continue to build on the wonderful foundations they laid.

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A.F. MOORE

As the first phase of the Anglo-Boer War drew to a close the British took a considerable number of prisoners. On 27 February 1900 General Cronje was forced to surrender at Paardeberg on the banks of the Modder River with 3997 men, and little more than 5 months later Chief Commandant Prinsloo, when his commando was unable to break through the encircling British lines, followed suit and a further 4314 Boers were captured. These events necessitated the establishment of camps, several in South Africa, including a large one at Green Point and two small ones at Simon's Town, in addition to others overseas.

The Simon's Town Museum has extensive pictorial and photographic record of the camps in Simon's Town. An article appeared in Vol.X No. 3 of our Bulletin. This was a translation of an article by Dr. W.J. de Kock, which had first appeared in the Huisgenoot magazine in February 1968.

Dr. de Kock's father had been at Bellevue camp in Simon's Town. This was the second camp to be established. The first, a transit camp, was located between the East Dockyard and Seaforth beach and was not enclosed. However, when Cronje surrendered, Bellevue (the site of the town's present golf-course) was established and given a fence of sorts. Both these camps were small and accommodated only a couple of hundred men which may be why there appears to have been a pleasant relationship between prisoners and guards. The fence facing Bellevue Road had only 5 strands of barbed wire, while that to seaward had, in addition, a barricade of the same wire coiled and 6 ft wide. It was, thus, not difficult for two of its prisoners, R. Erlank and A.M. Joubert to gain their freedom, but the latter was recaptured and sent to Bermuda. Contrary to what happened elsewhere, not one of the Boers imprisoned in Simon's Town was shot while endeavouring to escape (1).

De Kock tells us that many of the men had contracted gastric fever while they were dug in on the banks of the Modder River and that this was the cause of death of some of the approx. 50 Boers who succumbed and who were laid to rest in the Old Burial Ground at Seaforth, among them a few English-speaking comrades from the Orange Free State (A). John Henry Chandler, aged 29, died as the result of a shark attack (1).

The men were housed in bell tents, one for each group of 8, (12 at Green Point) with a circular wooden floor in four sections which could be removed for cleansing. On the seaward side there were corrugated iron sheds to serve as kitchens and wash-houses. The prisoners were provided with pots and pans and did their own cooking, but were allowed to buy provisions from vendors who came to the camp. Spiritual needs were catered for by, among others, Ds Jan van Blerk and Ds Gabriel van Lingem, and on one occasion the Rev. P. Legg held communion for the English-speaking internees (1).

Boredom is endemic to confinement and had to be combated. The

highlight of each day were dips at Windmill Beach, but even this delight was surpassed for those who received mail from home, even though news was censored and often heart-breaking. When the post-corporal arrived and stood on his stone pulpit the men clustered round eagerly. As a recipient identified his position in the throng vocally, the letter went from hand to hand until it reached him, often soiled, crumpled and inspected. These having been read and re-read or replies written, not many occupations remained; but the carving of toys, curios, etc with homemade implements helped to hasten the hours; or else songs were sung to improvised 'ramkikies', while jukskei or quoits served a turn. There were lessons also. J.M. Martins, one of Cronje's commando, was a school teacher. He performed another valuable function too, for he was a photographer and did history a great service. Mainly he used a box quarter plate camera, but sometimes he preferred his larger Thornton Pickard (1).

After his capture with Prinsloo's commando, General J. Crowther was sent to Bellevue, but his adjutant N.J. Brink, was less fortunate and was shipped overseas. He also deserves to be remembered for he kept a record of his experiences (2) which was published in Holland in 1904. However, it is a pity that he had not allowed a decade or two to elapse before putting pen to paper, for he had not recovered from the trauma of war, of defeat and imprisonment and, as a result, bitterness and partiality sometimes vitiated his sense of a just appraisal of events. Nevertheless his book gives us a more detailed insight into the life and reactions of a prisoner of war and, although conditions varied from camp to camp, his chronicle makes it possible for us not only to gain greater insight into experiences and impressions that must have been common to Bellevue as well but, also, to identify welcome contrasts. As far as possible his painful, even acrimonious, statements will be omitted but, should any be included, it is incumbent upon us more than 80 years later to accept them in a spirit of understanding.

Chief Commandant Prinsloo surrendered on 29 July 1900. On 1st August, four abreast with the officers in front and armed escorts on either flank, the prisoners began their march: Fouriesburg, through Slabbertse, Senekal, where they arrived on the 6th day still not knowing their destination and with their horses in worse shape than they themselves as they were allowed to be unsaddled but once daily. On the 9th day, after having covered only 100 miles, the unhappy columns reached Winburg where a train consisting of 1st, 2nd, 3rd class coaches and cattle trucks, awaited them. Bloemfontein. Where are we going? Colesberg, Noupoot, Paarl, Salt River. Will it be Green Point or Simon's Town? Although unstated, the latter was desired, but for most in vain. Brink and about 700 others boarded the MONGOLIAN, one of the transports, and set course for Ceylon, as the Island was then called(2).

Sri Lanka (its present name) and South Africa have much in common. It is a beautiful island with magnificent scenery. It also has racial, linguistic and religious differences. There are Buddhists who form 2/3 of the population and came from North India 2,400 years ago. They are of Aryan origin and their

language stems from Sanskrit, the oldest of the Indo-European languages and, thus, a distant relation of English and Afrikaans. They had a flourishing civilization centuries before one emerged in Europe. Then there are the Tamils, who are divided into 2 groups on the basis of their temporal migration to the Island from the south of India and constitute about 20% of the inhabitants, are of Dravidian stock, and, as such, are heirs to an even older language and civilization and to the Hindu religion from which Buddhism evolved. Then there are small groups of Afghans, Moors, Malays, Europeans and Burghers, followers of various denominations of Islam and Christianity (3,4).

In 1656 the Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Ceylon, as it was called through a mispronunciation of the Sanskrit word 'Sinhala' and encouraged their settlers to intermarry with the local population. The descendants of this group are known as Burghers, a word familiar to the South African visitor. Dutch Reformed Churches were built shortly after the Dutch occupation, but Nederlands as a language died out shortly after the British captured the country in 1795-6. At Galle, south-west of Colombo there is a Dutch-built fortification which strongly resembles the Castle at Cape Town but with a far superior strategic position. It brought an overwhelming feeling of homesickness (3).

The MONGOLIAN with other transports, dropped anchor in Colombo harbour, there being no quay for anything but small craft. Soon they were on their way by train to Diyatalawa in the hill country more than 4000 feet above sea level and almost in the middle of the widest section of the Island but a little to the south. The distance by rail is about 150 miles. Instead of the tropical, palm fringed coast there were now tea plantations, forests and shrubs. After a journey of 10 1/2 hours one reaches Diyatalawa. (2).

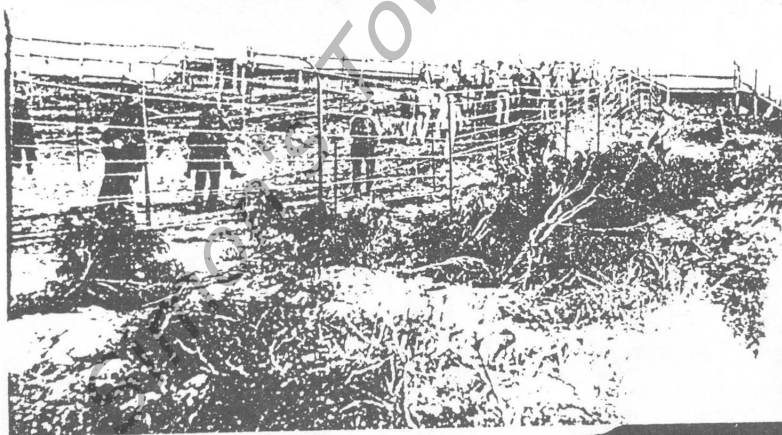
A map of the camp indicates that the length of a "trench" which served as the boundary was 6 miles and 400 yards and that there were 4534 prisoners within its confines. They were mainly from the O.F.S. and Transvaal. There were also some 'hired soldiers' the name the British had given the volunteers from other countries who had joined the Boer forces. The huts, measuring 120 x 20 feet, were of corrugated iron with plank floors and each housed 56 men, although earlier there had been 64. "The inhabitants of each hut are divided into table companions of 14 each; each of these latter under the supervision of a Corporal, while a Captain has the supervision of every hut. Three hut inspections are held each day, 6 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m." (2).

"Bread is baked with bran and is supplied by the military and distributed among us. The rest of the food we have to prepare ourselves in the kitchens, which are built for that purpose in a different part of the camp. These kitchens are built in a very primitive manner" (2). A photograph shows their construction which consisted of a high and wide roof, metallic uprights and open sides. Obviously they would have been cooler than if enclosed, but Brink's world had fallen apart and sometimes he saw things in an unnecessarily unfavourable light. He stated,

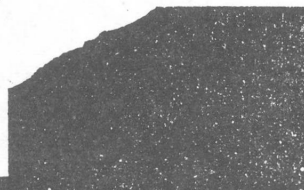
for example, that the sky was never "quite unclouded for the space of one day...We are not sorry for this...and if there were no clouds it would be impossible for a foreigner to live here." In fact Diyatalawa has a moderate and equable climate and a very small variation in temperature throughout the year. For this reason during the 1939-45 war a rest camp for service personnel was established there.

The officers and clergymen were accommodated in huts Nos. 21 and 36, each of which had a reading room well provided with books, and the inmates were allowed to walk outside of the camp and even visit Colombo or other places with special permission. There was in addition, a hut set aside for church services, concerts and other entertainment. It had a stage with a curtain, on the latter of which the battle of Magersfontein was depicted (2). Nostalgia, too, is endemic to imprisonment. This hut was constructed of 'kadjan', leaves of the coconut palm, widely used in most tropical areas. It would be cooler than a brick house because of its natural ventilation.

The prisoners divided the 80 huts into 2 villages named Krugersdorp and Steinsburg. They were linked by Commissioner Street where, incidentally, there were a few shops. Krugersdorp had a "suburb", Measles Square, so named because that was where the first cases occurred. The guards were housed on ground that overlooked the camp which was, also, surrounded by barbed wire. Coolies were employed to clean the camp and the latrines. Men of one caste would attend to the former, those of a lower caste to the latter. That is the law of the East (2, 3). The Boers could buy local newspapers and a few papers from England and Africa were also allowed, though papers which took up a hostile position towards the British government were prohibited.

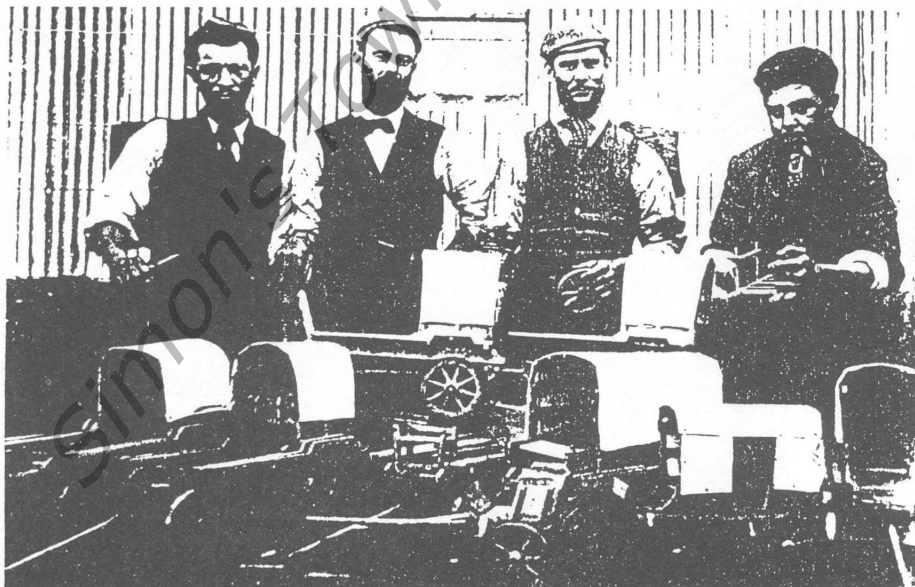


Two photographs of Bellevue Camp, Simon's Town which give some idea of how the camp was set up; also from the collection held by the Simon's Town Museum.



At first they received their mail personally at the window of the post office but were nearly trampled to death in the ensuing crush. Later a list was posted on a board and the hut captain ensured they were collected for distribution. Cryptic messages were used in order to deceive the censors, but sometimes they caused confusion. The following message proved to be deceptive: "We have had here a good harvest of peas in the Free State as well as in the Transvaal. The peas are beaten out in the kitchen. They are a new kind. We call them translation peas". After much cogitation this was thought to imply "that Kitchener had given in and consented to terms of peace. May this prove to be the right solution." (2)

As notice boards warned that anyone who attempted to escape would be shot, few attempts were made, for armed guards were on sentry duty day and night and "great electrical lamps shed a strong light all around." Yet "several of our foreign friends, and even some Africanders" managed to slip through the wires, but were caught "principally by the officious Coolies who were duly rewarded for it." Two Germans actually reached Rangoon, but were recognised. An Austrian was shot and Brink added "it may be possible that he was trying to escape, but the bullet found him while he was still in the camp and inside the wires. The guard who shot him was found blameless." A little later he wrote plaintively: "There is no chance here of digging tunnels as was done at Simon's Town and Greenpoint (sic)". Understandably, he wrote with zest about the escape of 5 prisoners from the transport CATALONIA when the ship reached Colombo. They were mainly Cronje's men: W. Steyn (son of the former landdrost of Heilbron), Piet Botha (son of the landdrost of Ficksburg), G. & L. Steytler (from the Wepener district) and E. Hauschner (a German from Blomfontein). At midnight, while others created a noisy diversion, they slid down a rope dangling from the forecastle and swam to a Russian ship that was at anchor some distance away. They were received enthusiastically and actually reached Russia (2).



Boer prisoners at Bellevue camp proudly display their skills. One of the photographs held by the Simon's Town Museum.

To-day the camps at Simon's Town, Diyatalawa and elsewhere have lost their sting. Simon's Town's has become the town's golf-course. The ground was given to the people of Simon's Town by the British Government and it is to be hoped that developers will never be allowed to build on this sensitive area where there are shell middens from a by-gone age and kiewiets and dikkops build their nests and hatch their young, jealously guarded by the golfers.

Six teachers gave lessons at Diyatalawa beginning with elementary subjects and progressing to Algebra and Geometry. The pupils used slates and slate pencils. Dominees Thom, Minnaar, Murray and Postma gave religious instruction. "Endeavour Societies" were formed "Where young men work to build up each other spiritually!". Handicraft groups were occupied "in manufacturing walking-sticks, butter scoops, penholders, pipes, photo-frames, napkin rings, watch chains and other similar objects, all made of wood", the implement used often being no more than a pocket knife. "Two burghers of Ladybrand, Messrs Strauss and Meyer, have even succeeded with much trouble and infinite patience, in constructing a barrel organ on quite new principles." Wagons and ships were inevitable as well(2).

Debates and discussions were held on many subjects such as the language question. Divine services were held and important dates were commemorated. Sports were played but somehow no mention is made of the game of rugby.

Typhoid fever was rife and nearly 70 deaths were recorded in October - December 1900. Convalescents were sent to a coastal resort near Colombo called Mount Lavinia. Nearly 140 died and "were buried with military honours, which includes the fact that after the burial the military band returns from the graveyard playing some lively airs".

Diyatalawa Military Cemetery was, 40 years later when the author visited there, still known as the Boer Cemetery. The graves were well kept and the tombstones record the name, age and town or place of origin of each man, some not much more than boys. The cemetery measures 50 x 90 metres and the wording on the monument reads: In Memory of the Prisoners of War who died at Diyatalawa Camp and Were Buried Near This Stone Erected by The Government of United South Africa. The inscription also appears in Nederlands. It is very similar to the memorial in the Old Burying Ground at Seaforth, Simon's Town which commemorates 82 Burgers who died at Simon's Town and are buried there.

References & Notes:

1. With the Boers Behind Barbed Wire: Dr. W. J. de Kock (English Translation)
2. Recollections of a Boer Prisoner-of-War: J. N. Brink (Presumably an English translation).
3. The writer's gleanings as a serviceman.
4. Ceylon and Its People - a booklet issued to servicemen.

A. Perhaps De Kock was referring only to those who arrived at Bellevue in Simon's Town when he did with the Prinsloo prisoners-of-war. In fact 82 died of various causes.

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John Wickham

I came to Simon's Town, on appointment as Civil Secretary in the Dockyard, in April 1955. The Superintendent at Simon's Town, then Captain H.F. Bone, DS0 DSC RN, had two hats. As well as being Superintendent of the Dockyard, he was also Commanding Officer, HMS AFRIKANDER, the Naval organisation in the port. Hence the designation of my post as Civil Secretary, concerned with advice and administration in the Dockyard side of his duties. He also had a Naval Secretary.

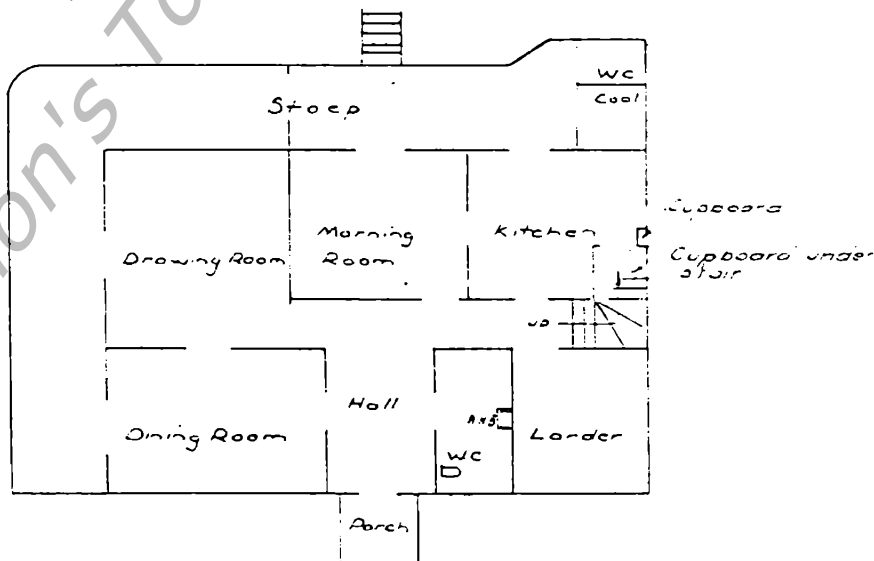
The Royal Dockyards, to give them their collective name, were essentially civilian organisations, although at that time they had R.N. officers in charge, and there were always some Naval officers in the management team. The yard was divided into professional departments, each handling different aspects of the refit, repair and support of H.M. Ships - constructive, engineering and electrical departments each looked after their own "part of the ship" with the constructive department co-ordinating. Then there were stores departments - victualling, armament and naval stores - accounts and police. The Queen's Harbour Master had a sort of dual role, partly naval and partly dockyard.

It may be of interest at this stage to say that later, during the later 1960s, the main Yards in the United Kingdom had fundamental changes in management structure, moving from what had earlier been "professional", to what was to be called "functional". The main departments became Production, Planning, Yard Services, Personnel and Accounts, all under a civilian General Manager, with a combined Supplies and Transport department in support. For six years before I retired, I was myself Personnel Manager in Rosyth Dockyard, just across the water from Edinburgh.

But to get back to Simon's Town. Our first accommodation here was in a Guest House "Morning Glory" in Kleintuin Road, near Seaforth beach, until our proper quarters in "Pennington" were ready. "Pennington" is just inside the old East Dockyard Gate.

Ground Floor Plan of
"Pennington" or
Residence No. 18
East Dockyard

See also p.62
photograph



It is a large house which had obviously grown in stages over the years. The bathroom was big enough for a game of doubles table tennis. The core of the house, centered on the front door, had very thick walls, and we were told that this had been the original structure there, before the Yard was built, and dated from the early 1800s. There might be some scope for some interesting investigation here. The house was furnished but we brought crockery, cutlery and various personal items which would make it feel like home to us - we had had past experience of this in Hong Kong and Bermuda. Our first night's sleep in the house was rudely disturbed at about 5.30 a.m. with a great clatter in the kitchen. Prudent investigation disclosed a man in brown uniform - was he from the Bantu Corps? (The Hershelians - Ed.) I cannot get a check on the name - making up and lighting the big solid-fuel stove which was our source of cooking and hot water. We had not been told about this welcome service! About an hour later off went the first of the Dockyard hooters, reminiscent of an air-raid siren and only a few yards from our bedroom!! But we learned to live with these activities. The office was no more than 50 yards down the road, so transport was no problem - nor was a mid-morning cup of coffee if the office service was not up to scratch. Our son, then aged 5, also was close to school. He went to St Joseph's Dominican Convent just across the road and run by the nuns. They took children from the age of 5, the normal school starting age for children in the U.K. He looked very smart in his chocolate brown uniform.

Social life amongst the Naval and Dockyard families was brisk, and many good friends were made - I write this as we are staying with Eve and Freddie Windsor, two of them. Some routines became joint exercises, a group of wives making excursions to Noordhoek to buy meat at a little shop there, chickens and eggs from across the way, and fruit and vegetables from a nearby farmstall. There were also excursions, though a little less frequent, to the Constantia/Tokai area to buy sherry in 1/2 gallon glass containers; cost I remember as 10/-. And there was one convention which sticks in the mind - if you were out for evening drinks, it was OK to ask for whisky in an R.N. home but not in a Dockyard home. Whisky was so much more expensive than any local drink, unless it was available duty-free.

Some months after we arrived came the news of Prime Minister Harold Wilson's Simon's Town Agreement. Simon's Town was to be handed over to the South African Navy, with Royal Navy rights of use in specified circumstances. A transfer period was agreed - it was at least a year - during which S. African senior staff would sit alongside their U.K. opposite numbers to learn the job and plan its absorption into South African Naval and Civil Service routines. The real estate, building and fixed assets were exchanged for a lump sum of £3.4 million; this included the graving dock, but the land did belong to the South African Government anyway. The stores and moveable equipment were to be transferred "at valuation". In the end this figure was pretty large - several million - which caused some raised eyebrows when the comparison was made with the fixed assets figure by people who did not know the background. There were some interesting questions to be answered. For example, was a dockside crane which could move slowly on tracks only alongside the dry dock, a

fixed asset or did it have to be valued? A crane on a motor truck had to be valued. Likewise, how about a bouy in the outer harbour? Then there were the personnel questions where U.K. and S. African practice could be very different, as, for example, pension rights, sick pay entitlement for industrial staff and membership of trade unions by non-white employees. And on to fixing which U.K. technical staff would stay on after the transfer date to fill gaps where local expertise was not yet available; and what were to be their conditions of service.

And another unexpected snag for us was the S. African civil service routine of using English one month and Afrikaans the next. They appreciated our problems however and made us an exception. But it all required contact and discussion to achieve it.

The potential for mis-understanding, irritation and downright dispute was great during this period when the two sets of people were working in one another's pockets. But the potential was never realised, and I think that in my job I would have been aware of it, if it had. Relationships so far as I was concerned were excellent. Having a Superintendent and a Superintendent (designate) was no problem: I got on well with them as they got on well with each other. "Boggy" Bone and Paul Dryden-Dymond I counted as real "good guys"; and if I reckoned the handing over of an efficient going concern was a rewarding one, then I am sure that they did too. My earlier experience of being involved in closing down the war-time bases in Mombasa and Durban was so much less satisfying.

Coming closer to the transfer date in April 1957 (35 years ago) one or two memories are clear. The visiting party representing the United Kingdom comprised the First Lord of the Admiralty (the political boss, Lord Alexander), the Second Sea Lord (a Naval member of the Board of Admiralty) and the Secretary of the Admiralty. We took the opportunity of having the First Lord with us to get him to make the presentations of the long service medals (the Imperial Service Medals) to the members of the local staff who had completed the requisite number of years service. There were about 25 of them, and their families were sitting in the stand which had been put up for the transfer ceremony itself. I had to call out the names over the public address system as each man came forward. They all seemed to have, what were for me anyway, the most awkward of non-English names!

Something was needed which could be formally handed over at the ceremony itself to mark the actual moment of transfer. Someone came up with a splendid key; the West Gate key, a good substantial piece of steel. This was burnished up (it might even have been chromium plated) and when placed on a velvet

4.34 p.m. The First Lord of the Admiralty makes a speech handing over the base to the South African Government.

The Royal Naval Captain Superintendent steps forward and hands the key of the dockyard to the South African Captain Superintendent.

4.45 p.m. The guards present arms. "The Queen" is played and the United Kingdom Union Flag is lowered.

4.47 p.m. The Minister of Defence makes a speech of acceptance.

cushion, looked the part precisely. It was in my custody for a couple of weeks before the ceremony, and was hidden away in the back of my car - why it stayed there and not in the safe, I am now at a loss to explain. But while there it had a couple of shopping trips to Noordhoek and one to Tokai. My wife had something to say when she discovered what she had been carrying about. The key is now a part of the transfer ceremony exhibit in the Simon's Town Museum.

A few days before the ceremony, with HMS CEYLON berthed near to the dias which was to be the centre of the activities, Royal Marine guard and band paraded, and I was on the dockside with Captain Bone. He wanted to check the timing of events and he asked me to go in his R.N. car up to the West Gate, then drive back to the ship with the Police at the Gate phoning the ship just when I left. The car drew up by the Marine guard, watches were consulted, and I got out thinking that my part was over. But instead, Captain Bone said briskly "You are the First Lord; come and inspect the Guard". So here I was, an innocent civil servant, inspecting the Guard. I have never felt quite so foolish before or since. Everyone seemed to have a good laugh at my expense, but at least the Captain of CEYLON reckoned that I had earned a drink when I finally got up the brow. I was never really sure whether the "inspection" served any useful purposes or whether it was just a leg-pull.

The transfer ceremony itself I remember as a procession of large black cars, politicians in black suits and hats, Naval officers in white uniform and caps, the ladies in Ascot-type finery. Some longish speeches in English and Afrikaans. Then for me came the crux of the whole thing - Captain Bone handing the key to Captain Dryden-Dymond; and what came through loud and clear were the words used; something like - "Paul, I can't think of anyone I would rather hand this to" and the reply "Thank you, Bob". Amidst all the formality, that reflected the spirit with which, at working level, the whole exercise had been carried out.

After that there were receptions, celebration parties and farewell parties, even a wedding anniversary party thrown in. At this latter event, at Belmont House, a song of great local interest was sung - "At Simon's Town in the Cape" which is fully documented in the Simon's Town Historical Society Bulletin Vol. XIV No. 1 of January 1986. And so we departed. On the desk at my home in Cornwall is a silver box engraved with my name and Simon's Town 2nd April 1957, to remind me that I had had a small part in that fragment of history.

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see p.62 for sketch of house when it
was the Dutch Reformed Church Pastorie

THEY HAD A (GUN) BARREL OF FUN

From: The Star newspaper 12:9:1953.

"Historians and lovers of the ridiculous should owe a debt of gratitude to the man who is chronicling the story of artillery in South Africa for "Kommando" the official journal of the Defence Force. He has just recorded in all solemnity the story of the 9.2" gun barrel, the Royal Naval Captain-in-Charge at Simon's Town, and Captain Bluett of the South African Mounted Rifles.

Away back in 1921 a new Captain-in-Charge arrived, checked his inventories and found lying in the dockyard a 9.2" gun barrel of which he had no record. It was a sizeable piece of property, weighing 26 tons. It was stamped 1905. The Fleet gunnery officers said the Navy had ceased mounting 9.2" guns in 1903. So the thing must belong to the Army.

The Captain-in-Charge wrote to Captain Bluett, who was Officer Commanding Simon's Bay defences and asked him to remove it forthwith. Captain Bluett checked up on his own 9.2" guns. Nobody had pinched any: all were present and correct. He said, sorry, its not mine. Correspondence followed, with Bluett finally offering to send his own Quartermaster-Sergeant to give the Captain-in-Charge a hand at verifying the naval ledgers. This made the Captain-in-Charge more than somewhat cross. He wrote a polite letter to O.C. Troops, Simon's Town, and signed it "for" Commander-in-Chief, Africa Station, asking for the gun to be taken away. O.C. Troops replied, sorry, he couldn't comply with the request.

The Captain-in-Charge was now really choleric. He sent a strongly-worded letter to Bluett saying that if he didn't take the gun away he would be personally surcharged with storage costs. Bluett replied that if he removed the gun it would, under M.D.C., Section 18 (4), be theft, and he refused to lay himself open to court-martial. And could this correspondence now cease, please, because he was short of typists?

The game was now on. The Captain-in-Charge considered Bluett had insulted the Admiral. The Admiral took the matter up on a higher level and wrote confidentially to the Chief of the General Staff. The C.G.S. referred the matter to the Adjutant-General. The A.G. said it was the Quartermaster-General's responsibility. The Q.M.G. sent an inspector to Simon's Town to check up, and confirmed that the gun did not belong to the Union Defence Force.

The Q.M.G. consulted the Government Law Adviser and drafted a strong letter to the Admiral denying ownership of the gun. The C.G.S. himself signed the letter. Now the Admiral was on his mettle and went to see the British High Commissioner. The High Commissioner saw the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister sent for the Minister of Defence and told him to get the matter settled. The Minister sent for the C.G.S. The C.G.S. sent for his staff officer and said "For goodness sake write a personal letter to Bluett and tell him somehow to get rid of the some-

thing gun." Captain Bluett told his Sergeant Major to collect a fatigue party and chuck the gun in the sea. It was done and everybody was happy.

Bluett and the Captain-in-Charge were once more able to speak to each other in the Royal Naval Club.

Some time afterwards Bluett received a private letter from the Royal Artillery Officer from whom he had taken over the Simon's Town armament. This letter said he had forgotten to tell Bluett when he handed over that the barrel of the Noah's Ark gun was badly worn and he had got the Navy to bring out a new barrel in a storeship. Bluett, wisely, burned the letter. In due course he retired.

In 1939 just after the outbreak of war, it was found necessary to replace the barrel of one of the 9.2" at Simon's Town. An officer with a long memory recalled the barrel that had been dumped in the sea in 1921. With Admiralty permission and R.N. dockyard employees helping, the barrel was salvaged. The outside was rusty and covered with barnacles, but it had been plugged fore and aft and the bore was perfect. The barrel was installed in the battery.

What is more, an official photograph was taken of the gun being salvaged, just to prove that this whole incredible story is true

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Something similar happened to one of the guns from the old Munroe Battery which was situated between the Museum and the Admiral's Office. When Soldiers' Way was being built the Clerk of Works to the Simon's Town Municipality thought it would be a good place to bury this old gun barrel which was lying around. Some years later a trench was dug to lay pipes and the contractor was so excited when he found this old gun barrel. The Clerk of Works took it back and it now lies outside the Museum, close to where it originally was mounted!

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From: AT SCHOOL & AT SEA by "Martello Tower".

Her Majesty's "jackass" frigate ARACHNE, commanded by an eccentric young post-captain, who bore one of the charmed names of the service, or he would not have tried on such a mad prank (but it was not Grey or Elliot) called in at the Cape. The Admiral, happening to be in port, signified his intention of inspecting the ARACHNE before she continued her voyage. On stepping on to the little frigate's deck, in sword and epaulettes, and with the formalities that were usual on such occasions, what was his astonishment and rage at seeing the captain, also in cocked hat and sword, mounted on ponyback at the head of his officers to receive him! Anything more impudent, more ludicrous, I can hardly conceive.

The indignant flag-officer immediately descended into his barge

and returned to his ship, ordering a signal to be made for the offending captain. What passed can only be conjectured, but next morning the inspection was duly performed, no trace of the pony being visible.

It was affirmed that in the seclusion of the cabin, after all was over, the admiral gave place for a time to the old friend and shipmate. Tapping his junior laughingly on the shoulder he good-humouredly asked, somewhat sotto voce, "What have you done with the charger, old fellow, eh?" "Do you really want to know, sir?" cheerfully answered the gallant representative of horse-marines. "I do, indeed, S----"

Captain S--- rose, led his chief to the door of his quarter-gallery, slid it open and out popped the pony's nose in readiness for the biscuit or other tit-bit to which he was accustomed from the crew - for Jack loves to pet animals.

It can scarcely be necessary to explain that, by custom, captains' cabins are not open to the scrutiny of an inspecting officer!

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ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD CHICHESTER, Bart, CMG, ADC, RN.

From: "Hull Down" by Captain Sir Bertram Hayes KCMG DSO RNR

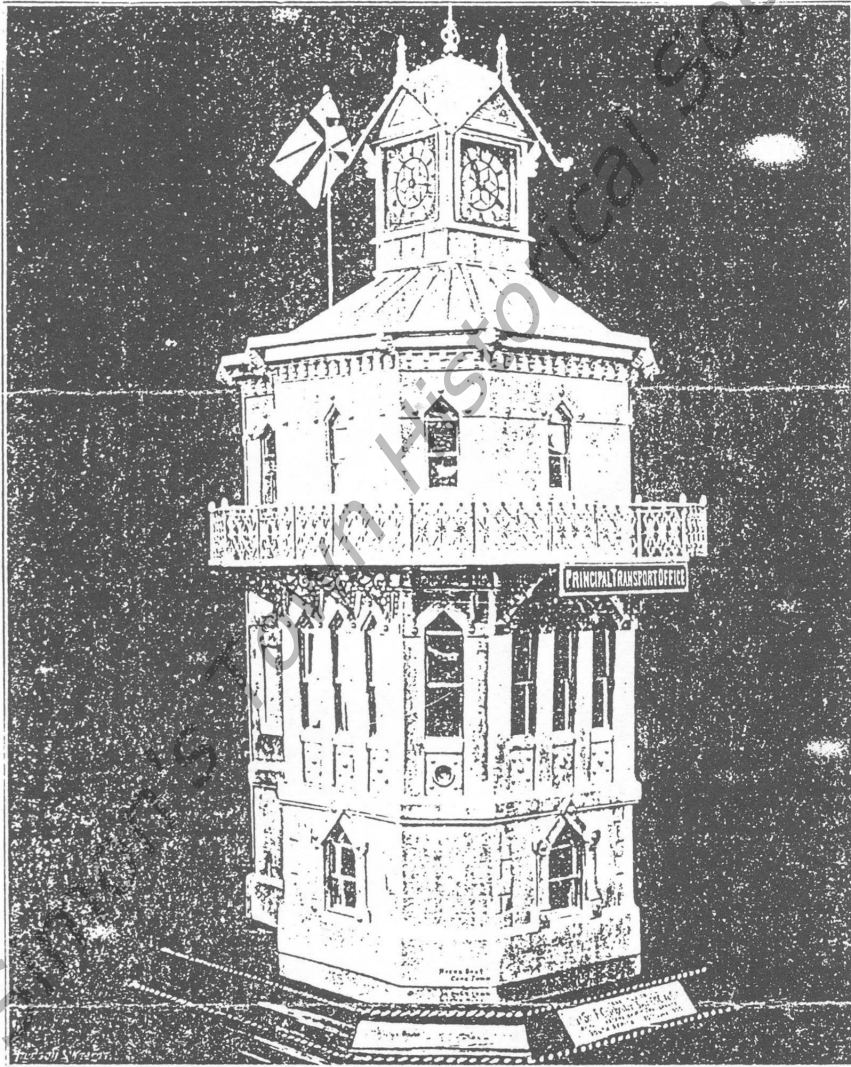
"....There is one man whose name stands out so prominently in my recollections that I cannot help mentioning it - Sir Edward Chichester, the Principal Transport Officer for South Africa (during the Boer War), affectionately called by all who had the pleasure of serving under him "The P.T.O.". He was, without any question, the right man in the right place, and through all the trouble and trials of the war, even when his son was shut up in Ladysmith, down with enteric fever, he showed the same cheery, genial face to everybody, and so long as any one of us, the Masters of the transports, did his bit, to use a colloquialism, he was our friend. He ruled the Cape Town docks with a rod of iron, yet one never felt the rod, so kindly was it applied. He was a typical Naval Captain of the old school, and no one mourned his death, which occurred some few years after he had returned from South Africa, more than those who had served under him at the Cape.

A very pleasant time to look back on was from 10.30 to 10.45 each morning at the Clock Tower, then "The Court was closed", the lower door was shut, and Mike, the P.T.O.'s Messenger boy, was put on guard to admit no one till the Court opened again, and Sir Edward dispensed his hospitality to all who happened to be in his office at the time. Mike was no respecter of persons where his orders were concerned!

One day the Admiral on the station came to call on Sir Edward just as "the Court was closed". Mike would not let him in. "But I want to see Sir Edward". "Can't help it sir, the Court's closed." Eventually, however, the Admiral persuaded him to take in his card, and Sir Edward went down himself to bring the Admiral up, and the Admiral was initiated into the mysteries of

the closing of the Court."

Sir Edward's office was the well known Clock Tower. Before Sir Edward left South Africa he was dined by the Masters of the transports at the City Club in Cape Town and was presented with a silver replica of the clock tower, which was a liquor stand and was of colonial manufacture. The photograph of it is shown below. THE SOCIETY IS ANXIOUS TO KNOW WHERE THIS ORNAMENT IS TO-DAY AND WOULD BE GRATEFUL TO HEAR FROM ANY MEMBER WHO CAN SHED ANY LIGHT ON THE MATTER. WE PRESUME IT HAS FOUND ITS WAY INTO A BRITISH MUSEUM OR MAY STILL BE IN THE FAMILY'S POSSESSION?



COLONIAL GIFT TO CAPTAIN SIR EDWARD CHICHESTER, BART., C.M.G., A.D.C.

Sir Edward Chichester has been Principal Transport Officer at Cape Town, and on June 30 he was Presented with an Address and a Silver Model of the Clock Tower at the Docks, which has been His Business Headquarters for Several Months. The Whole of the Elaborate Piece of Work, which is a Liqueur Stand as well as an Ornament, is of Colonial Manufacture.

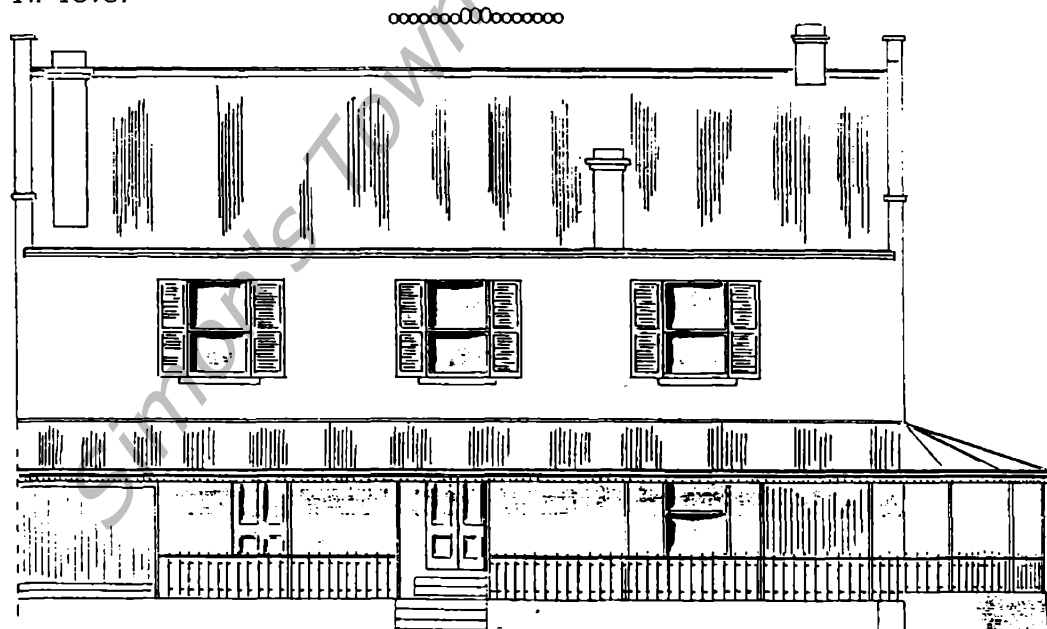
MIDSHIPMAN CHARLES MADAN

Information from Mrs. C. Pybus.

In the Garden of Remembrance (Naval Section) of the 'Old Burying Ground at Seaforth lies a memorial to the memory of Charles Madan, 6th child and 4th son of Dr. Spencer Madan II.

Charles was born on 30th July 1798 at the Rectory House, St. Phillip's, Birmingham and christened at Lichfield Cathedral on December 10th. He was admitted to Westminster School on 11th September 1811 but never a King's scholar. Presumably his interests and powers did not lie in the direction of literature, for he left the school in 1813 and entered the Royal Navy later in that same year. He was a great nephew of Admiral William Cornwallis. Charles' elder brother about the same time joined the East India Company. One of Charles' early postings was to SUPERB (Captain Paget). The Captain wrote that "Charles is doing so well that at the end of his 1st cruise he had been made signal Midshipman". From 1814 - 1818 Charles served as a midshipman in SUPERB, NEWCASTLE and finally the frigate EURYDICE. Sadly on 3rd August 1818 while the EURYDICE was at Simon's Bay he fell victim to the climate and died of a liver and bowel complaint. A monumental stone was "erected as a mark of esteem and regret by his Messmates" and testifies to the death of this young lad aged 20. A memorial tablet has also been erected in Lichfield Cathedral by his father, who describes him as a "promising and gallant youth".

A descendant visited here in December 1871 and sketched the monument. By marriage the Madan's are related to the family of Charles Kingsley whose niece Mary Kingsley also died in Simon's Town, during the Boer War. They are also related to the Froude family and lower down the Garden of Remembrance lies the tomb of William Froude who died at Admiralty House while visiting here in 1879.



ex Dutch Reformed Church Parsonage

"Pennington"

Front facing the Sea

GERMAN POWs ESCAPE FROM SHIPS - SIMON'S BAY 1942.

A. E. Read

In December 1988 a reporter Peter Dennehy and a Staff Reporter wrote up about these German prisoners. This arose from the fact that their graves in that part of Maitland cemetery where they were buried would probably need to be moved to make way for a new road system. Their article arose from an advertisement placed by the Regional Services Council in the week-end Argus of 10th December giving a list of graves which would be affected.

These 5 prisoners-of-war met their deaths as they tried to escape from a British troopship anchored in the Bay. It was en route from North Africa to Canada and had come via the Cape as that was deemed to be the best route as crossing the Mediterranean was thought to be inadvisable at that time. Only two of the five reached the shore, to be killed by soldiers guarding the shore-line. There are varying stories of the brutality used to kill them, but that is another matter. The writer remembers that there had been much trouble on board the troopship and in an act of defiance many of the prisoners hurled their cork pith-helmets over the side of the ship and many of these bobbed ashore onto the local beaches. It was probably inevitable that these lads should try to escape, who would not given the opportunity; and remember there were many people in the Union of South Africa who were sympathetic to the German side. Two were shot trying to escape and the fifth prisoner drowned in the water. They were all young men in their 20s. The guards on the beaches were native troops and armed with spears and we children were warned to keep away from the beaches until the troopship left.

The dead were given a funeral at Observatory and it is reported that an amazing number of people turned up for the service, some informed by telephone and others by a death notice in the Cape Argus for one of the deceased, Kurt Schmidt. Members of the German community have helped tend the grave over the years.

On 29th December 1988 Dr. G. Heisch, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Cape Town had taken up the matter with the Regional Services Council and wished to assure the public that the matter would be co-ordinated by him to ensure that the dead found their final resting place with dignity.

It is sad that they could not find their way into our Garden of Remembrance where British, French, Dutch and Russians already are commemorated.

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Vernon White

Commodore C.M. Schomberg 1829-1831
Rear Admiral Sir F. Warren 1831-1834
Vice-Admiral Sir Patrick Campbell 1834-1837

In Part VII which appeared in the previous Bulletin we wrote about the years 1825-1829. The year 1825 was a significant one as it marked the end of the decade following the Battle of Waterloo and the close of the Napoleonic wars. It also marked the beginning of a new era.

In the preceding years Napoleon Bonaparte had died in exile in St Helena in May 1821, the United States government had declared the Monroe doctrine denying the European powers the right to colonise the American continent (2nd December 1823), and Spanish America attained independence from its mother country. The Royal Navy had settled into its new peacetime role, following 12 years of war, although two years hence in 1827 a combined British, French and Russian fleet were to defeat the Turkish and Egyptian fleets at the Battle of Navarino, thereby securing the independence of Greece.

In South Africa changes of political magnitude were taking place, with names such as Chaka, Henry Francis Fynn, Nathaniel Isaacs and Captain William Owen RN of HMS LEVEN passing into the vocabulary of South African history; and the 1820 settlers had arrive to help colonise the Eastern Cape.

We have frequently mentioned that an Admiral was Admiral of the Red/White/Blue. The reason for Flag Officers in the Royal Navy being designated by a colour in this way bears repeating here to refresh the reader's memory.

In the time of Queen Elizabeth I, the English Fleet was divided into three Squadrons, and in order for ships' Captains to be able to distinguish their squadron commanders in the haze of battle, the Admiral in the CENTRE wore a red flag on the foremast, the Admiral in the VAN a white flag, and the Admiral in the REAR a blue flag, each flying a corresponding red, white or blue ensign. This enabled the Captains in each squadron to locate their flagship and to watch out for flag hoists during the course of an engagement. As the Royal Navy grew in size, and squadrons became larger, it became necessary to have 3 Flag Officers in each squadron, a full Admiral in command, a Vice-Admiral as second in command and a Rear Admiral as third in command. The seniority of the squadrons in a fleet was in the order of red, white, then blue, and the seniority of Flag Officers within the fleet was according to their squadron seniority. Thus on promotion a Rear Admiral of the Blue became a Rear Admiral of the White, while a Vice-Admiral of the White would become a Vice-Admiral of the Red, and so on. The Admiral of the Red was, of course, the Admiral of the Fleet.

This system of distinguishing squadrons and Flag Officers by a colour was discontinued in the Royal Navy in 1864, as the system

by then no longer had relevance in the age of steam. The first steamship, the Dutch steamship CURACAO, had crossed the Atlantic in 1826, whilst 5 years earlier the first steamship to call in Table Bay, the ENTERPRISE of 470 tons, had done so on a voyage from England to Calcutta.

COMMODORE CHARLES MARK SCHOMBERG CB Kt KCH who as Captain of HMS ASTRAEA (39 guns) in 1810 engaged and defeated a French Squadron off the coast of Madagascar, in company with HMS PHOEBE (36) and HMS GALATEA (36).

Born in Dublin in 1777 Charles Schomberg was the second son of Sir Alex Schomberg Kt RN (1730-1804). Charles' elder brother Alex Wilmot also served in the Royal Navy becoming a Vice-Admiral in due course. The Schomberg family of this narrative were a branch of the family of the Duke of Schomberg, who at the age of 80 was in command of the English troops at the Battle of the Boyne, when he was killed in action. Charles was also related to Meyer Lower Schomberg, the German Hebrew scholar.

Charles Schomberg entered the Royal Navy as a Midshipman, and joined his father's ship HMS DORSET, a yacht which attended the Viceroys of Ireland when they put to sea. In April 1795 Charles was promoted to Lieutenant and joined HMS MINOTAUR (Capt. Th. Lewis RN) in which vessel he saw action at the Battle of the Nile. He was subsequently to become 1st Lieutenant of MINOTAUR and continued to serve in the Mediterranean. His next appointment was Flag Lieutenant to Lord Keith in HMS FOUDROYANT (80 guns) in 1801, when the fleet was engaged in the Egyptian campaign.

Charles was promoted Commander in the sloop TERMAGENT and then joined HMS CHARON (44 guns). He was promoted to Post Rank in August 1803, in command of MADRAS (34). His subsequent commands were HIBERIA (120), FOUDROYANT (80), NISUS (58) and ASTRAEA (36).

From April 1820 to April 1824 Charles was Captain in command of the ROCHEFORT in the Mediterranean, being appointed Commodore of the Cape Station in 1829, flying his broad pendant in HMS MAIDSTONE. Commodore Schomberg who remained C-in-C until 1831, had strong words to say to Sir Lowry Cole over the conduct of naval affairs in Simon's Town. He complained at the lack of police supervision of wine houses, and of the anchoring of Merchant vessels in Simon's Bay, which interfered with the movement of ships of the Royal Navy.

In 1830 Commodore Schomberg was ordered by the British Government to sail at short notice from Simon's Town to Mauritius where he again complained to the Governor, this time at the defenceless state of Simon's Town in the absence of the fleet. He prompted Sir Lowry Cole to spend £700 on the defences of Simon's Town and the naval base.

In 1815 Charles Schomberg had been awarded the C.B. and on his return from the Cape on completion of his appointment as C-in-C he was invested with a Knighthood. Earlier he had also received

a decoration from the Prince of Brazil. Four years after leaving the Cape Sir Charles Schomberg died on board HMS PRESIDENT (52), flagship of Sir George Cockburn, the then Governor of Barbados.

It is interesting to note that between 1822 and 1831 (after the death of Napoleon) 6 Commodores served in succession as Commander-in-Chiefs of the Cape, and were followed by 7 Admirals in succession as Commanders-in-Chief from 1831-1849.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR FREDERICK WARREN who succeeded Commodore Schomberg was born in London in March 1755, the son of Dr. Richard Warren, who was physician to Kings George III and IV. His mother was the daughter of a Doctor Shaw and his uncle was the Bishop of Bangor. At the age of 14 Warren joined the Royal Navy as Captain's Servant in HMS ADAMANT.

As a Midshipman in 1792 he sailed with Lord McCartney in HMS L10N to China, being promoted to Lieutenant and confirmed in that rank in October 1794 on transfer to the PRINCE GEORGE.

FROM 1795 TO AUGUST 1797 Warren served in HMS JASON and was given command of the sloop HMS SHARK which paid off in 1798. Next came command of HMS FAIREY in which Warren served with the Home Fleet and in the West Indies until February 1801. In 1802 he was promoted to Post Rank after which he commanded a number of vessels, AMPHITRITE (1803), DAEDALUS (1806) and MELEAGER (1808) in the West Indies and the MELPOMENE (1809) in the Baltic. Whilst in command of the MELEAGER the ship was wrecked but Warren was cleared of negligence or dereliction of duty by a Naval Court of Enquiry. In MELPOMENE Warren beat off and defeated 20 Danish gunboats, for which action he received public acclaim and the special thanks of the Commander-in-Chief. He then went on 1/2 pay for 3 months before proceeding in ARGO to bring home a fleet of East Indiamen from St Helena. In 1811 he took British troops to Portugal, and Sir R. Liston, the Algerine Ambassador, and his suite to Constantinople. He resigned ARGO in October 1812. During 1812-1815 he was in CLARENCE and SPARTIATE in the Channel and Lisbon area. He continued in SPARTIATE from 1825 - 1830 and was promoted to Flag Rank. He was appointed C-in-C Cape the next year flying his flag in ISIS from 5/8/1831 - 20/11/1834. While at the Cape he was responsible for helping Maclear improve facilities at the Royal Observatory, which establishment came under Warren.

When Warren returned to England at the end of 1834 he became Admiral Superintendent of Plymouth with his flag in SAN JOSEPH. He then retired and was made a Vice-Admiral in 1841. He died in 1848 at "East Court", Cosham, Portsmouth. In 1804 he had married Mary, the daughter of Rear Admiral Laird of Dundee. They had 5 sons and 1 daughter. His eldest son Richard Laird Warren acted as his father's Flag Lieutenant on the Cape Station. The other 4 chose less hazardous professions than the armed forces, two becoming Ministers of the Church, one a Chief Justice and the other a London physician.

VICE-ADMIRAL SIR PATRICK CAMPBELL KCB Little is known of his service life. The Campbell family came from Melfort in Argyle.

Sir Patrick's brother Colin became a Governor of Ceylon, another brother became a Colonel in the Royal Artillery and a third an Archbishop. This brother's son also named Patrick (born 1812) was between 1835-1837 also on the Cape Station in THALIA, BUZZARD, DOLPHIN and SOUTHAMPTON. For a while he was Flag Lieutenant to his uncle.



Frederick Warren



Patrick Campbell

Admiral Campbell's flagship was THALIA (46) and this was commanded by Captain Robert Wauchope, the Admiral's brother-in-law. Mrs. Campbell was Wauchope's sister. Sadly in June 1836 the Campbells lost their young son on 11th June just nine days after his first birthday. He had been born in Simon's Town and lies buried in the cemetery at Seaforth. This was Frederick William Campbell. He was the same age as Captain Wauchope's boy William. It appears from letters of Lady Herschel (wife of the famous astronomer) that the Wauchopes lived at Admiralty House with the Campbells. Unlike the Campbells, the Wauchopes were very religious and Mrs. Wauchope helped Lady Frances Cole (wife of the Governor) to raise funds for the building of the Anglican Church in Simon's Town. Lady Campbell is described as "whimsical and capricious" and "Eccentric" and is said to have abdicated her responsibilities as the Admiral's wife to Mrs. Wauchope - perhaps this was due to ill-health. Admiral Campbell is described as "agreeable and unaffected" "a good horseman". In May 1837 the Admiral held a dinner and ball at Admiralty House for friends who had come down from Cape Town for the Bazaar held to raise funds for the "Free School".

Admiral Campbell died 4 years after leaving the Cape - in 1841.

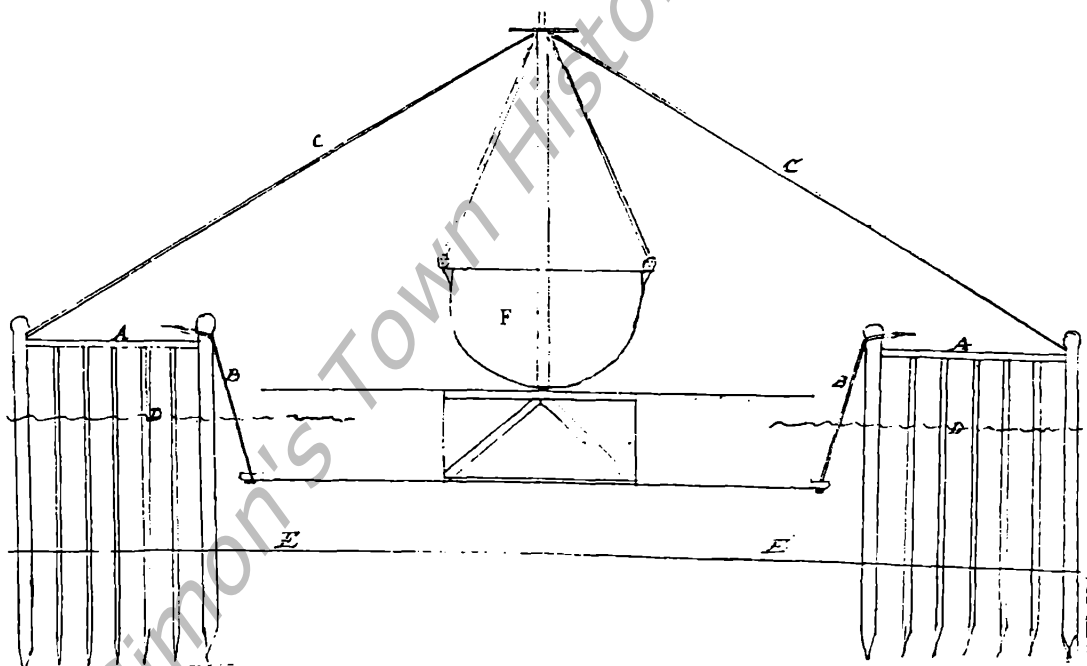
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MR. MARSHALL'S LIFTING DOCK

In Volume XV No.4 p.159 we mentioned this lifting dock and felt we should publish a sketch of what it involved. Also, our local inhabitant John Osmond was asked by Col. Bird, Colonial Secretary to comment on it. He was not too impressed - perhaps jealous because he had not thought of it?

"As I am perfectly certain the ingenious contrivance of Mr. Marshall's lifting dock will never pay the expense of constructing one in this Colony - I have been considering how it might be simplified, its expense of construction and wear and tear reduced; so as to make it suitable of more considerable commerce such as the Mediterranean, Baltic, Rio de Janeiro etc. where there is no rise and fall of tide..... I have sent Mr. Marshall'a transcript of the enclosed. It is the only method I conceive it can be brought to bear upon - he may improve upon it in England - but I predict it will never be brought into use - though I will not hurt his feelings by telling him so. It will die a natural death." (Cape Archives - C.O. 145/74 5.12.1821).

The Royal Navy were kinder - they actually tried it out and it worked on their ship's tender and the occasion was witnessed by the Governor and the Admiral in the Dock in Cape Town.



- A = wharf B = Bollards between which "cradle" would be suspended
 C = Hawsers to steady boat D = supposed water line E = harbour bottom
 F = boat on cradle

NOT DRAWN TO SCALE

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE NAME SIMON'S TOWN

Jack Wilkinson

For many years officialdom insisted that the name of the town should be spelt as one word - Simonstown. After a long struggle with the bureaucrats that endured for some 7 years, Alderman Gordon Wilson finally succeeded in 1982, in persuading the responsible minister of state to accept that Simon's Town should be spelt two words, with an apostrophe "s" at the end of the first word. The decision was made on 15 June 1982 and since that date the correct spelling has also been the official one.

Doubts still seem, however, to exist. The argument is usually along the lines that as the place was started by the Dutch it should logically be "Simónstad" and, less logically by some, that it should be translated as one word.

But there is little evidence to support this view. The authorities at the Cape and in Holland were against the establishment of a town and there is good reason to believe that during the whole period of their rule, the Dutch never thought of the group of buildings in Simon's Bay as a town, in the sense of a "stad" (1). They may well have referred to it as "Simonsbaai vlekje" (2) when they wished to be specific about the settlement as distinct from the bay in general but it was more usually referred to as "Simone Baai" or simply "de Baai Fals". In his scholarly and finely detailed thesis on the history of False Bay, Professor Anton Bekker (3) points out that the V.O.C. had an ambivalent attitude towards the establishment of a settlement in Simon's Bay. On the one hand the severe losses to the return fleets as a result of the disastrous north-westerly storms in Table Bay (4) forced the company to look elsewhere for safe alternative anchorages. On the other hand they were afraid that any establishment on the False Bay coast would be used as a base from which the country's enemies could attack the Cape.

The great storm of 1737 finally moved the Here XVII into action. In 1742 it was decided that Simon's Bay and not Table Bay should be used by all the Company's vessels, from 15 May to 15 August (later changed from 15 April to 15 September). Because the fleets invariably needed replacement masts, sails and other equipment, a warehouse was built in 1743 on the instructions of Baron van Imhoff (5). The warehouse included space for a hospital and accommodation for some soldiers under a sergeant who was the official representative of the government at the Cape (6).

The presence of a postholder formally extended the authority of the Council of Policy to this part of False Bay but it did not result in the rapid development of a town. The other side of the Company's ambivalence now came to the fore. The more developed the settlement became, the better it could be used by the country's enemies as a base. It should be borne in mind that the 18th century was a period of almost continuous warfare in Europe, with the United Provinces generally embroiled.

Long before the arrival of Sgt. Blass there were free burgers farming or fishing in and around Simon's Bay. The best known was Anthonij Visser who had been granted a loan farm in 1725 and who in 1740 built the house, which, much altered, later became Admiralty House (7). He and another resident Frederik Rossouw played an important role in providing refreshments and caring for sick and injured crews and passengers from ships calling at Simon's Bay. By 1774, over 30 years after the building of the warehouse there were still fewer than half-a-dozen residences (8) and Robert Jacob Gordon's panorama drawn in 1780 shows only a handful of buildings (9).

In May 1786 an official survey revealed that there were only six families permanently resident in Simon's Bay (10). Expansion and the development of new buildings were strictly controlled. For example, in 1788 Munnik, a resident, sought permission to build stables and outbuildings. He was allowed to do so, provided they were made of straw and reeds so that they could be easily destroyed in the event of an enemy attack (11).

As late as 1808 Lt Golovnin, an officer of the Russian Imperial Navy, who had been obliged to spend a short while in the town wrote:

"Simon's Town cannot be called a town as it is just a village containing public buildings, i.e. a small arsenal, military barracks, a hospital and not a single church. It has about 25 private dwellings lined up on the shores of a small bay" (12).

The British seemed to take naturally to the name "Simon's Town" (as, indeed, was the case with Cape Town), from the very beginning. In a report by three officers to Admiral Elphinstone dated 19 September 1795, a few days after the surrender, there is a heading:

"A Description of the Public Buildings at Simon's Town" (13).

The earliest formal use of the words "Simon's Town" is probably in Major General James H. Craig's despatch to the Secretary for War, the Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas, informing him of the actions which led to the landing, and of subsequent events. It is dated 21 September and contains the following in a reference to the suspected intentions of the Dutch commander:

"...and to justify the suspicion which was conveyed to us of its being his intention to set fire to Simons Town [NOTE: NO APOSTROPHE 'S'] from which all the inhabitants have been obliged to retire...." (14).

And in 2 letters dated 27 December 1795, also addressed to Dundas:

"at Simon's Town there is a pretty considerable range of Stores which were used by the Dutch Company...." (15).

and

"...we have a detachment under command of a Field Officers at Simon's Town...." (16).

Although the British consistently referred to "Simon's Town" during the first occupation it is interesting to note that in the days of the Batavian Republic things were different. In

1803 Commissioner General de Mist received a report on the state of "Simonsbaai" which claimed that the British had left some public buildings in a "desolate condition" (17).

Three years later "Simon's Town" came into regular and permanent use.

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Notes:

- (1) J. Holtrop: Engelsch en Neerduitsch Woordenboek:
Stad = a city or town.
The English word "town" seems to have a more generalised use -
J. Cobley in Names and Places says that "town" is a Middle English word, derived from the Old English "tun", meaning any of the following: "enclosure" "enclosed dwelling" "farmstead" "Hamlet", "village estate", "manor".
- (2) H. Jansonius: Groot Nederlands Engels Woordenboek:
vlek = (stadje) small market town
stad = town, city
Holtrop: op cit
vlek = a spot, stain, blemish
vlekje = a little open town, a little spot or stain.
"Vlek" and "Vlekje" seem to have been used in the same way that we would refer in English to a place as a beauty spot.
- (3) Anton E. Bekker: History of False Bay Up to 1795 with special reference to Simon's Bay. Published by the Simon's Town Historical Society.
- (4) Notably in 1692, 1697, 1722, 1728 and 1737. In the latter year 8 vessels and 250 crew were lost together with most of the cargo of the return fleet.
- (5) Baron Gustaaf Willem van Imhoff (1705-1750), Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies from 1743 - 1750.
- (6) Sgt. Justinus Blass who was appointed in 1743.
- (7) B.B. & B.G. Brock (editors) Historical Simon's Town pp 169-170 quoted by Bekker op cit
- (8) J.S. Stavornius - Voyages to the East Indies II p.45.
He says "not more than 4 houses...."
- (9) M1/1118 Cape Archives
- (10) Bekker - op cit (11) Bekker - op cit p.121
- (12) Robin Knox Johnson - The Cape of Good Hope - A Maritime History - Hodder & Stoughton, ISBN 0340-41528-2.
- (13) G. McC. Theal - Records of the Cape Colony p.136
- (14) G. McC. Theal - op cit (15) & (16) G. McC Theal - op cit
- (17) V.C. 79 p.33 - 12.3.1803 - Cape Archives

contd. from p. 75

- (5) On the Zulu War phase see D.R. MORRIS, The Washing of the Spears, London 1966, pp. 459, 464, 535; C.L. Norris-Newman, In Zululand with the British... London, 1880, pp 127, 131, 132, 196; H.F. Norbury, The Naval Brigade in S.A. During 1877-79.
- (6) Plaque in St Francis Church which refers to Batanga, possibly the port of Tanga (in Tanzania) close to Zanzibar.
- (7) J. Lehman, The First Boer War, London, 1972, pp. 137 149, 228, 236, 263.
- (8) Plaque in St Francis Church, Simon's Town.
- (9) M. Murray, Ships & South Africa, London 1933, p. 264.

HMS PELORUS - S.A.S. PIETERMARITZBURG

Peter Humphries

In dry dock in Simon's Town, out of commission and waiting "final orders" is the old Algerine-class minesweeper S.A.S. PIETERMARITZBURG. She was formerly the HMS PELORUS, the 5th ship of that name. She gained her place in history by firing the first shots against Fortress Europe on the morning of 6 June 1944, the shots which heralded the invasion on D Day which, almost to the day 11 months later brought about the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany.

In 1947 she was one of 3 vessels bought by South Africa for the recently re-formed permanent force navy and was given her present name. With that the name PELORUS disappeared from the Navy List in Britain, not so far to be used again. Probably the last of her class still afloat, she is also the last bearer of a name first used for a brig-sloop which was built at Itchenor in 1800 and was broken up in Singapore in 1842. The second PELORUS was a wooden steam corvette launched in 1857 and disposed of only 12 years later. The third PELORUS was laid down in 1889 as a 3rd class cruiser but was renamed MILDURA the following year shortly before launching, the name being passed to another cruiser of the same Class which was launched at Sheerness in February 1896, the subject of an interesting article which first appeared in the Weekly Telegraph in England in 1909.

The PELORUS, a sister to the PEARL about which we wrote in STHS Bulletin Vol. XIII No.4, carried 8 x 4" guns, had a displacement of 2,135 tons and a speed of 20 knots. She was first commissioned for Particular Service on 30 March 1897 and later served in the Channel Squadron and on the North American and West Indies Stations before being sent to the Cape of Good Hope Station in January 1905 to relieve the BAROSSA.

Her first commission coming to an end, she was recommissioned at St Helena with a crew sent out in the SIRIUS on 13 October 1906. At the end of her second commission she received orders to return to her home port, Devonport. It was while she was on her way back to the United Kingdom that she received further orders - these were to bring her fame of a sort for a short while. Calling at St. Helena she was ordered to join the squadron commanded by Sir Percy Scott, then at Rio de Janeiro. Sir Percy you will recall had made his name by adapting HMS TERRIBLE'S naval guns during the Boer War.

Sir Percy Scott's flagship drew too much water for it to navigate the River Plate when Sir Percy's Cruiser Squadron were to visit Buenos Aires. Having conveyed him there she was then instructed to proceed up the Amazon, surveying as she went, as far as she could safely get.

On January 19th the cruiser entered the Amazon, and a week later reached Manaus in Brazil, 1,000 miles up the great river. Manaus although a young city, by then already contained a population of 70,000. It was the "India-rubber capital", being largely de-

pendant for its prosperity upon the rubber produce brought down from the regions of the Upper Amazon. Although so far from the coast its harbour resembled an ocean port, being 3 miles across, the river at that point being 4 miles wide.

The PELORUS then took 9 days to navigate the 850 miles between Manaus and the borders of Peru which she passed on February 5th, reaching Iquitos 3 days later. The ship was received with great enthusiasm - the first White Ensign to be seen in those parts. The crew were entertained royally. They were only the 2nd warship to have visited Iquitos - the first being from the U.S. Navy about 10 years previously.

You may ask what purpose was served by this strange voyage of the PELORUS. Apart from the useful survey which was carried out it put the stamp of official recognition upon the fact that in Iquitos, Peru possesses a port accessible at all times from the Atlantic. In fact at one time 3,000 tons vessels ran a regular monthly service between Iquitos and Liverpool. At that period much of the development of the interior of Brazil was done by Canadian initiative backed by British capital.

The PELORUS eventually returned to Devonport where she was laid up. She was re-commissioned on 17 May 1910 to be employed by the navigation school at Portsmouth, and on 28 May 1912 with a full crew she sailed for the East Indies Station, returning to the United Kingdom the following year. Her service in the 1st World War was minimal and she was paid off on 10 May 1919, being sold for breaking up in the following year.

Of the 1st PELORUS, she served on the Cape Station for a while in the 1830s and her First Lieutenant T.P.P. Barrow, married Agnes, the daughter of the town's famous John Osmond. Barrow died in 1870 at the age of 67 years.

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THE FATEFUL COMMISSION OF HMS BOADICEA 1878-1882

Arthur Davey

In 1877 HMS BOADICEA, a copper-sheathed iron steam corvette, was launched at Portsmouth. She was one of a new class of 3 ships which, although fast under steam, still retained sails as an alternative (1). Towards the end of the following year BOADICEA was assigned to Simon's Town to be the flagship of Commodore Frederick Richards, newly-appointed to command the Cape of Good Hope and West African stations (2). She called at Freetown, Sierra Leone on her outward voyage from England. Thirty-seven Kroomen were taken aboard there on 27 December 1878 for duty at the Cape (3). The new year, 1879, opened disquietingly at sea when a Krooman was placed on the sick-list as a smallpox sufferer and he died of it 10 days later. Other cases developed and a 2nd Krooman died on 26 January. In spite of attempts to isolate cases and disinfect the BOADICEA there was a raging epidemic on board by the time the ship anchored in Simon's Bay

on 28 January.

The civil authorities at Simon's Town* refused to allow the sick men, 11 at this stage, to be put ashore, so HMS FLORA, a receiving (or depot) ship, one of the old "wooden walls" (4) was hauled to the outer moorings and converted into a temporary hospital ship. Those infected - and all the Kroomen - were transferred to her. Despite cleansing and fumigation the disease continued to spread among the white crew of the BOADICEA and many more of the stricken were transferred to FLORA for observation or treatment. The last established case occurred on 14 February. A 3rd Krooman had succumbed on 30 January before the transfer took place and on the FLORA the mortality toll was 7 Kroomen and a white seaman. The epidemic had claimed 11 lives; however many more including the Commander (Romilly) recovered. It is very likely that all those who died were buried at sea. At Sierra Leone BOADICEA had been given a clean bill of health, but the head Krooman subsequently disclosed that there had been a recent outbreak of smallpox in the Kru quarter of Freetown in Sierra Leone.

BOADICEA, whilst still in quarantine, sailed for Saldahna on 21 February. There the hatches were battened down, ports closed and the whole ship subjected to major fumigation with burnt sulphur and chlorine gas. The crew were put ashore and camped out on the Langebaan peninsula with a picket to ensure their continued isolation. According to the medical report "the whole peninsula was thickly covered with acrub and cacti which had to be cleared away before the men's tents could be pitched; it abounded with various kinds of game, as well as with lizards, scorpions and snakes". Somewhat spartan lodgings, but surely preferable to "the confluent type of smallpox" ?

The hold-up of BOADICEA was untimely as alarm-bells were ringing in south-eastern Africa following the Isandlwana disaster for the British on 22 January 1879. Reinforcements for Natal were needed urgently and the Royal Navy was already an important supplier of manpower. BOADICEA joined other ships of the squadron off Durban and landed a further detachment of 228 sailors and marines on 18 March for service ashore (5). BOADICEA was well represented in the total naval support force of more than 800 men. Some of her crew were in action at Gingindlovu in April and at the relief of Eshowe. At the first-mentioned clash a sailor of the BOADICEA seized an intrepid Zulu lad, who we are told, subsequently became the ship's mascot and enlisted in the Navy! Two of the ship's crew, a signalman and a stoker, did not return from the Zululand campaign. In June the flagship participated in one of the stages of a melancholy journey when it conveyed the body of the Prince Imperial of France from Durban to the Cape before it was transferred to another warship for passage to England.

In 1880 two of the ship's crew were lost, probably in the course of an anti-slavery patrol off the East African coast (6). Worse was to follow. The 1st Anglo-Boer War (1880-1881) again brought BOADICEA to the shores of Natal. A detachment of 126 blue-jackets was put ashore and seen marching cheerfully through the streets of Pietermaritzburg. They were soon in a tough battle at

Laings Nek and so were the spectacular but erratic rockets they deployed. At Majuba on 22 February 1881 a naval contingent of 64 suffered severely, losing 36 men (7). Commander Francis Romilly, Lt. C.J. Trower, several seamen and a Krooman of BOADICEA were killed and buried later in the military cemetery at Mount Prospect. Eighteen of the ship's complement died in this war (8). BOADICEA remained at the Cape for a further spell with Rear Admiral N. Salmon, the successor in overall command to Commodore Richards. BOADICEA was to have participated in the inauguration of the graving dock at Cape Town, which was opened on 22 October 1882, but once more smallpox intervened. There had been a major outbreak of the disease in Cape Town and consequently a sensitive Admiralty was unwilling to expose the flagship to further peril (9).

Smallpox and battle casualties account for at least half of BOADICEA'S fatality list of 56 (48 during the first commission), but other familiar hazards are reflected in 2 deaths by drowning at Monrovia and 2 other deaths, of an ordinary seaman and a ship's boy, who "fell from aloft". The names of the victims of the smallpox epidemic are not reflected in the Roll of Honour that was compiled when the present Garden of Remembrance at Seaforth was inaugurated and the Public Record Office, Kew, which holds the older Admiralty documents, has no ready answer concerning their identity. However, an alternate "document" is at hand - a plaque in St Francis Church, Simon's Town, which covers the ship's first commission at the Cape. The details on it include the names of the unfortunates who died at Simon's Bay and who otherwise might have lapsed into the oblivion of anonymity. The plaque furnishes the following names of men who died at Simon's Bay:

Lt. H.B.C. Wynyard, Armourer H. White,
A/B W.H. Burfield & 11 Kroomen (Black Whale,
Bottle of Beer, Tom Cockroach, Jack Glasgow,
A. Hazleburg, Jim Manning, Tom Newman, Jack
Ropeyarn, Tom Sharp, John Smith and Jim
Weller).

It also indicates that Ben Johnson, Krooman, died at sea - probably the first of the smallpox casualties. The names of Wynyard (8.11.1880) and White (19.11.1880) appear in the Roll of Honour; originally they were interred in the Naval Reservation, the forerunner of the Garden of Remembrance, but the other names were not recorded. With a high degree of certainty, it can now be affirmed that Able Seaman Burfield and 11 of the dozen Kroomen named above constitute the smallpox death tally of 1879. Kipling reminded Victorian readers that blood was "the price of admiralty". Who could dispute that sombre verdict?

(1) Mariners Mirror. Vol 22, 1936 pp.398-404

(2) Navy List. April 1879, p.198. Richards Bay is a reminder of "King Dick" who retired as Admiral Sir Frederick Richards.

(3) Statistical Report of the Health of the Navy for the Year 1879, HMSO 1881, pp.52-4 is the source for the smallpox outbreak. Mr. George Dawson of Onrus River drew my attention to the lack of information about the victims and provided me with a copy.

(4) FLORA, launched 1818, was recommissioned at the Cape in 1872. (Navy List Oct.1878, p.212. [contd. - foot of p.71])

THE S.A. NAVY'S FIRST SHIPS' BADGES

CDR. W.M. BISSET

The S.A. Navy's first ships' badges were worn with pride by the SANF's 'little ships' during the Second World War (1939-45). They were unofficial because Admiralty Fleet Order 3809/42 stated in paragraph 4 that 'Badges are not authorised for Corvettes or the majority of smaller vessels'. The Secretary of the Admiralty Committee on Ship's Badges, Mr. D. Bonner-Smith, FR Hist S, who was also Librarian at the Admiralty wrote in 1948 that he understood that the design and issue of ships' badges for these ships had been suspended 'in order to effect economy in material and labour'.

Until last year only 4 different types of S.A. Naval Forces ships' badges were known to me. A photograph which appeared in Navy News in January 1989 and another in Mr John Duffel-Canham's collection confirm the existence of two more. Earlier this year I was shown the main ship's badge of the 2nd HMSAS SONNEBLUM which is in the S.A. National Museum of Military History in Johannesburg. The group photograph of the ship's company taken on 27 May 1944 reveals that this ship wore two ship's badges, the main ship's badge surmounted by the general South African anti-submarine vessel badge. Finally Mr. P.R. Humphries has informed me that HMSAS BLOMVLEI also had a ship's badge. So it now seems very likely that there may be more and this short article has been compiled in the hope that anyone who may be able to supply further information will do so.

Most of the ship's badges which have survived are main ship's badges and were mounted in front of the bridge or on the foremast and are consequently of considerable historical importance. In some instances the ship's badge is the only relic from the ship which has survived. It was not until 6 July 1948 that the Commanding Officer of HMSAS GOOD HOPE wrote to the College of Arms in London requesting details of the ship's badge of HMS GOOD HOPE, a Drake class cruiser lost in the Battle of Coronel on 1 November 1914. The adoption by the Admiralty of responsibility for the design and supply of ship's badges did not take place until 1919 so any badge worn by the ship was unofficial.

HMS GOOD HOPE'S unofficial ship's badge may have been the replica of the Dutch East India Company's Cape of Good Hope Seal which was mounted in the ship. The original which depicts a Dutch East Indiaman may be seen above the steps leading down to the cells in Katzenellenbogen Bastion at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town.

The second HMS GOOD HOPE did have a ship's badge - the rampant Netherlands lion similar to that on the shield of the coat of arms of the Cape Province within a circular ship's badge surmounted by the RN crown. (See South African Navy News April 1987 p.14). HMS GOOD HOPE was a shore establishment housed in the Seaview Hotel in Port Elizabeth. Cadets for commissioned rank in the RNVR (SA) and SA Naval Forces, were trained there from 1.8.42 - 30.6.44. The 2nd HMS GOOD HOPE and its ship's

badge were not mentioned by Mr. Bonner-Smith in his reply to the Commanding Officer of HMSAS GOOD HOPE so it seems unlikely that the re-use of this ship's badge was considered.

S.A. Naval Forces ship's badges were later approved and the GOOD HOPE'S first ship's badge, was the RN diamond shaped badge for aircraft carriers, shore establishments and all ships other than battleships, cruisers and destroyers.

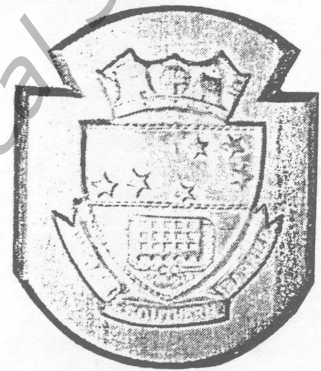
Later the diamond was replaced by the circular badge surmounted by a RN crown which preceded the SA Navy's present series of ship's badges.

Mr. Duffel-Canham's photograph reveals that HMSAS GRIBB'S main ship's badge was a wooden shield which was decorated with a sea bird (Gribb) on a contact mine with the Latin motto 'Destruimus' (we destroy) on a scroll below.



HMSAS Unitie

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HMSAS Southern Barrier



HMS BOADICEA (left) & guardship HMS FLORA (right) at
SIMON'S BAY 1885

HMS BARRACOUTA, HMS LEVEN & THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

P.R. Humphries

While doing some research on a subject quite unrelated to the following, my eye caught this story in an adjoining column. It appeared in the Wanderer's Column of the Cape Argus, on Monday 7 April 1924.

THE PHANTOM BRIG.

Simon's Town had something wierd to talk about on the morning of April 7, 1823. His Majesty's coastal survey ship LEVEN had put in after a long absence at Delagoa Bay in company with the brig BARRACOUTA. It had been a disastrous visit, for in the course of exploring the delta around Lourenco Marques, virulent malaria had broken out and 2/3 of the officers and half of the men had died of fever.

The larger vessel had left the BARRACOUTA behind at Algoa Bay, where, according to instructions, she was to remain for refreshment and repair. But Captain Owen had something else to report; namely, that on the morning of the previous day, while off Danger Point, they had found themselves within two miles of the BARRACOUTA. They were quite sure that it was that Brig, and with their glasses they could recognise some of her people and they saw her lower a boat. Then a haze enveloped the brig, and they saw her no more. The captain remarked that he could not understand how she had followed them so speedily, but the sailors were less reticent and hinted that it was the Flying Dutchman they had seen. The real BARRACOUTA arrived in Simon's Bay a week later. She had not been within 300 miles of Danger Point when her vision appeared to those on board the LEVEN.

And this is no seaman's yarn, but a matter of fact. Curiosity made me go to a book called "Narrative of Voyage to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia and Madagascar, performed in HM Ships LEVEN & BARRACOUTA under the direction of Captain W.F.W. Owen" published shortly after the event here recorded. The extract I took reads as follows:

"Having obtained a small quantity of fresh provisions on 29th (March 1823), we quitted Algoa Bay for Simon's Town. In the course of this voyage, which occupied 9 days, the weather was variable, with two or three severe gales and some dead calms, during which latter we invariably caught great quantities of fish of the finest quality."

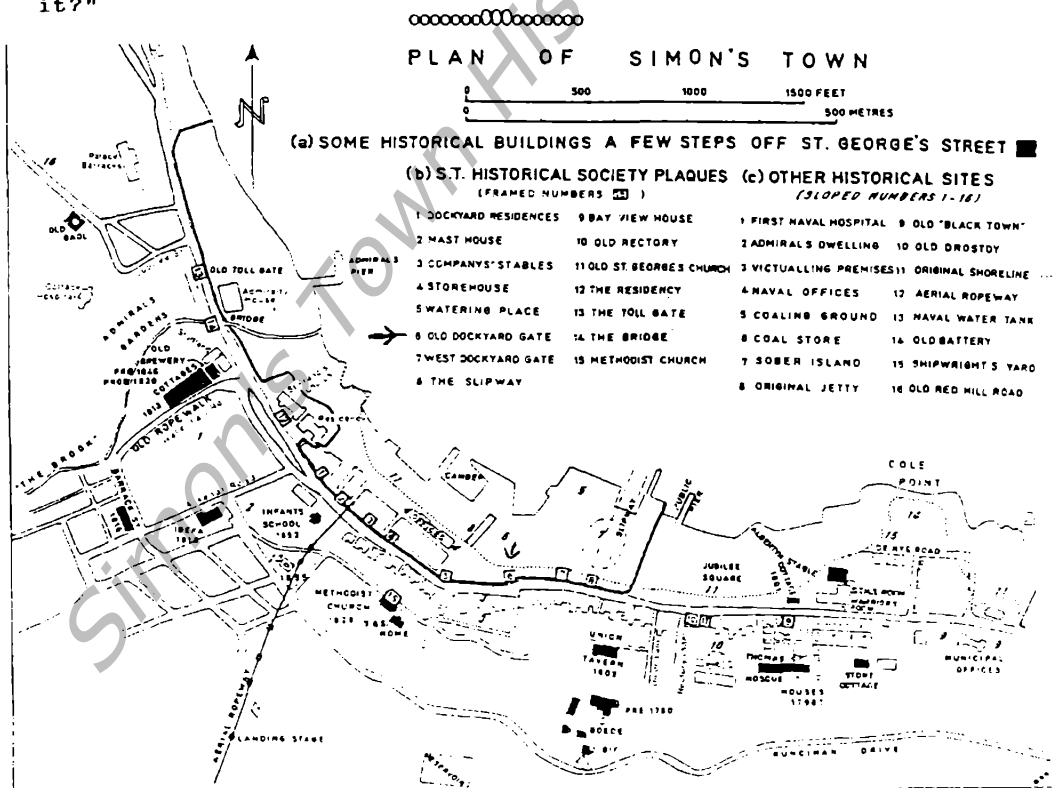
"For many years, the Flying Dutchman has been a popular superstition and source of terror to mariners. Few have often passed the Cape but can tell their tale of what they saw, or what other have told them of this mischievous phantom-ship. Old seamen still while away the tedious night watch in repeating to their young and marvel-loving comrades, stories of this water-sprite; and many a stout heart has quailed as with anxious ears, they have listened to the freaks of this airy terror. The following circumstances happened to us during this voyage, which called forth many an almost forgotten record of the "Flying Dutchman".

"In the evening of the 6th April, when off Port Danger, the BARRACOUTA was seen, about 2 miles to leeward: struck with the singularity of her being so soon after us, we at first concluded that it could not be she; but the peculiarity of her rigging and other circumstances, convinced us that we were not mistaken; nay; so distinctly was she seen, that many well-known faces could be observed on deck, looking towards our ship. After keeping thus for some time, we were surprised that she made no effort to join us, but on the contrary, stood away. But being so near the port to which we were both destined, Captain Owen did not attach much importance to this proceeding, and we accordingly continued our course."

"At sun-set it was observed that she hove-to, and sent a boat away, apparently for the purpose of picking up a man overboard. During the night we could not perceive any light or other indication of her locality. The next morning we anchored in Simon's Bay, where, for a whole week, we were in anxious expectation of her arrival; but it afterwards appeared that at this very period the BARRACOUTA must have been above 300 miles from us, and not other of the same class was ever seen about the Cape."

Well, there you have it, Captain William FitzWilliam Owen, Owen of the African Survey, was a down-to-earth hydrographic surveyor not given to imagining things and he appears to have believed the story.

As the man in the telly advert says "Makes you think, doesn't it?"



See Article on p.80 - No.6 shows position original West Dockyard Gate

WARRANT OFFICERS' CLUB, SIMON'S TOWN

(The following details were printed in Royal Naval Warrant Officers' Manual 1910 and a copy was obtained from the Admiralty Library by Mr. M.A.M. Graham, one of our members who lives in England. Ed.)

COMMISSIONED WARANT & WARRANT OFFICERS' CLUB, SIMON'S TOWN.

This Club was inaugurated in 1893 under the patronage and with the personal interest of the then Commander-in-Chief, Rear-Admiral F.G.D. Bedford, CB, and has enjoyed the support of his various successors.

The suite of rooms in which the Club meets is on dockyard ground, but the entrance is from the main road of the town. The buildings are granted by the Admiralty. Originally it consisted of a reading and smoking-room and a bar, together with a large dormitory, but as the need of a billiard table was soon felt, and one shortly afterwards obtained, the bedroom was fitted for the purpose and the beds abolished.

It has been more or less successful and prosperous according to the number of ships and officers of the class attached to the station, and as a social centre it has ever been a useful and valuable meeting-place for the members of the Warrant rank and the civilian and other honorary members who are associated with them.

A steward, lent from the flagship, resides on the premises, and though the beds have been removed a shakedown can still be provided. The billiard table is of first-class quality, and is much used and appreciated, it is also a source of revenue. The bar is closed during times of Sunday service. Meals required are obtained from the town and served in the Club. The tariff is low, and liquors 30% cheaper than in the hotels. Entrance fee is 5 shillings; monthly subscription 1/-. The Auditor is the Admiral's Secretary. Hours, open from 9 to 12.

This building was demolished when the main road was widened and the West Dockyard Gate moved to its present position. It stood approx. opposite Runciman's Building and the United Services Institute Building. That it was entered from the main road originally may be so but by the 1930s the main road had been raised to such an extent that the pavement was only 6" below its window cills and at that time it was entered from inside the Dockyard, which also gave it more security. Diagonally across from it was the stone cottage which housed the Assistant Inspector of Dockyard Police - also now demolished. Both these were stone residential type buildings - i.e. they had not originally been offices. Editor.

See previous page for plan showing position