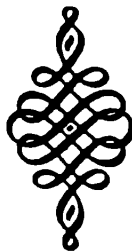




SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



PRICE
R5.00

VOL. XVII NO. 3
JANUARY 1993

SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN

VOL. XVII NO. 3

JANUARY 1993

CONTENTS

	page
List of Office Bearers	82
Subscription Rates	82
Royal Naval Punitive Expeditions to West and East Africa Part I West Africa	83
Obituary Cdr. J.C.Goosen SM SAN (Retd).....	103
Firing Broadsides Against Boers	104
Book Review:Maps of South Western Cape of Good Hope	111
Legion of the Lost 1795-1913	112
Escaped German P.O.W's	116
Trek Fishing	117

oooooooo000oooooooo

LIST OF OFFICE BEARERS

PRESIDENT	Admiral H.H.Biermann SSA SD OBE JP
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Vice-Admiral R.A. Edwards SSAS SM Professor Eric Axelsson Dr. A.R. Davey Alderman G.J. Wilson JP
CHAIRMAN	G.B. Read CBE
VICE-CHAIRMAN	N.K. Farquharson
HON. SECRETARY	Cdre.D.K. Kinkead-Weekes SM
HON. TREASURER	H.A.C. Colgate
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Miss M. Cartwright Mrs. J.P. Cobern Mr. J.O.M. Wilkinson Mr. P. van Blommestein Mrs. E.A. Biggs (Curator) Mrs. C. Dilley (Friends' Rep.) Cdr. W.M. Bisset (S.A. Navy Rep.)
HON. AUDITOR	Mr. E.H. Fry
EDITORIAL BOARD	Mr. G.B. Read (Editor), Mrs. E.A. Biggs, Mrs. A.E. Read.

This publication is for free circulation to members of the Society. The approval of the CHAIRMAN must be obtained for the reproduction of the whole or any part of any article appearing herein.

Exchange copies of other historical society publications will be welcome. SPARE COPIES OF THIS BULLETIN & COPIES OF PREVIOUS BULLETINS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE HON. SECRETARY. Articles dealing with matters of historical interest to Simon's Town and the surrounding area will be considered for publication.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (due on 1st January each year) are:

SINGLE MEMBER or the 1st person of a family - R15.00 p.p.p.a.

ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS - R5.00 per person per annum.

Please address correspondence to: Hon. Secretary, P.O. Box 56, Simon's Town 7995, R.S.A. (Tel: 021-786-1195 mornings only).

ISSN 0037-5470

ROYAL NAVAL PUNITIVE EXPEDITIONS TO WEST & EAST AFRICA

A. E. READ

Approximately 19 Expeditions were mounted to East and West Africa between 1863 and 1900. Many involved men and ships from the Cape Station, sometimes with the Commander-in-Chief actively participating in the campaign. A list of these expeditions to the West Coast follows below. This account is in two Parts. Part I West Coast and Part II East Coast. It is hoped to print Part II in the next edition of the Bulletin. It has been divided in order to make the article more interesting and hopefully more digestible for readers of the Bulletin.

The history of these events underlines the importance of Simon's Town in the great chain of naval and supply bases of the British Empire.

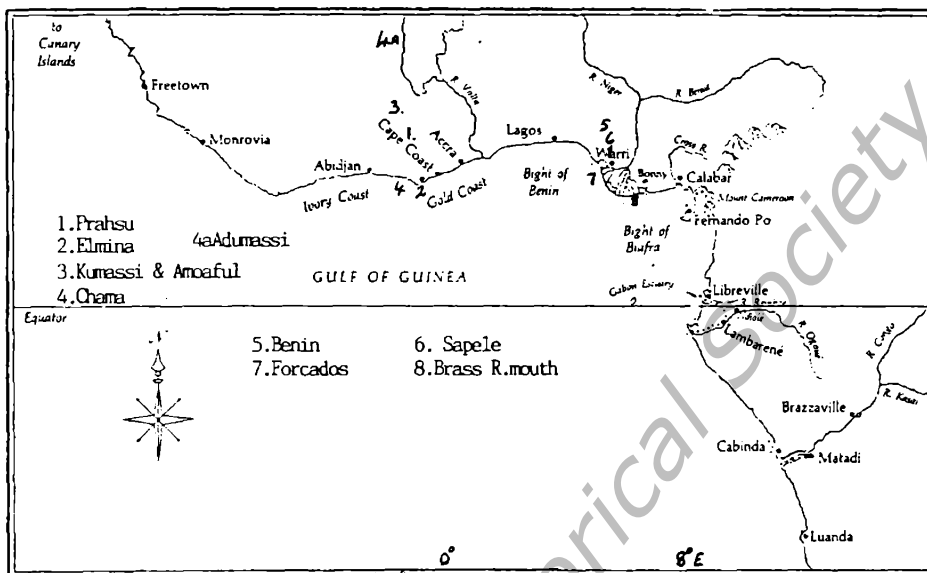
PART I - WEST COAST EXPEDITIONS:

1863 - 1864	1st Ashanti War
1873 - 1874	2nd Ashanti War
1887 - 1888	Expedition against Yonni
1889	Expedition in Sierra Leone
1891 - 1892	Campaign in Gambia
1893 - 1894	3rd Ashanti War
1894	Gambia Expedition & Sierra Leone Expedition
1894	Benin
1895	Brass River Expedition
1895 - 1896	4th Ashanti War
1897	Capture of Benin City
1898 - 1899	Campaign in Sierra Leone
1900 - 1901	Ashanti War

ASHANTI CAMPAIGNS:

There were some minor skirmishes in 1806, 1811 and 1814. The first employment of British troops against the Ashanti warriors came in 1823 when Sir Charles McCarthy, the British Governor of Cape Coast Castle launched a punitive expedition. When the two armies came close Sir Charles ordered the band to play "God Save the King" while he stood to attention in the jungle confidently expecting the Ashantees to join him. Instead they attacked and his forces were soundly defeated. Sir Charles was killed and his skull taken to Kumasi (sometimes also spelt Coomassie) where it was displayed annually at the Yam Festival. In numbering the Ashanti Wars the one of 1823 is generally ignored and the numbers start with the war of 1863 - 1864. In the early battles West Indian regiments were usually used on the West Coast of Africa because they were more able to stand up to the deadly fever-ridden equatorial climate. In fact a famous rhyme goes "Beware and take care of the Bight of Benin, Where few come out, though many go in" !

Before going into the details of the Ashanti campaigns it would seem appropriate to give the reader some information about the Ashantee (or Sianti) also sometimes spelt Ashanti.



GENERAL MAP OF THE AREA

Ashantee was a country in West Africa in the interior of the Gold Coast (nowadays Ghana), the extent and population of which can only be approximately given, variously as from 1 million to 3 million. It stretched from lat. 5° to 9° North and from long. 0° to 40° West and comprised about 70,000 square miles. Tradition represents the Ashanti as descendants of bands of fugitives who were driven before the Moslem tribes migrating southward from countries on the Niger and Senegal rivers. It is also thought that the Fantees who live nearer the coast were of the same origin as they speak the same language. The separation of these people into two tribes is generally ascribed to a famine which drove the Fantees south and led them to live on "fan" or herbs, while the Ashantees subsist on "san" or Indian corn, hence the names. The area of Ashantee proper was covered in almost impenetrable forest and in the early days the only routes through this consisted of narrow winding paths, where it was only possible for man to ride, no waggon of any description was able to pass. In all Ashantee silver and gold work there is a Moorish influence.

Ashantee is divided into two provinces, the East - with Headquarters at Kumasi, and the West - with Headquarters at Sunyani. Kumasi is the chief town and is to-day a railhead of two lines which link up with the coast some 120 miles distant.

The Ashantee attack on the Fantis led to the early British Expeditions in 1807 - 1811. In 1807 the Ashantee attacked the

town of Annamaboe where there was then a British fort. The Ashantee destroyed the town but failed to storm the fort although the British garrison was reduced from 24 to 8 men. A truce was later agreed and the Ashantee king, Osai Tutu Quamina, refused to deal with anyone other than the Governor of Cape Coast, Col. Torrane. By this treaty the whole territory of Fantee, including Cape Coast Castle, was ceded by right of conquest to the Ashantee empire. I should mention that there were many "castles" or "forts" along the coast in those days. They were there to protect the British traders and were usually defended with very small garrisons.

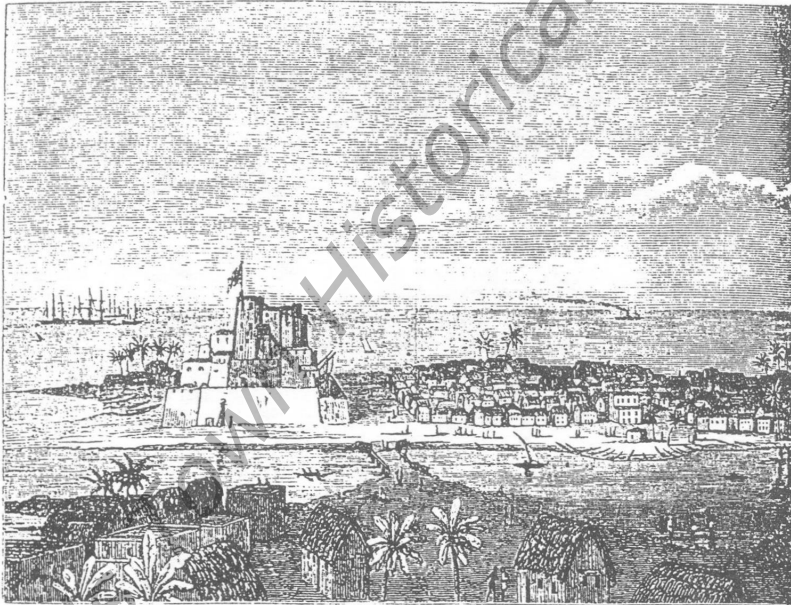


CAPE COAST CASTLE.

In 1817 the British Government sent Messrs. James, Bowditch and Hutchison on a mission to Coomassie. They were received with dignified politeness at first. The king demanded payment for permission to hold fortified "castles". Upon refusal by the visitors, the king broke into uncontrollable rage, calling them cheats and liars. Bowditch and Hutchison decided that in order to protect the British interests they would take the negotiation into their own hands instead of journeying back to Cape Coast to discuss the events with the Governor. A treaty was concluded by which all the king's demands were satisfied; and after a residence of several months, they returned to Cape Coast. This treaty resulted in a fixed resident being sent out to the king's court - one Mr. M. Dupuis. After several hold-ups Mr. Dupuis finally was accredited to the king's court from 28 February 1820. However, Dupuis had much trouble with the Governor of Cape Coast, Sir George Collier, who put many difficulties in his way. In 1821 the Africa Company was abolished by an Act of the British Parliament and the forest and possessions transferred to the Crown. It was then that Sir Charles McCarthy was appointed Governor (see p. 1 of this article). On the day of Sir Charles' death, the king too died - of natural causes - and was succeeded by Osai Okoto. He, with an army of approximately 10,000 men, now marched and laid waste to the country with fire and sword. He was finally defeated at Dudowah on 7 August 1826. In 1828 all public establishments were withdrawn by the British Government and the chief power was transferred to a company of

merchants. In 1831 the king was obliged to purchase peace the price of 6,000 tons of gold and to send his son as host to Cape Coast Castle. The River Prah was then fixed as boundary of the Ashantee kingdom and all the tribes to the south were placed under British protection.

In 1843 the British Crown resumed the government of the Coast. All went well until 1852 when the Ashantee king began interfering with states not under his jurisdiction. In 1853 to 1863 there was peace, then in 1863 disagreements broke out on account of a refusal by the Governor to deliver certain Ashantee refugees. In 1867 it was agreed that all Dutch forts east of the Sweet River should be handed over to British in exchange for all the British forts to the west of river. Unexpected difficulties arose which led the Dutch Government to hand over all the Dutch forts to Britain in exchange for certain commercial privileges being guaranteed them. The Ashantee king objected to the transfer of Elmina, however, his objections were disregarded and transfer took place on 6 April 1872.



VIEW OF ELMINA.

Things did not go peacefully for long. Three Englishmen (Ku Ramsayer and Palmer) and a Frenchman named Bonnat, were capt by the Ashantee king; the British Government demanded their return but the king refused and the rumblings that had sometime been heard, turned into war when on 22 January 1873 Ashantee force crossed the River Prah and invaded the British protectorate.

This led to the 2nd ASHANTEE WAR June 1873 - February 1874.

2ND ASHANTEE WAR (June 1873 - February 1874):

HMS RATTLESNAKE on the Cape Station commanded by Commodore (afterwards Sir) Edward Commerell VC, was deputed to investigate. RATTLESNAKE's station extended from Natal in the east to Sierra Leone in West Africa. The term "station" conveys something of a policeman's beat in those days of "gun-boat diplomacy", "Freedom of the Seas" and such grand phrases now sadly passed into oblivion.

When RATTLESNAKE reached the Gold Coast, Commodore Commerell had repeated conferences with the Governor, Sir Samuel Rowe, with the various native chiefs, especially those known to favour the Ashantees. This state of affairs continued for some time but at last the crisis came. There was a certain Chief whose somewhat large town was called CHAMAH and who was pro-Ashantee. This town was near the Prah River (a sacred river). Commerell had spoken with the chief and the latter had agreed to lend two of his canoemen to act as pilots to guide the navy across the bar of the river. They appeared to part as friends, so thought Commerell. The following day they were to meet the pilots off the mouth of the River. It was 60 years since any white man had been allowed to enter the Prah River. It seems that Commodore Commerell had heard that an Ashantee force was operating some distance up the river and he was anxious to verify this.

The proposed Royal Naval Expedition consisted of (A) a steam pinnace with a crew comprising the Gunnery Lieutenant (Edwards), a rocket apparatus with a few men to work it, the RATTLESNAKE's navigating officer (Sub Lt Peregrine Hutton) (B) the Commodore's galley carrying the Commodore, a naval Captain and some crew to man it and (C) a gig in which was Surgeon Lt. C.F.K. Murray with a modest supply of medical stores and a sick-berth attendant plus 8 other crew. The Pinnace towed them with the galley immediately astern and the gig coming last. At the same time a large ship's cutter was manned and sent with a present to the King of Chamah. Meanwhile RATTLESNAKE remained lying at anchor off the town. It was bright, sunny and an intensely hot day. Pith helmets were worn by the officers (with cabbage leaves inside each to keep them cool). Off they set following the native pilots who were in a small canoe, with Sub Lt Hutton taking continual bearings and soundings in the tortuous channel, where great rollers were breaking on either side. The pilots paddled hard, never looking back, until they reached the small lagoon - suddenly the canoes raced for the shore and the pilots stowed their canoes in the weeds along the bank, seized their paddles and vanished into the forest. This seemed odd to the Naval contingent. However, they beached their boats at the side of the lagoon and while the officers debated their situation, the crew exercised themselves playing leap-frog. They then re-embarked and continued upstream in a deafening silence. Suddenly from the left bank there was a burst of rifle fire. The navy were probably saved by being too close to the river bank for the rifle fire to be more effective. The navy replied by firing the rocket, which, although it probably did not hit anyone directly, the projectile made an alarming buzzing sound after striking the ground.

The Ashantees ceased fire. The naval party proceeded a little further up the river before turning round to begin the return journey. It was then that Surg. Lt. Murray noticed he had a slight arm wound and 3 others in his boat were also "winged". On looking at the galley he noticed the Captain's face was covered with blood and he was signalling for the doctor to come closer. To his horror, in closing up, he found Commodore Commerell lying in the bottom of the boat looking as if he were near death. He had been shot through the right pleura at the level of the 6th rib. The bullet had entered but no exit mark could be seen. There was also not much external haemorrhage. The doctor bandaged him and made him comfortable.

Sub Lt. Hutton led them back down the tortuous channel, through the breakers and they steamed full speed for RATTLESNAKE. The Commodore's condition gave them grave anxiety. All told there were 24 wounded and 2 killed.

And what of the cutter carrying the King's present? They landed the present and were returning to the bank when they were attacked. Sub Lt Drafin, who was in command, ordered his men to re-board with all speed while he kept the enemy at bay with his revolver. This he did and then started to swim after them. As he struggled through the surf the enemy opened fire and hit a man swimming near him. Sadly the rollers hit him and carried his body to the shore whereupon the natives dragged it out, cut off the head and ran off with it towards the "town". The men wanted to punish the Ashantees but this was not permitted. The order was given to bombard the town. The ship's bugle sounded "to quarters" and RATTLESNAKE opened fire with her 21 guns. Meantime Surg. Lt Murray and his senior surgeon Staff-Surgeon Colan, attended to the wounded.

RATTLESNAKE by now had full steam up and was moving up and down parallel to the coast opposite the town. The ship fired deliberately and separately each of her 10 guns on the port side, then in turning fired her stern gun and having turned, fired her 10 starboard guns. They set many thatch roofs of the mud huts on fire and the natives with their cattle fled inland. "Cease fire" was eventually sounded and RATTLESNAKE stood out to sea to catch what breeze she could.

The Commodore, recovering somewhat, RATTLESNAKE set sail for Simon's Town. Being before the days of cables and wireless telegraphy, the shock to all concerned can be imagined when RATTLESNAKE returned to Simon's Bay with her melancholy news. Happily the Commodore eventually made a complete recovery after his long illness. This brought much joy to all the officers for Commodore & Mrs. Commerell were very kind and hospitable to those on the Cape Station and had made Admiralty House a real "home" to all.

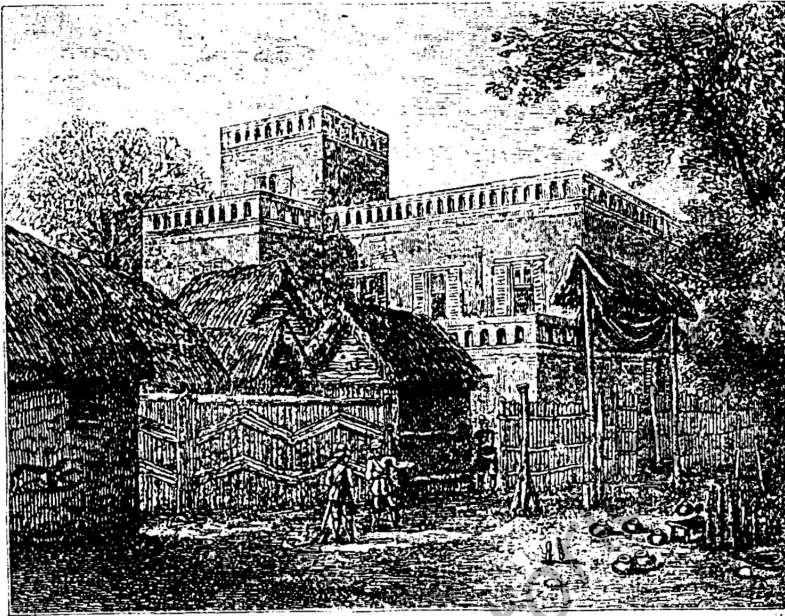
Footnote: Surgeon Lt. Charles Frederick Kennan Murray who served as ship's surgeon in RATTLESNAKE 1871 - 1874 while it was Flagship on the Cape Station, was born in Wicklow, Ireland on 2 July 1848, the son of Thomas David Murray. He married Miss Caroline Molteno, daughter of Sir John Molteno KCMG of the Cape,

and settled here. During the 1st World War he was commissioned in the S.A. Medical Corps and later promoted to the rank of Lt. Col. He served at Wynberg Military Hospital and was created an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his war services. His naval sword was donated to the Simon's Town Museum some years ago by his daughter Miss Kathleen Murray of Palmiet River, Elgin. The sword has now been returned to his great grandson and he in return has presented the Museum with a very fine machine gun. We are indebted to Cdr. W.M. Bisset, Staff Officer, S.A. Naval Museums, for information on the Murray family.



FOOTBRIDGE ON THE TRAIL

Meanwhile the British Government had been gathering troops and supplies etc for a campaign against King Coffee Kalkali of Ashantee. Sir Garnet Wolseley landed with his staff on 2 October 1873 and began planning his campaign prior to the arrival of the main body of his troops. They arrived on 17 December 1873 and the advance on Coomassie began on 5 January 1874 and was completed on 4 February. During this period 4 VC's were won. The sickness rate in this campaign was to be the worst on record and no less than 98% of the naval force engaged on land reported sick during this period. The marines in the force were under Col. Festing, who landed on 9 June. The ARGUS also took part and her Captain (Commander Luxmore) was wounded and the command was then taken over by Captain Freemantle. Commander J. Glover RN was sent into the interior with a small naval detachment to take the Ashantees in the rear. Sir Garnet with 200 seamen and marines under Captain Freemantle, together with a battalion of the West India Regt. disembarked at Elmina and defeated the enemy at Essaman on 14 October. Col. Festing also defeated them at Escabeo on 27 October. A small naval force under Lt. Wallis RN was attacked by the enemy at Abrakrampra on 5 November but they were driven off. On 27 December a Naval Brigade under Captain Blake RN with 250 officers and men (later under Captain Luxmore) marched towards Prahsu. After crossing the River Pra, they defeated the enemy at Borborassie on 29 January 1874. On 31 January a Brigade, now divided into 2 units under Captains Luxmore and Hunt-Grubbe RN, was in action at Amoaful. Hunt-Grubbe was later to arrive in Simon's Town as the Commander-in-Chief.

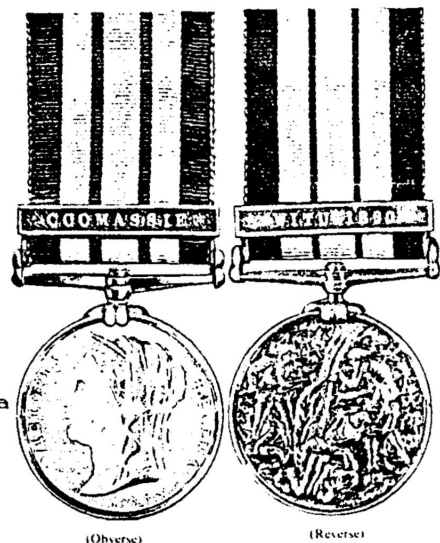


KING KOFFEE'S PALACE

Peace was signed on 13 February 1874 but King Koffee was reluctant to pay the indemnity demanded until he heard of the approach of Captain Glover and his men. All the naval officers present at the campaign received the thanks of the British Parliament. The Naval Brigade on this occasion - 2nd ASHANTEE WAR 9 June 1873 - 4 February 1874 was 400 strong from HM ships ACTIVE, AMETHYST, ARGUS, BARRACOUTA, BEACON, BITERN, COQUETTE, DECOY, DROMEDARY, DRUID, ENCOUNTER, HIMALAYA, MERLIN, RATTLER, RATTLESNAKE, SEAGULL, SIMOON, TAMAR and VICTOR-EMMANUEL.

The troops came from 17th Battery Royal Artillery; Raits Artillery; 28th Co. Royal Engineers; 2/23 and 1/42 Royal Engineers; 2 Rifle Brigade; 1 & 2 West India Regts; Medical Department; Army Service Corps.; Wood's and Russel's Native Regiments; Haussas, Kassos, Elminas (these last 3 being from West Africa itself); Armed Police; Control Department.

On the right is a picture of the Obverse side of the Ashantee War Medal 1873-74 with clasp for Coomassie. This same medal was used for East Africa 1887-1900, the relevant clasp being added. (see far right).



(Obverse)

(Reverse)

To set up an expedition like this took considerable planning and expertise. Also it had to be carried out in December, January or February if the British troops were not to become bogged down in the rainy season. When Sir Garnet Wolsely arrived in the Gold Coast to begin planning, he found to his dismay that of the 130 English officers and men in the country only 22 were fit for duty such was the toll of fever in what was termed "the white man's grave".

To begin with the troops on arrival threw a 200 ft bridge across the Prah River (see picture previous page). The troops were well prepared and stations had been set up at 10 mile intervals, each with sleeping quarters for 400 men, a hospital, storage sheds etc. There was also a very essential piece of equipment - a water purifier. Two of the stations had bakeries and 4 had abbatoirs. There was a native porter to each 3 soldiers and among their equipment there were mosquito veils, respirators and cholera belts. Their heavy uniforms were replaced by suits of grey homespun. Each day each man received a dose of quinine. There were 4000 men altogether. Wolsely exhorted them to "be cool, fire low, fire slow and charge home".

When the British finally reached Kumasi they found it empty; A bloody, barbarous city. The loot was auctioned off. The town was burned and the palace of the king blown up by army engineers. There had been no formal surrender but it was a successful and brilliantly organised expedition. Only 18 troops were actually killed in action, although 55 died of disease and 185 were wounded. £800,000 was spent on this expedition. Wolsely returned to London to be awarded a GCMG and a KCB and honorary degrees from Oxford and Cambridge. He also received £25,000 from a grateful nation. In July 1878 he was appointed Lord High Commissioner for Cyprus which the British had just taken over from the Turks.

1887-1888 13 NOVEMBER - 2 JANUARY:

There was a small operation against the Yonnie Tribe during which 1 West India Regiment was again present. Also there were naval brigades from HMS ACORN, ICARUS and RIFLEMAN.

1891-1892 GAMBIA 29 DECEMBER - 2 FEBRUARY:

During this expedition there were 300 members of the British forces present. They comprised 1 & 2 West India Regt (6 officers and 176 other ranks); Naval ships present were HMS ALECTO, SPARROW, SWALLOW, THRUSH, WIDGEON and the Colonial Steamer LILY.

This expedition was mounted because disputes between the French and British over the boundaries of their colonies in West Africa produced a great deal of unrest among the tribes affected. Early in 1891 an Anglo-French boundary commission was attacked near the Gambia River and although the party was rescued by the paddle-gunboat ALECTO, the tribes in the area remained unsettled. This little paddle-gunboat was permanently stationed in West Africa for river service from 1883 - 1899. The Senior Officer at Bathurst (Gambia) ordered the sloop SWALLOW and the

gunboat WIDGEON to join ALECTO and land some men. Peace was restored for the moment, but when rumours of fresh disturbances reached the Governor in Bathurst at the end of the year further action had to be taken. Three gunboats HMS SPARROW, WIDGEON and THRUSH were ordered to round up the rebellious chief believed to have caused the original attack.

The expedition mustered in the Gambia River on New Year's Day 1892, but the chief proved particularly elusive. Although the Naval Brigade burnt all his strongholds before withdrawing, the chief returned to the area within two weeks, and the Naval Brigade was called out again. By the end of January it was clear that reinforcements were needed and eventually close on 500 men were hunting fruitlessly through villages and bush. The expedition was finally recalled in February 1892, when it was learned that the fugitive had crossed the border and gone over to the French. No attempt appears to have been made to arrange for his extradition.

1892 GAMBIA - 8 MARCH - 25 MAY:

This was an expedition against the Tambi, Toniataba and the Jebus. Not too much information has been found on the details of this expedition save that it seems to have been divided into two parts. The Tambi Expedition 8 March - 11 April and the Toniataba and Jebu Operations 12 March - 11 April and again 12 May to 25 May. The first operation comprised 1 & 2 West India Regiments of 60 people; Bathurst Police (20); Lagos Hausa Force; plus 13 officers, seamen and Marines from HMS RACER (67), SPARROW (38), THRUSH (31) and WIDGEON (39). During the Toniataba and Jebu operations there seem to have been men from 1 West Africa Regiment, a Naval Brigade from HMS ALECTO, RACER and SPARROW and a few men from the Colonial Ship COUNTESS OF DERBY.

1894 GAMBIA 23 FEBRUARY - 13 MARCH:

There was considerable fighting during this short period. It was general unrest. This time the show of force met with more success - probably due to the size of the force sent which intimidated the locals. The Naval Brigade was commanded by Captain Gamble RN from HMS RALEIGH and went inland to attack Chief Fodi Silah. On its way back it was ambushed. Lieutenants W.H. Arnold, F.W. Hervey and Sub Lt F.W. Meister and 15 men were killed. A further attack was made on a force commanded by Lt.Col. Corbet. Reinforcements were sent under Major S.G. Fairclough and Major G.C. Madden. The town of Gonjur was bombed by Rear Admiral Bedford's squadron. Chief Silah surrendered to the French in Senegal. The naval ships included HMS ALECTO, FORTE, MAGPIE, RALEIGH, SATELLITE and WIDGEON.

1894 BENIN 19 AUGUST - 1 OCTOBER:

On 19 August 1894, the Actg. Consul-General for the Niger Coast Protectorate telegraphed for assistance to St Paul de Loanda, where the cruiser PHOEBE (Captain Francis Powell) was laying. She left immediately and on 26 August arrived at the entrance to Brohemie Creek, on the Benin River. She there found the paddle special service vessel, ALECTO (Lt J.G. Heugh) and learnt that

that craft's steam-cutter had met with a serious reverse. There had already been some trouble, and Heugh, with 2 Niger Coast Protectorate Officers, had been proceeding up Brohemie Creek in the boat and, encountering an obstruction, had been in the act of turning round when he had been fired on at close quarters by a gun in a masked battery on the bank. One man was killed and 3 injured. The Chief-Gunner's Mate had fired a rocket into the battery and then the cutter had steamed back to the ALECTO in a sinking condition, with her gun dismantled and its shield pierced.

Upon PHOEBE's arrival she and ALECTO bombarded Chief Nanna's town, near which the outrage had been perpetrated, and prepared to storm the town and capture the battery. To this end a force of natives, guarded by seamen, set to work to make a rough road which should be practicable for guns.

On 29 August a force of 144 officers and men from PHOEBE and 35 from ALECTO with 157 men of the Protectorate troops, preceded by 80 native wood-cutters, advanced in open square formation, accompanied by ALECTO's rocket apparatus, a 7-pdr. and a Maxim from the PHOEBE, and a 7-pdr. and a Maxim belonging to the Protectorate. The battery was captured and its 23 guns of 3-in. and 4-in calibre, were dismantled and spiked. The terrain was very difficult. The force had advanced at low tide and were now returning with the tide having come in so they were unable to get PHOEBE's 7pdr. across. They therefore spiked it and threw it into the water. They returned to the ships at 8 p.m.

It was clear more force was needed and word was sent to Rear-Admiral Bedford CB. He arrived on 18 September in the cruiser PHILOMEL (Captain Charles Campbell). The gunboat WIDGEON (Lt Hubert Grant-Dalton) followed on 20 September.

On 25 September the attack on Nanna's town began. One detachment led by Rear-Admiral Rawson and Captain Powell, consisted of 136 officers and men from PHOEBE, 35 from ALECTO and 50 Royal Marines with a Maxim, rocket tubes and a gun-cotton party, besides 100 Protectorate troops. WIDGEON sent some men as a reserve. The other detachment under Captain Campbell consisted of PHILOMEL people in their ship's boats. Powell and Bedford landed at the stockade. Campbell advanced up the creek and covered Bedford and Powell's detachment. On landing, Powell made a detour to the right of his previous line of advance, occupied Brohemie without opposition, and was met by Campbell. The expedition destroyed 106 guns and captured a quantity of stores, many war canoes and Chief Nanna's personal treasure amounting to £324 in British money but Nanna himself escaped through the swamps. On 1 October PHOEBE's 7-pdr. was recovered and on the same day, having destroyed the town, the naval expedition re-embarked. Several decorations were bestowed and Admiral Bedford received a KCB, while Captain Powell received a CB.

Outside the old False Bay Hospital in Simon's Town stands a small mounted gun. A brass plate says "Captured at Iriomie, Nana's stronghold, Benin River, 25 September 1894 - PHILOMEL, flagship, PHOEBE, WIDGEON and ALECTO". (The writer wonders if

this is a replacement brass plate as it bears the wrong name - perhaps the original lettering wore down with polishing over the years).

1895 BRASS RIVER 17 FEBRUARY - 26 FEBRUARY:

A factory at Akassa, belonging to the Royal Niger Company, having been looted and destroyed by natives of the Brass River district, Rear-Admiral Bedford led a punitive expedition up the River on 20 February. His force consisted of a landing party of 150 bluejackets and Marines from the cruisers ST GEORGE (newly arrived flagship on the Cape Station under Captain W.C.C. Forsyth) and BARROSA (Commander J.L.Marx) and the gun-boats WIDGEON (Lt. H.Grant-Dalton) and THRUSH (Lt H.L. Tottenham (later Admiral Tottenham C-in-C Cape), reinforced by 150 Protectorate troops. They shelled the scrub on the river bank below Nimbi and then forced their way through Tuna Creek to Nimbi Creek and landed. The enemy attacked and 3 of their war canoes were sunk by machine-gun fire, the rest withdrawing. The stockades were blown up, then Nimbi was shelled. Fire was returned and there were several casualties. Nimbi was set on fire. Several of the chiefs submitted to the force but those who had attacked the Akassa factory fled.

1895 - 1896 4TH ASHANTI WAR:

The Treaty arranged between the British authorities and the Ashantis after the expedition of 1873-74 had remained practically a dead letter. The road from Kumasi to Cape Coast Castle had not been kept open to trade. The indemnity had only been paid in part. Human sacrifices continued. Under King Prempeh the Ashanti power became more and more a disturbing influence in the hinterland of the Gold Coast colony, and an obstacle to trade and civilization. It was impossible to permit the reign of murder within a short distance of the British frontier, and demands made for the complete fulfilment of the terms of the treaty produced no result.

The King declined to treat with the Governor of the Gold Coast and despatched informal agents to England, whom the Secretary of State refused to receive. To put an end to the misgovernment and barbarities carried on at Kumasi, and to establish law, order and security for trade, an expedition was at length decided upon. The force, placed under the command Col. Sir Francis Scott, consisted of the 2nd West Yorkshire Regt., a "special service corps" made up of detachments from various regiments in the United Kingdom, under specially selected officers; the 2nd West India Regt; and the Gold Coast and Lagos Hausas. The composition of the special service corps was much criticised at the time; but as it was not called upon for fighting purposes, no inferences as to its efficiency are possible. The details of the expedition were carefully organised. Before the arrival of the staff and contingent from England, the native forces were employed in improving the road from Cape Coast Castle to Prahsu (70 miles) and in establishing road stations to serve as standing camps for the troops. About 12,000 carriers were collected, the load allotted to each being 50 lb. In addition a force of native scouts which ultimately

reached a total of 860 men, was organized in 18 companies and partly armed with Snider rifles to cover the advance of the main column and to improve the road. The king of Bekwai having asked for British protection, a small force was pressed forward and occupied this native town, about 25 miles from Kumasi, on 4th January 1896. The advance continued, and at Ordahsu a mission arrived from King Prempeh offering unconditional submission. On 17th January Kumasi was occupied, and Col. Sir F. Scott received the king. Effective measures were taken to prevent his escape, and on 20th January, King Prempeh made submission to Mr. Maxwell, the Governor of Cape Coast, in native fashion. The king, with the Queen Mother and the principal chiefs, was then arrested and taken as a prisoner to Cape Coast Castle, where they were embarked on board HMS RACON for Elmina. The fetish buildings at Bantama were burned, and on 22nd January Bokro, a village 5 miles from Kumasi, and Maheer, the king's summer palace, were visited by the native scouts and found deserted. On the same day, leaving the Hausas at Kumasi, the expedition began the return march of 150 miles to Cape Coast Castle. The complete success of the expedition was due to the excellent organization of the supply and transport services, while the promptitude with which operations were carried out probably accounts in great measure for the absence of resistance. Although no fighting occurred, fever claimed many victims, among whom was Prince Henry of Battenberg, who had volunteered for the post of military secretary to Col. Sir F. Scott.

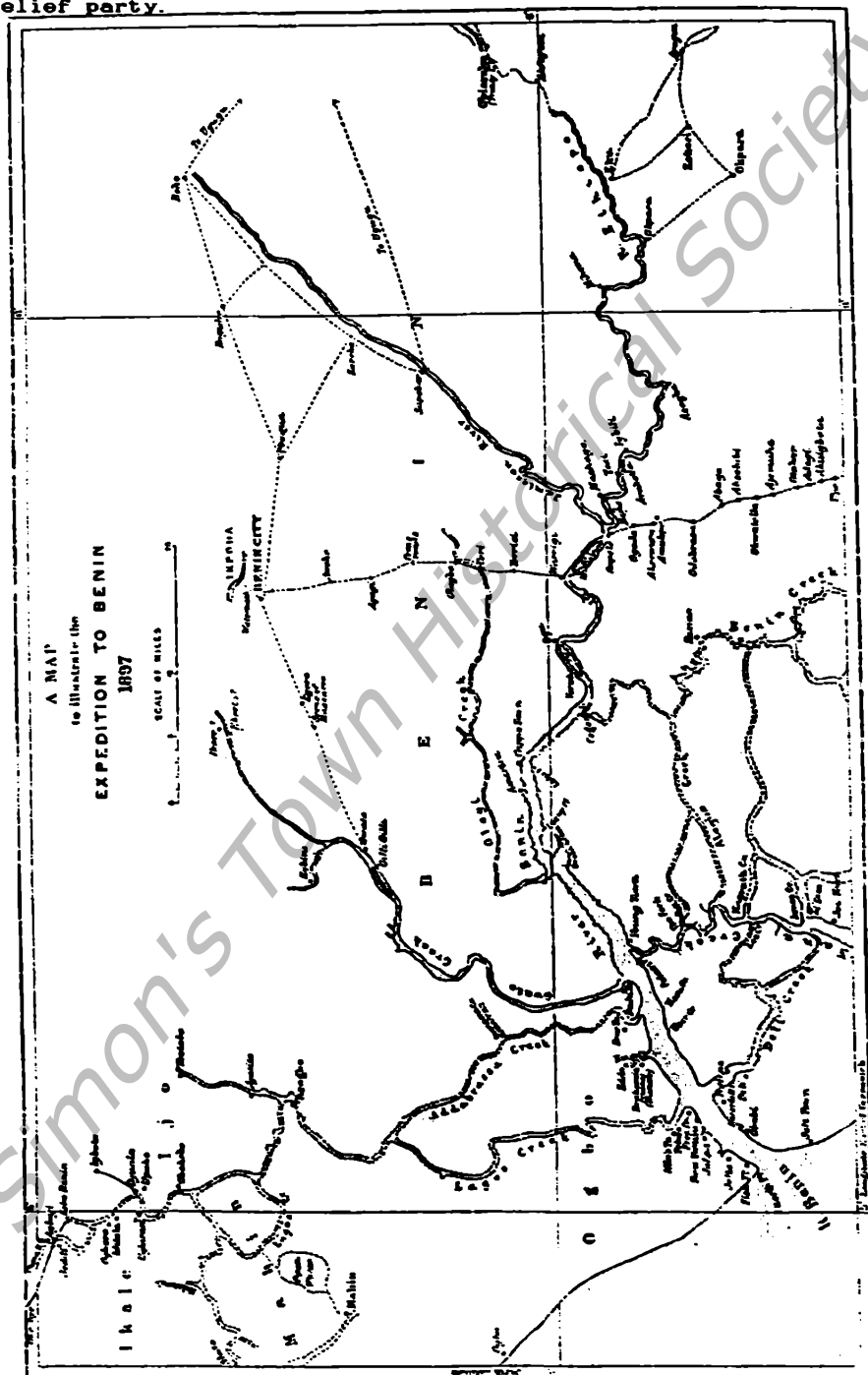
HMS ST GEORGE had on 6th December 1895, left Simon's Town for Cape Coast Castle where she arrived on Christmas Eve. A naval brigade was to take part while the fleet patrolled the coast. However, the Jameson Raid required ST GEORGE and also HMS PHILOMEL which had accompanied her, to return post haste to Simon's Town. Rear Admiral Sir Harry Rawson, newly appointed Commander-in-Chief Simon's Town, had the unique honour of being in command of two of the last important naval operations on the coast of West Africa. The first was the provision of a naval contingent for the 4th Ashanti War which eliminated the Ashanti threat to the Gold Coast. The second operation was on a far bigger scale, calling for 6 cruisers and 3 gun-boats. This was the Benin Expedition of 1897 which follows below.

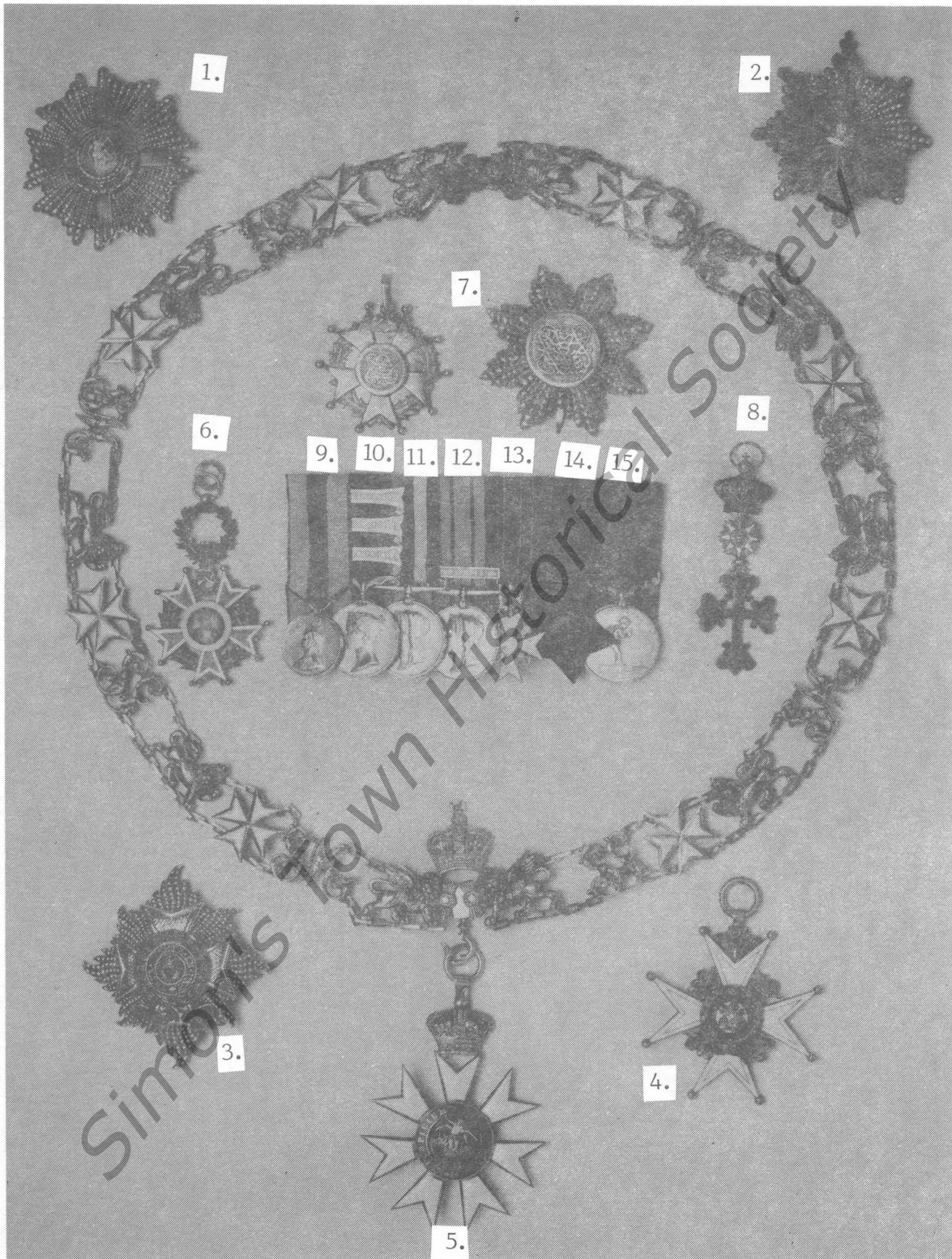
6:2:1897 - 7:8:1897 CAPTURE OF BENIN CITY:

The decision to mount this campaign was brought about by the killing of Phillips, the Actg. Consul-General and a party accompanying him. This party of Phillips and 8 potential traders plus 200 carriers, set out from Sapele on the Benin River, on a peaceful mission to the King of Benin, to gain trading concessions. No arms were being carried. They landed at Gwato and went overland through dense forest to Benin. The King sent messages advising that he did not want to receive the party but they still pressed on. The king advised he was making ju-ju for his royal father's soul. This meant crucifixion of some of the slaves. Ju-ju also prevented the king putting foot in his capital before being crowned. Ju-ju was a useful excuse to use whenever he felt like it.

The carriers were ahead of the party. Just outside the town the

main party found some of their mutilated bodies. Next thing the main party was ambushed. Phillips and 4 others were killed. Then another was killed and the remaining 2 escaped into the bush and wandered for 5 days surviving on casava leaves. Finally friendly natives took them down the river where they met a relief party.





ADMIRAL RAWSON'S MEDALS WHICH WERE RECENTLY AUCTIONED IN LONDON

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Sash badge of GCMG | 2. Civic Cross of Belgium | 3. Order of the Bath (KOC) | 4. OBE (Companion) |
| 5. G.C.M.G. | 6. Order of Hamoudieh, Zanzibar | 7. Brilliant Star of Zanzibar | |
| 8. Order of Portugal | 9. 1887 Q.Victoria Jubilee Medal | 10. China War Medal | |
| 11. Indian Mutiny Medal 1857-58 | 12. Benin 1897 | 13. Royal Victorian Order | |
| 14. Khedive of Egypt 1882 | | | |

This action was attributed to the King and the British Government decided he should pay for this, though after it was all over, it was found that he was not the principal instigator. Too late!

On 10 January 1897 news reached Simon's Town of the massacre of Phillips and his party and on 15 January orders were received for "a naval expedition against the King of Benin City under your command, 250 Niger Coast Protectorate troops will co-operate..." Admiral Rawson wired the War Office in London re the estimate of time and cost. The reply he received was "£50,000 and 6 weeks". It actually cost £30,000 and took 4 weeks!!

ST GEORGE was at Simon's Town and THRUSH and FORTE were in Malta over 8,000 miles away. ALECTO was up the River Gambia out of telegraphic communication and MALACCA (a hired transport owned by the P & O Line) was promised from England. She was fitted as a hospital and store-ship and equipped with ice-rooms and medical and surgical appliances. Hausa troops assembled at Warrigi (nowadays known as Warri) and 50 scouts were raised at Lagos. The expedition assembled at Forcados which had a moderately deep bar where ships drawing 20 ft could cross while at Benin River mouth it was much shallower although nearer to Benin City.

On 20 January Admiral Rawson left for Brass, the nearest telegraph station to Forcados. They were going to fight an unknown people. The expedition was divided into 2 Divisions of seamen, each of 220 men strong, 120 marines and a guard for the carrier column consisting of 70 seamen to act as escorts. In addition there was a Headquarters staff of 50 plus 250 native troops and 70 scouts. The whole force totalled 1,000 men under Admiral Rawson with Captain G. le C. Egerton as Chief of Staff.

Admiral Rawson and ST GEORGE arrived within 10 days. Aboard they were busy while en route from Simon's Town. Provisions for 24 men for 1 day were packed in tin-lined boxes and weighed 56 lbs. Companies were organised in multiples of 12 so that in some cases boxes would last for 2 days. 60 men were in 1 Company - 1st day they got 3 boxes, equal to rations for 72 men, leaving 12 rations over. Next day they got 2 boxes equalling 48 rations which added to the 12 remaining from the previous day equalled the 60 rations required.

It was decided that the main body would march to Benin. A division from PHILOMEL, WIDGEON and BAROSSA under Captain M.P. O'Callaghan, would go up Gwato creek to the town of Gwato, sack it and burn it and cut off fugitives and keep the local "army" busy. A division from ALECTO and PHOEBE would venture up the Jamieson River to Sapobar and create a diversion.

By 9 February all ships on the Forcados bar had disembarked their men, and on the same day the Gwato force proceeded. On 10 February the Sapobar force set off. Meanwhile Hausas under Col. Hamilton cut down the jungle and cleared a road from Warrigi to Ceri while the Intelligence Officer, Cdr. R.H.S. Bacon, surveyed and gathered information. River steamers set off with

the main force. It took 4- 5 hours to get through the mangroves into the main Benin River. Two hours later they were at Warrigi. On 11 February the Admiral and his staff and the 1st and 2nd divisions of seamen marched 7 miles to Ceri in great heat and discomfort. 12 February saw the main advance to Ceri. To find where the enemy were hiding they fired a maxim gun into the bush. Almost immediately an attack commenced, but the enemy soon gave up and retreated, leaving their camp undisturbed. This became the expedition's main depot. Admiral Rawson called for reinforcements from the ships at the Forcados bar. One of the main discomforts was that there was no drinking water and this was a great setback.

On 16 February the Admiral decided on a flying attack by a small force of 560 men consisting of:

30 Headquarters staff & Medical Staff 40 Scouts
240 Hausas 120 seamen (2 companies)
120 marines (2 companies) 10 Rocket and demolition parties.
The seamen were under Lt Fyler and Lt Griffiths and were drawn from THRUSH and ST GEORGE. The Marines' commanding officer was Captain Beaumont with Captain Byrne RMLI. The Hausas had 2 x 7 pdr guns and a maxim and there were 4 maxims in the remainder of the column. The advance guard were under Lt. Col. Hamilton. The rear guard were under Captain C. Campbell RN. The main body were under the immediate command of Admiral Rawson. There were 820 carriers of whom 290 were there to transport drinking water alone. At 9 p.m. the Admiral provided a little of his own ju-ju!! 4 signal rockets dropped blue, red and green stars from the heavens. The force spent that night at a village called Awoko.

At 6.30 a.m. next day the force set off with full water bottles and 1/4lb of biscuit being carried by each man. All went well with spasmodic attacks on the column by the enemy, until 10.30 a.m. when Torpedo Instructor Ansell was killed. He was quickly buried alongside the path. Communication was by messengers carrying notes along the column. When a halt was made later, water was issued and rockets fired in the general direction of Benin. Luckily they hit the ju-ju compounds and people ran out panic-stricken. The 7 pdrs were brought to bear on a house at the front where the enemy were massing. The expedition advanced by stages and finally the King's compound was entered and secured. It was found to be unoccupied. If the King had held on there the British might not have been so lucky. The expedition achieved its object, although the King escaped and was not captured for many months. 1 officer and 3 men were killed and 2 officers and 24 men were wounded.

The City of Blood was captured but its sights and smells lived on for years in the minds of the British troops. There was blood everywhere from the human sacrifices. Skulls and bones were strewn everywhere. The storehouses contained the usual cheap glass trinkets and tawdry finery with which traders used to tickle the fancy of the natives. Nearby, buried under the dirt of ages, were several hundred unique bronze plaques, superbly cast.

The next day early in the morning a force under Captain Campbell

set out to find water and luckily, 3 miles away, found a fast-running stream. It was decided to try and establish communications by river, but this failed, the creek running instead north-east away from Benin and not towards the estuary. Sunday 21 January a church parade was to be held. Suddenly at 4 p.m. on the Saturday fire was seen about 300 yards off and it was discovered that the buildings were alight and the fire was spreading fast to the tinder dry thatch roofs. A lot of the men's personal effects went up in smoke, besides many interesting local relics. The fire had scarcely died down when it marched a train of carriers with provisions etc from HMS FORTE. Just as well as bedding, waterproof sheets, candles etc had all been lost in the fire. They now decided to set off at 8.30 on the Sunday to return to the ships. Progress was slow due to the wounded. 28 February saw them all back on board their ships, but sadly many, many men were down with fever.

400 men and officers were down with fever and on their return to Simon's Town it was necessary to convert the corrugated iron army Drill Hall opposite St Francis Church into a hospital. It took many months before the sick list was finally clear. The Admiral himself was dangerously ill with fever. He then developed an arthritic hip which henceforth caused him agonising pain. He was 55 at the time of the expedition.

On his return to Simon's Town Admiral Rawson set about the formation of a Sailors' and Soldiers' Club in Cape Town. In January 1898 when ST GEORGE paid-off from the Cape Station and reached the United Kingdom, the officers and crew were given a banquet by the Corporation of the City of Portsmouth. Queen Victoria invited them to Osborne on the Isle of Wight, the first time this had ever been done to a whole ship's company and every man was introduced to the Queen. The Admiral was awarded the KCB.

Admiral Rawson stayed on at Simon's Town until May 1898 when he was relieved by Admiral Harris. He was fêted by the public and the Cape Houses of Parliament and sadly missed by the inhabitants of Simon's Town. It was due to him that a large new reservoir was built above the town. The people of Simon's Town presented him with an illuminated address and Lady Rawson with an ostrich feather fan. Admiral Rawson implored the Admiralty to build a graving dock in Simon's Town as the one in Cape Town was too small for a ship like the ST GEORGE. The graving dock was soon to be commenced and finally opened in 1910.

SEPTEMBER 1897 - AUGUST 1898:

There were small minor expeditions to the hinterland of Lagos, to Borgu and many small towns in the Central Division. No Naval personnel were mentioned as taking part in this series.

18:2:1898 - 9:3:1899 SIERRA LEONE:

There were expeditions to the Sherboro district and to the Brempe River area. The army again consisted of 1 & 2 West India Regt. and a small contingent from the R.G.A. The Naval

Brigade came from HMS ALECTO, BLONDE, FOX and the colonial ship COUNTESS OF DERBY. HMS WIDGEON was also present but did not offer any seamen.

1900 - 1901 ASHANTI WAR:

In 1900, after 4 years of peace, a serious rebellion broke out in Ashanti. The tribes involved were the Kumasis, Adansis and Kokofus; other tribes of the Ashanti confederation remained loyal. The rebels were, however, able to command a force of 40,000. 28 March found the governor of the Gold Coast, Sir F. Hodgson, holding a public palaver (or talk) at Kumasi. Lady Hodgson had also accompanied her husband on this occasion. They and an accompanying party of Hausas and a few missionaries took refuge in the fort at Kumasi when the talks went sour. Fortunately on 18 April 100 Gold Coast Constabulary arrived as reinforcements. The fort was again attacked on 29 April but the Kumasis were repulsed and later that day 250 Lagos Constabulary arrived, but without much ammunition left. Eventually inside the fort were 700 men, Major Morris having arrived on 15 May from the British territory north of Ashanti with 250 men. Outside the fort were gathered 3,000 native refugees. Famine and disease soon began to tell their tale. On 4 June the Governor and 26 of the 29 Europeans inside the fort, together with 600 Hausas sallied out of the fort. They avoided the main road and finally reached the safety of Cape Coast Castle on 10 July.

A large force under Col. Willcocks prepared to relieve Kumasi. A force of just over 1,000 men (West Africans), some Yaos from Central Africa and over 1,000 Sikhs with 134 British officers and 35 British non-commissioned officers finally set out. On 30 September the Kumasis were completely beaten at Obasa, which brought about the surrender of many rebel chiefs, thereafter only 2 remaining in the field and they were captured on 28 December. Thus 1901 opened with peace restored. Sadly there were 1007 casualties (including the number who died of disease). Col. Willcocks was promoted and created a KCMG, was mentioned in the King's speech at the opening of Parliament in 1901 and received the Freedom of the City of London, with a sword of honour. Hodgson was appointed Governor of Barbados and Major Nathan took his place as governor of Cape Coast Castle. By an Order in Council dated 26 September 1901, Ashanti was formally annexed to the British dominions.

COMMENT: These punitive expeditions brought a certain stability to the West Coast of Africa which lasted until the demands for independence emerged towards the end of the 1940s and 1950s. The resulting and currently despised "Colonial regimes" mainly British and French, which superseded those of the local rulers described in this article provided a basis for development and national progress unprecedented in this history of West Africa, a record which its rulers since the grant of "independence" without exception, have failed to achieve. Perhaps another "policeman" will have to be found. The Royal Navy as usual set a very fine example.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Biography of Admiral Sir Harry Rawson by his son
Benin, City of Blood, R.H. Bacon
Journal of a Residence in Ashanti, J. Dupuis
Narrative of the Ashanti War, H.J. Rickets
The Ashanti War and the Fanti and Ashanti, Brackenbury & Hayshe
The Downfall of Prempeh, R.S.S. Baden-Powell
History of the Gold Coast, W.E.F. Ward
The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of
Ashanti, K.A. Busia.
Send a Gun-boat, Major and Preston
Encyclopaedia Britannica 1875, 1908 editions
Queen Victoria's Little Wars, Byron Farwell
British Battles and Medals, Maj.L.L.Gordon
The Royal Navy - A History, Sir W. Laird Clowes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Editor thanks Commander Bisset, Staff Officer, S.A. Naval
Museums for his assistance and information.
The Editor also thanks Dr. Arthur Davey, a Vice-President of
this Society, who pointed Mrs. Read in the direction of many of
the books of reference in the South African Library, Cape Town.
Special thanks go to Mr. Mussel of Medal News (Token Publishing
Ltd) of Honiton, Devon, U.K. who very kindly loaned the Society
the negative of Admiral Rawson's decorations and gave permission
for us to use this in our Bulletin. He also obtained permission
from the auctioneers Glendinnings for the use of the negative of
these truly wonderful medals. A copy in colour of the photo-
graph of Admiral Rawson's medals has been handed to the Curator
of the Simon's Town Museum for possible display.

oooooooo00000oooooooo

FLAG OFFICERS OF THE CAPE

V. White

PART IX THE HON. GEO. ELLIOT CB FRS RN 1837 - 1840
REAR ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD DURNFORD KING 1840 - 1841

He succeeded Admiral Campbell in 1837 as C-in-C at the Cape and
remained here until 1840. He was born in 1784, the 2nd son of
the 1st Earl of Minto and his wife Anna Amyard. Admiral Elliot
was the brother-in-law of Sir Rufane Donkin. The Admiral's
nephew the Hon. Charles J.B. Elliot followed him into the Navy.

The Hon. Geo. entered the Royal Navy as a 1st Class Volunteer in
1794. His first commission in August 1800 saw him serving under
Nelson in the SAN JOSEPH. On this ship also was Captain Th.
Masterman Hardy. Elliot rose rapidly in rank and by 1802 was
made a Captain. He was Captain of VICTORY in 1827. In 1830 he
was made Naval ADC to William IV. December 1834 - April 1835 he
was 1st Secretary of the Admiralty. From April 1835 - September
1837 he was Lord of the Admiralty Board. In 1837 he reached
Flag rank and was appointed to the Cape Station in September of

that year. In February 1840 he proceeded to the East Indies to become C-in-C. He was Joint Plenipotentiary with his nephew the Hon. Charles superintending the war from July to November 1840 in China. Due to ill health he had to be invalided home in VOLAGE in December of that year. He was put on 1/2 pay and appointed General of the Mint in Scotland.

In 1810 he had married Elizabeth Ness of Osgodovie, York and they had 5 sons and 5 daughters. Two of their sons followed their father into the service and his second daughter married Commander Lord William Compton RN. The Admiral's brother John Edmund Elliot painted many early Cape scenes. At Queen Victoria's coronation Admiral Elliot was promoted from Admiral of the Blue to Admiral of the White which meant he now flew a white ensign on the mizzen mast of the ship.

REAR ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD DURNFORD KING 1840 - 1841 succeeded Admiral Elliot as C-in-C, Cape. He was born circa 1775, the son of William King and his wife Hannah Isaacson of Southampton and of Suffolk. Hannah herself came from Fenton, Northumberland. Sir Edward's brother Andrew was also in the Royal Navy and passed away on 30th June 1835 having attained the rank of captain.

From 1786-1788 Sir Edward was borne on the books of IRRESISTABLE (74) and in June 1789 we find him a midshipman in DIRECTOR (64). In her and later LEVIATHON he was Actg. Captain. He was in the East Indies in 1814 when due to ill-health he was returned to England. In July 1830 he was made a Rear Admiral, knighted and made a KCH in January 1833 and was Commander-in-Chief Brazil and the Cape, based in Rio. In July 1840 he was made C-in-C Cape Station and he was here until the end of 1842. His flagship was SOUTHAMPTON (Flag Captain W. Hillyar) which was present in action of Port Natal (see STHS Bulletin Vol. XIV No. 4 - for details).

oooooooooooooooo

OBITUARY: COMMODORE J. C. GOOSEN SM SAN (Retd)

A long-standing member of our Society, John died on 4th September 1992. He is probably best known as the compiler and part author of the first comprehensive history of the South African Navy - "S.A. Navy - the First 50 Years".

He was born in 1918. He joined the headquarters of the S.A. Naval Service as a 2nd Grade Clerk in 1936. In his spare time he was a member of the RNVF in Cape Town. In the 2nd World War he joined the SANF and was later commissioned as a Paymaster Lt. When the war ended he joined the Permanent Force and held several senior posts. In 1947 he married Doreen Hutton - a former SWAN and they have one son.

John Goosen was made a Commander in 1954. From 1958-1961 he was Naval Liaison Officer in London during which period many of South Africa's ships purchased in terms of the Simon's Town Agreement were commissioned, one of which SAS HAERLEM was launched by Mrs. Goosen. John was made a Captain in late 1961 and in 1962 was appointed honorary ADC to the State President. He was promoted to Commodore in 1966. He retired on 31 October 1973. John was a member of the S.A. Naval Museum Advisory Board and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

FIRING BROADSIDES AGAINST BOERS: WARSHIPS VERSUS HORSEMEN ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN COAST

Graham Dominy

In his article "Siege of Port Natal" (Medal News 26 (11), Dec. 1989/Jan 1990: 15-17), Ian Knight makes an intriguing throwaway remark: Writing on the landing of the relief force from the schooner CONCH and from HMS SOUTHAMPTON, he suggests that the covering fire from the frigate was "...the first - and perhaps only? - broadside fired from a man-of-war against the Boers."

On reading this, a faint warning bell rang as the facts of an obscure incident during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 came dimly to mind. I am grateful to Ian Knight for unwittingly encouraging me to find out more about these long forgotten events which should shed light on some otherwise undramatic Anglo-Boer War medals.

Naval brigades were landed in South Africa from warships of the Royal Navy on several occasions during the 19th century, but there was rarely any opportunity for the ships themselves to get involved in action. Naval brigades took part in military actions during the Frontier Wars in the Eastern Cape, the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and during the First Anglo-Boer War of 1881. Warships played a noteworthy part during the Anglo-Zulu War, but that is another story. During the Majuba campaign of 1881 the action took place hundreds of miles inland and only the landed naval brigades were involved.

When the Second Anglo-Boer War broke out in October 1899, seamen and naval guns were rushed to the front lines in northern Natal and in the northern Cape. Then, as the situation worsened (from the British point of view), the defences of Durban were prepared to face a Boer attack and warships in the outer anchorage were put on the alert. These precautions were unnecessary as the Boer forces settled down to besiege Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking. None of the seaports was seriously threatened.

After the capture of Bloemfontein and Pretoria in 1900 the Boers adopted guerilla tactics to continue their opposition to British occupation, but they realised that if they could not intensify pressure on the British in some way, their cause would ultimately be doomed. These facts led the Boer generals to plan a series of attacks on the Cape Colony in 1901 and 1902 to arouse the Afrikaners of the Cape to rebellion and to attempt to make contact with supporters in Europe either through German South-West Africa or, more fancifully, by sea. Ironically it was during these raids that the coastline and several minor ports of the Cape Colony were more seriously threatened than Durban had been during the major campaign of 1899.

My hunt for an Anglo-Boer naval engagement took me up some blind alleys before I found a lead. Thomas Pakenham in "The Boer War" (London, 1979) does not mention any Boer commando reaching the coast, but does point out that in 1901, Lord Kitchener had to tie up a large number of troops in garrisons at the Cape ports

because most Cape Afrikaners seemed to sympathise with the republican cause (Pakenham 1979:496). Rayne Kruger in "Good-bye Dolly Gray: The Story of the Boer War" (London, 1967:398-401) describes how Orange Free State commando leader, and former judge, James B.M. Hertzog raided the Cape Colony in 1901 and headed for Lambert's Bay where, rumour had it, he would meet a ship from Europe, loaded with munitions, supplies and volunteers for the Boer cause: "A ship indeed waited for them. But it flew the White Ensign and greeted them with a salvo of shells."

Certainly this was a lead, but what ship, and when did the incident take place? I began a search through some contemporary sources. Louis Creswicke, in Vol.VII of "South Africa and the Transvaal War" (Manchester, n.d.:198), painting the most glowing picture of British activities, glosses over Hertzog's raid into the Cape without mentioning the Lambert's Bay incident, but he does mention the name of a warship, HMS BARRACOUTA, in connection with General Jan Smuts' campaign in Namaqualand in 1902. So, were there perhaps two incidents rather than one? I tried a quick check on another modern source, Byron Farwell's "The Great Boer War" (London 1976), which describes Smuts' invasion of the Cape in some detail. In the dying months of the war Smuts was virtually the master of Namaqualand and attacked the copper mining centres of Concordia, Springbok and Okiep. While he was planning this offensive his men had time for relaxation and Smuts took some 60 to 70 lads who had never before seen the sea down to the coast to swim in the cold South Atlantic. They had a wild time: riding their horses into the surf and partying on the beach. Farwell describes how a smaller group, under Commandant Maritz (who defected to the Germans in 1914), rode to the sea further south and saw a British warship at anchor off Lambert's Bay. They happily fired on it and were harmlessly shelled in return. The Boers bolted, boasting that they had fought in the only naval action of the war. Farwell, however, reminds his readers of the earlier incident at Lambert's Bay in 1901 when Hertzog's men were shelled by a British warship and Farwell names her, HMS SYBILLE, and gives his source as the "Times History" (Farwell 1976: 347-8).

Erskine Childers, the editor of "The Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902 Vol V" (London 1907) was also the author of the Edwardian spy story "The Riddle of the Sands" and had a dramatic turn of phrase. He described the aim of Hertzog's campaign as being to meet a supply ship from Europe at Lambert's Bay, and thus reinforced, to raid the rich areas around Cape Town. Unfortunately when his patrols reached Lambert's Bay in January 1901, indeed they saw a vessel,

"...but it flew the white ensign and saluted the raiders with a volley of shell as a reminder that they had reached the element where Britain, under Providence, was undisputed mistress."

An intriguing footnote on this page names the ship as HMS SYBILLE, wrecked shortly afterwards at this spot." (Childers 1907: 13-131).

Hertzog's raid had prompted a major scare in the Cape and it was

linked with aggressive moves by other commandos, notably that commanded by Commandant Kritzinger. Captain Maurice Grant, author of Vol. IV of the official "History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902" (London, 1910), stresses the extent to which the British commanders were dependent upon the navy to plug the gaps in their extended lines in the Cape. HMS SYBILLE, "steaming up to Lambert's Bay" was "the true left flank of the British forces." HMS DORIS under Captain W.L. Grant, had to land sailors to defend Mossel Bay and provide a link of communication to Col. Douglas Haig's isolated column. And HMS WIDGEON patrolled close inshore, beyond Plettenberg Bay, reassuring the coast dwellers "who had given themselves up for lost." (Grant, 1910: 70-72). Grant does not mention HMS SYBILLE going into action at Lambert's Bay, nor does he mention her being wrecked there.

Malcolm Turner, in "Shipwrecks & Salvage in South Africa - 1505 to the present" (Cape Town 1988: 141) describes HMS SYBILLE as a 2nd Class steel cruiser of 3,400 tons, commanded by Captain Hugh Williams, which was the guardship at Lambert's Bay and involved in the only "naval engagement" of the Anglo-Boer War when she "exchanged fire with Gen. J.B.M. Hertzog's men." On the night of 16 January 1901 Captain Williams was ashore and the SYBILLE was being temporarily commanded by Lt. Holland. There was a severe storm and heavy seas which sent the ship drifting south. The lights of a farm were mistaken for those of Lambert's Bay and the SYBILLE went aground opposite Steenbokfontein. One man was killed, but the rest of the crew got ashore and salvaged most of her guns. Since then the wreck has been picked over several times by teams of divers searching for a box of gold sovereigns that she is reputed to have had on board.

The curator of the Sandveld Museum at Lambert's Bay kindly provided me with a colourful account of how the Boers crept through the scrub and fired at the warship, killing a Royal Marine. The victim, Cpl Smallwood, is buried in the Lambert's Bay cemetery, next to Able Seaman Jones who died when the ship was wrecked. The cemetery is next door to the Museum. This is a fascinating story, marred only by the fact that the local tradition has Jan Smuts as the leader of the Boer commando. Smuts did not arrive on the west coast until the following year.

Turner reiterates that HMS SYBILLE'S action with the Boers was the only naval engagement of the war, yet Farwell describes two incidents. This needless to say intrigued me. Clearly, Farwell's source for Maritz's action is Deneys Reitz's vivid first-hand account "Commando, a Boer Journal of the Boer War" (London 2nd ed. 1931: 296-297), my favourite book on the Anglo-Boer War. Reitz gives a lively description of Smuts taking the farm lads to the sea and their antics "riding barebacked into the surf, shouting and laughing, whenever a rider and his mount were thrown headlong by the breakers." Reitz also recounts an incident with a local coloured fisherman who "stared open-mouthed at the sight of armed Boers patrolling the water-line." Reitz accosted the man and asked angrily for the road to England. Back came the reply "My God, Daas, don't do it; the water is over your head here, and you will all be drowned."

Reitz repeated his story to Commandant Maritz who told him that two of his men had:

".....recently ridden on to the beach at Lambert's Bay where an English cruiser lay at anchor close in-shore. Dismounting they opened fire. Their bullets pattered harmlessly against the armoured side of the warship, and when the crew turned a gun on them they made haste to disappear into the sandhills, but, on their return to their commando, they boasted that they had fought the only naval action of the war."

Reitz's account of this incident is secondhand and I could not trace any corroborative evidence which named the ship. I then contacted the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein and the Simon's Town Museum in the Cape and with the help of the interested and dedicated staff at these institutions I found an information bonanza.

I was referred by the Bloemfontein War Museum to two sets of memoirs by Boer officers - Generals Bouwer and Maritz. Manie Maritz published his memoirs, "My lewe en strewe" (My life and struggle), privately in 1939 when his ageing mind was filled with pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic thoughts, so the book is not well balanced, but rather a selection of incidents from his life which he uses for propaganda purposes. He does, however, mention that some of his men fired on a British warship during the Anglo-Boer War. He does not date the incident, nor does he name the ship and he places the action as occurring in Saldahna Bay whereas Reitz locates it near Lambert's Bay. Maritz does, however, mention the names of his men involved in the incident - Thys Boonzaaier and P. van Niekerk (Maritz 1939:46).

An article in an Afrikaans newspaper, *Beeld*, by S. Vercueil, published on 13 October 1979, gives some specific details. On 15 October 1901, Maritz's commando attacked Saldahna Bay and the locals fled to sea in a small steam vessel. At this stage HMS PARTRIDGE sailed into the bay and was fired at by a small party of Cape rebels under Thys Boonzaaier and Petrus van Niekerk. The ship returned the fire and shelled the dunes until Boonzaaier withdrew his party to rejoin Maritz's main force. The article concludes with a statement that HMS PARTRIDGE was the only ship to be attacked by Boers during the Anglo-Boer war.

Newspaper articles can be unreliable sources, but in this case it confirms what Maritz said about his own movements and the incident fits into the chronology of activity worked out by other historians and ties in with what is known of naval movements.

An Afrikaans local history of the Olifants river valley (Olifant = Elephant) by P.L. Scholtz ("Die historiese ontwikkeling van die Onder-Olifantsrivier 1660-1902" - Archives Year Book for South African History - 29 (2) 1966) describes Maritz as being very active in the area in August and September 1901 before lunging south at the end of September and occupying Hopefield, which is inland of Saldahna Bay, in early October. By the middle of October a strong British force had driven Maritz back north into the Olifants river valley (Scholtz 1966:165-6).

The curator of the Simon's Town Museum kindly provided me with information from the mooring and slipping books of the Royal Naval Dockyard from which naval movements can be deduced. HMS PARTRIDGE, a first-class gunboat of 755 tons, left Simon's Town on 25 August 1901 and returned to base to coal only on 5 and 8 - 10 October. The curator also sent me copies of correspondence between the captain of the PARTRIDGE Lt. Eustace Leatham, and Mr. Birchfield, the customs officer of St Helena Bay. This exchange took place in November 1901, after the incident with Maritz, but clearly indicates that the ship had been operating off the west coast for some time.

My source at the Bloemfontein War Museum confidently asserted that HMS PARTRIDGE was the ship involved and referred me to the memoirs of General Ben Bower. This is a very much more reliable work than Maritz's propagandistic reminiscences. Dr. O.J.O. Ferreira edited the "Memoirs of General Ben Bower: as written by P.J. le Riche" (Pretoria 1980) and has produced an authoritative, but still very readable work. Bower was one of Smuts' senior officers and held a semi-independent command. He describes how on 18 January 1902 he led a patrol to "Doorn Bay" (Doringbaai on modern maps) where there was a British warship offshore. Ferreira's footnotes tentatively identify her as HMS PARTRIDGE (Bower 1980:232-233 fns 22 & 24). Bower's account of the action is vivid:

"After placing ourselves comfortably we opened fire on it. They scorned to do anything at first, but afterwards threw over a few shells, which, as they had no idea where we were, banged harmlessly into the dunes behind us. We continued our fire and later she hauled up her anchor and steamed away. It would of course have been mere madness to attempt sending men ashore in boats to attack us. I don't know whether we are entitled to claim a naval victory. She went to Lambert's Bay and we returned to Windhoek near Urionskraal.

I suppose her captain found we were spoiling his paint. I should like to have heard what he had to say about it", (Bower 1980: 233).

This is another "naval engagement" to add to those with Hertzog and Maritz's men. The ship engaged by Ben Bower may not have been the PARTRIDGE as in a letter to Mr. Birchfield dated 20 December 1901, Captain Leatham regrets that the PARTRIDGE would no longer be operating on the west coast as she was being sent to Zanzibar and would probably be there until April 1902. It is not clear from the dockyard records which ship it could have been. It could NOT have been the BARRACOUTA which seems to have been refitting from 11 January until 25 February 1902. It is possible that the PARTRIDGE was recalled to cover the west coast while the BARRACOUTA was in dock.

The BARRACOUTA, a 3rd class cruiser of 1580 tons commanded by Commander S.H.B. Ash, did play an important role in the final flare-up of the war: Smuts' campaign in Namaqualand. In March 1902 Smuts decided to attack the copper mining centres in Namaqualand and overwhelmed the weakly garrisoned centres of

Springbok and Concordia (which surrendered without firing a shot). Okiep, the main centre of the Cape Copper Mining Company was stoutly defended by Lt.Col. W. Shelton, of the West Surrey Regiment, with a mixed garrison of coloureds, white miners (many of Cornish descent), a handful of Warwickshire Militia and a small detachment of Cape Garrison Artillery. Shelton was described by Reitz as being given to "oratory, and high-flown phrases about England's far-flung Empire and the upholding of the flag." (Commando: 309-310).

Port Nolloth, the copper mining port of Namaqualand was threatened, but HMS BARRACOUTA was in the harbour. Ash landed a party of blue jackets with a ship's gun and this small naval brigade assisted the Namaqualand Border Scouts under Captain M. MacDonald, in securing the approaches to the port. This enabled a relief force for Okiep to be sent by sea from Cape Town and saved the British from an arduous march across the desert. Detachments of the 2nd East Surrey Regiment and the 2nd Royal Fusiliers were sent inland from Port Nolloth along the railway line to attack the Boers at Steinkopf, but were repulsed (Grant, 1910: 468-472).

All this time, peace negotiations were proceeding at Vereeniging and at the end of April, Smuts, accompanied by the irrepressible young Denys Reitz as his orderly, departed under a flag of truce from Port Nolloth for the negotiating table.

Okiep was relieved on 4 May 1902 and Smuts' force, without its leader, withdrew rather than face the relieving column in a set-piece battle. Col. Shelton had held Okiep for 30 days under siege circumstances similar to those faced by Baden-Powell at Mafeking more than two years earlier. On 31 May 1902, the Boer leaders and Lord Kitchener signed the terms of the Peace of Vereeniging which ended the Anglo-Boer War. The Namaqualand campaign was almost the last flurry in the war.

This probably accounts for the fact that the British combatants did not seem to do well in terms of medals and decorations. Despite a careful study of "South African War Honour and Awards 1899-1902 (London 1987), I could not trace a mention of Col. Shelton, Commander Ash, Lt. Leatham or the vessels BARRACOUTA, PARTRIDGE or SYBILLE. Only 5 members of the Namaqualand and Border Scouts (Lts. H.G. Maddison & H.R. Rich; Sgt C. Muller, Qrmr-Sgt L.S. Panizza and Pte B. Links) are mentioned in Lord Kitchener's final despatch of 23rd June 1902, but no specific events or services are described. The officers and men of the SYBILLE, the PARTRIDGE and the BARRACOUTA would have been entitled to the Queen's and the King's South Africa medals. So too would the crew of HMS DORIS (the flagship which landed a naval brigade in 1899 and which assisted at Lambert's Bay after SYBILLE ran aground) and the gunboat HMS WIDGEON which protected the south coast of the Cape Colony in early 1901 from Commandant Kritzingen's commando.

The men of Hertzog, Maritz and Smuts' forces would have been entitled to the Anglo-Boere-Oorlog Medalje issued by the Union Government. Ben Bouwer received a most interesting array of decorations. For his services in the Anglo-Boer War he was

awarded the "Dekoratie voor Trouwe Dienst" (Decoration for Devoted Service), a very high award which leaders of the calibre of Louis Botha and Jan Smuts received. He also received the "Anglo-Boere-Oorlog medalje", and, having been wounded in Namaqualand, the "Lint voor Wonden" - the Boer equivalent of a Purple Heart. During the 1st World War Bouwer served the Union Government and the imperial cause loyally. He tried to persuade his erstwhile comrade, Manie Maritz, not to rebel and served with the Union troops in German South-West Africa. He received the 1st World War campaign and victory medals and was mentioned-in-despatches. He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his services on the staff of the Union Defence Force (Bouwer 1980:4-8). A remarkable collection of awards for service both for and against the Crown.

The War Office was not only mean with decorations for Col.Shelton, but apparently refused to award the Queen's South Africa Medal to the coloured members of the Okiep garrison. This prompted the Cape Copper Mining Company to strike a special medal for the defenders of Okiep known as the Cape Copper Company's Medal. As with the siege medal issued by the Mayor of Kimberley for the defenders of that better known town, the War Office would not allow the Okiep medal to be worn with uniform (E.G.M. Alexander et al, "South African Orders, Decorations and Medals", Cape Town 1986:100).

The Okiep Medal is of major numismatic interest, but for me the most fascinating part of the quest for Anglo-Boer naval engagements was to find out how many times ships and horsemen did fire at each other and how often the participants thought that their actions were unique. By my count there were three incidents when most sources state that the action with the SYBILLE was the only incident. Regrettably I could not firmly identify the ship which engaged Bouwer. However, I believe that this is the first time that a chronology of Anglo-Boer naval actions has been put together: and what a merry sea-dance it led me to reveal finally a pattern of little known and inaccurately recorded events.

(Republished with the permission of Token Publishing, England, publishers of MEDAL NEWS, in which this article first appeared.) Ed.

oooooooo000oooooooo

BOOK REVIEW: MAPS OF THE SOUTH WESTERN CAPE OF GOOD HOPE by Margaret Cartwright. Published by the South African Library, Cape Town. Price R40 (S.A) or US\$25 or £15. Plus p & p. This shows early maps of the growth and settlement of the South-Western Cape. There are over 500 entries arranged by area and date, with indexes to names and titles. A much needed work and very well set out and researched. All the maps are available for consultation at the Library either in their original form or as facsimiles.

Margaret is a hard-working member of the Society's committee and it gives us much pleasure to see what she has achieved.

THE LEGION OF THE LOST: UNCOMMEMORATED SAILORS, MARINES AND SOLDIERS AT THE CAPE 1795 - 1913.

Arthur Davey

Following the British seizure of the Cape in 1795, small naval hospitals were established at Table Bay and Simon's Town. These institutions were a fairly innovative feature then: in England the main naval hospitals, Haslar (Portsmouth), Plymouth and Chatham only came into full use in the early 1760s. After that, small hospitals, really little more than sick-bays ashore, were opened at other naval ports in Great Britain and at colonial outposts. These smaller hospitals were usually staffed by a surgeon, a dispenser, a purveyor or a clerk and two or three orderlies then called "Hospital mates".

Lady Anne Barnard has left a brief but scathing description of the Cape's havens for stricken seamen. At False Bay, she wrote "....there is sadly little room for the poor sick fellows the Honest Tar, multitudes of whom have not been lost for want of air and wholesome accommodation they having been so closely packed in their Hospital with scurvy-ulcers, etc that it was certain death going into it. Of late the physician to the Navy (Dr. Pattison) has got with MUCH difficulty leave to have the use of a stable.....and since 60 men have been put into it many of them recovered - what a pity more places are not created for them, the price of 20 lives saved would save hundreds - aye thousands of people in this Hot climate." The navy's hospital in Cape Town was even worse, placed "above the publick ovens" where the languishing creatures are baked into the next world with it [bread]....".

At first the navy was at a distinct disadvantage at Simon's Town as the army had appropriated the Dutch East India Company's hospital - so it had to make do with the deplorable accommodation described by Lady Anne Barnard and in that year, 1797, there were 75 deaths of seamen and marines. In 1798 more spacious quarters for the sick were acquired (The Residency) and the death tally was reduced drastically.

During the 2nd Occupation a new naval hospital was built after 1814. Conditions must have improved generally for the hospital muster books of the Cape Station show that whilst there were still many deaths, many more recovered, either to return to duty or take their discharge. In the course of the protracted war with France (1794-1815) there was a flow of sea traffic around our coast and numerous hospital admissions, some of them invalids returning to Great Britain from India and Ceylon. In the Spring of 1808 for instance, the SAN FIORENZO, a naval vessel used for the purpose, put a large batch of invalids ashore for treatment in the Cape naval hospital, of whom 9 did not recover. With the employment of two matrons between 1812-1820 womens' nursing was introduced locally, but Florence Nightingales era lay in a distant future and it has been said that such hospital matrons in England were of low repute. A description survives of a matron employed at Malta towards the end of the Napoleonic Wars: "She was a generous kind-hearted creature, and very fit to be a nurse to sailors as she was not

overburdened with delicacy, and, being of a pleasing disposition she could accommodate herself to the healthy as well as the sick." (Lewis, Social History of the Navy, p.418).

During the 1st British Occupation (1795-1803) there were 418 recorded deaths of Royal Naval men, including a few soldiers, in the naval hospitals of the Cape; the corresponding figure for the later phase of the Napoleonic Wars (1806-1815) was 240. This mortality figure for the French Wars - 658 in total reflects a substantial slice of the Cape's "Legion of the Lost" for nearly all of whom there are neither gravestones nor inscriptions on monuments. To this must be added 388 men who were lost in the wreck of HMS SCEPTRE in Table Bay in 1799.

Conditions in the hospitals ashore could well have been better than those on many ships. The stately wooden walls of Old England were floating disease traps. On the Lower Deck seamen lived in cramped quarters where contagion spread rapidly; in rough weather when gun-ports were closed fresh air was lacking whilst soggy bilges, rarely cleaned, stank to high heaven. Dampness was everywhere and diet was often poor. It was only in 1810 that soap became an official issue. Obviously some commanders lacked the prudence and care of Captain James Cook, for scurvy continued to take a toll. During the war with France, and later, disease was by far the largest killer of King George's sailors - scurvy, yellow fever, malaria, typhus, dysentery (the bloody flux) and hepatitis were common. The Cape station illustrates this state of affairs amply, for instance HMS MALACCA lost 15 men in 1815 due to ulcers, scurvy and abscesses; early in 1823 the ANDROMACH lost 21 of its crew from dysentery and fever and in 1846 8 men of the CLEOPATRA succumbed to dysentery. Causes of death were not always defined closely and the hospital register for 1816 records the curious case of a sailor who died of "suspended animation".

Among the killing factors accidents to individuals took second place. In the age of sail the hazards were plentiful: "Aloft, he [the sailor] was constantly expected to perform feats, which, on land, one normally left to steeple-jacks or circus performers." "Fell from aloft" accounts for several deaths at Simon's Town, others were swept overboard in stormy weather. There are also occasional burstings of cannon and the menace of rolling ordnance dislodged from mountings in gales. Drunkenness contributed to deaths by drowning or from fatal falls. Ruptures (hernia) were common, the principal causes apparently being the lifting of barrels and water-bottles and the heaving of hawsers. Hernia cases did not usually qualify for hospital admission. Between 1808 and 1815 the Navy distributed 29,712 trusses to those unfortunates in need of support.

Disasters at sea in or near Simon's Town were not a large feature, but when the pinnacle of HMS OWEN GLENDOWER overturned in bad weather a score of men were drowned. The major calamity at the Cape occurred in Table Bay on Guy Fawkes night 5 November 1799 when the SCEPTRE (64 guns) was driven ashore in a violent gale with the loss of nearly 400 of its complement.

A specialist in the social history of the Navy (M. Lewis) has

estimated the "Mortality Stakes" of the Napoleonic Wars in which more than 100,000 British sailors and marines died. First, "by many lengths" was disease (50%), second "a comfortable second", individual accidents (31.5%), third, "a poor third", accidents to ships (10.2%). "Also ran", those who died in battle or of their wounds, a mere 8.3%. Only a handful of seamen and marines lost their lives in action during the occupation of the Cape in 1795. Casualties of another kind were incurred when three seamen and a marine were hanged late in 1797 after the collapse of a mutiny in the squadron.

In 1816 the Admiralty, intent on post-war economy, asked whether the naval hospital at the Cape could be dispensed with, suggesting that a small number of the sick might be accommodated in the military hospital on St Helena, but Rear-Admiral Malcolm responded by arguing that the hospital establishment should be kept up as long as the dockyard was retained. Moreover on the death of Napoleon the Cape would again become "the general Rendezvous of the Squadron" (RCC, Vol.11, pp.198-9). At the end of 1828, Sir Lowry Cole, the Governor, ordered the break up of the hospital at Simon's Town (ADM 102/114) - there were only 8 reported deaths in 1829 and 1830 but the order may not have been carried out. Later on however, there was probably a temporary closure between 1835 and mid-1840. In 1834 there had been only 2 patients in hospital at Simon's Bay. The mortality rate picked up briskly between 1847 and 1856, probably due to the wars on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape, the Sikh wars in India, the Indian Mutiny and even the Crimean War which occasioned much movement of naval vessels and transports.

The naval hospital establishment, in addition to its own patients, accommodated at times ailing French, Spanish, Dutch and American prisoners of war, soldiers of the British East India Company, and later in the century, sailors of passing ships belonging to friendly countries. In a fitting gesture, Gerard Volkerz, captain of the Netherlands frigate FRANÇOIS was interred in 1886 among the British sailors in the naval allotment. The naval allotment dated from 1813 and was on the sloping site now occupied by the Garden of Remembrance, Seaforth. When the Garden of Remembrance was brought into being in 1975 other gravestones, plaques and monuments of sailors and soldiers who had originally been buried in the Church of England and Roman Catholic burial grounds were also transferred to it or their names commemorated there on round or rectangular slates.

Irrespective of its architectural merit or otherwise, the Garden of Remembrance is a great historical treasure. It is the only predominantly naval burial ground in South Africa and is a reflection of the Royal Navy's presence and activity during the Pax Britannica for a century after 1814. (Its only possible counterpart in this country is the evocative military cemetery at Fort Napier, Pietermaritzburg which had a continuous Imperial garrison from 1845 to 1914). If, at Seaforth, we add a sprinkling of inscriptions on a modern memorial to those who were lost or buried at sea we go back fittingly to the commencement of British control in 1795. This is more than a Simon's Town burial ground as it includes commemoration of the entire complement of 133 officers and men of the NERBUDDA which

was lost with all hands off Algoa Bay in 1855 and of men of the squadron based here who died fighting Arab slave dealers on the East African coast, as well as a few who were buried at Salamander Bay (Donkergat, Langebaan).

When the Garden of Remembrance was officially opened in 1977 a Roll of Honour was prepared by the war graves authority that details the names of more than 550 sailors, marines and dockyard workers and of about 40 wives and children. That is quite an imposing total, but if one deducts the NERBUDDA complement and others who died in distant places the total is reduced considerably. Questions were raised a few years ago (i) the Sexton's records of the Parish of St Francis (1849-1867) disclosed particulars of many naval and military deaths which were not reflected in the Roll of Honour (ii) were there any surviving gravestones or monuments for those who died before 1814? (iii) where are they buried? and (iv) why did details on the monument for those lost or buried at sea end abruptly in 1878? There was extensive research - and there I acknowledge most gratefully assistance given by Mrs. E. Biggs, Miss J. Cartwright, Mr. N. Farquharson and Mr. Maurice Gough-Palmer, former secretary of the British War Graves Committee. Many sources were consulted and when the details were assembled they produced quite startling results. The tally of the "missing" was well over 1300 and consequently the Roll of Honour of 1977 was seen to be incomplete and obsolete.

A pointer to the whereabouts of an earlier burial ground at Simon's Town is given in a report of Deputy Resident J.H. Brand to the Earl of Caledon in 1810. He stated that civilians, military and those of the "sea services" were buried behind the barracks - to such an extent that it was hardly possible to dig a new grave without opening an old one. (Historical Simon's Town p. 82).

Investigated were the parish registers of St Francis and the Dockyard Church, as well as the Sexton's record already referred to. The Admiralty records in the Public Record Office at Kew in England, are a vast store of information - naval hospital muster books from 1795 are there in quantity and bulk; they rarely distinguish between deaths in Simon's Bay or Table Bay, but the symbols D "discharged" or DD "discharged dead" against the names of individuals are clear enough. In addition there are ships' muster rolls, usually compiled quarterly, that list every man jack, from the captain to the ship's boy - but there are some 12,000 of them before which massive documentation even the most assiduous researcher must quail! If information was to be collected about deceased wives and dependent children (and much of that would be speculative) there could easily be another 200 names.

The pattern for the British army at Cape Town is rather similar. The burial registers of the Chaplain of the Forces there have survived and are in the Cape Archives. From 1806 to 1869, approximately 800 soldiers, their wives and children were buried, either at Somerset Road or at Fort Knokke, except for 1/2 dozen gravestones transferred to Maitland (Woltemade) - Gate No. 1 - there is no other visible reminder of their presence.

Statistics and percentages are cold things. In a search of this kind human interest often emerges, sometimes pathetic. The youngest victims of them all were Edward Jordan, ship's boy in the PRESIDENT who died in 1811 aged 13 and, of the same age, John O'Brian of the band of the 98th Regiment who died in 1838. Admiral Sir Hugh Christian, Commander of the Fleet was 50 when he died in 1798 and Rear-Admiral George Dundas was 57 at the time of his death; by the standards of those days they were old men. Early in 1852 Private J.Cooper, a marine, died of phthisis after having survived the wreck of the BIRKENHEAD and the only woman casualty on the roster, Matron Ann Henderson of the Hospital staff died later that year, aged 54. In lighter vein - the first surgeon listed was appropriately named Dr. Edward Bones (of the SCEPTRE). And why was HMS CAMELEON renamed HORATIO in 1816? Whilst so many mariners have been lost sight of that was not the case with Gunner Percy Jefferies of the Royal Marine Artillery. He was buried at Saldahna in 1902 and his gravestone can still be seen there in a disused cemetery. Naval records at Kew confirm burial at Saldahna, but a tablet in the Garden of Remembrance states that he was buried at Salamander Bay (which he was not), and for good measure, the name of this mobile marine was added on the monument commemorating those who were lost at sea or had no known grave.

Many of the wooden ships of an earlier era survived battle and fire to carry the flag of their victorious enemy. The Royal Navy perpetuated many of the original names, so among callers at the Cape were HMS TROMP, DORTRECHT and BRAAVE captured from the Dutch in 1796 and former French vessels, eg. HMS AFRICAINE, IMPERIEUSE, OISEAU, RAISONABLE and REVOLUTIONAIRE. Particularly interesting was the visit of HMS CHESAPEAKE to put sick sailors ashore in 1815. She had been captured from the Americans in the War of 1812-1815, one of the few British successes at sea in that conflict when Captain Broke of the SHANNON won a bloody cannon duel with the CHESAPEAKE and carried her off as a prize.

There is also a glimpse of the diverse labour force that was employed in the Dockyard. Early in the 19th century it included some government slaves and natives of Madagascar - later there were a few liberated slaves and after 1880 numerous Kroomen from West Africa.

Finally, what should be done to do belated justice to this resurrected company of the Cape seas? An accessible record is the first priority and when computerised lists have been prepared the British War Graves Committee may be able to supply the Simon's Town Museum and other interested bodies with copies. A new Roll of Honour is another possibility - and an illustrated brochure to explain the naval cemetery to visitors. Perhaps the most we can hope for is a modest sized commemorative tablet or monument to recall a legion that was overlooked rather than completely lost.

oooooooo000oooooooo

GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR ESCAPE:

AN ARTICLE ON P.63 OF OUR JULY 1992 BULLETIN REFERS.

Dr. Arthur Davey informs us that these men were re-interred in the Garden of Remembrance at Woltemade Cemetery (Maitland) - Gate No. 10.

TREK FISHING IN SIMON'S TOWN AREA: A Preliminary Study

E. A. Biggs

Gaining a subsistence living from the sea by netting fish from shore-based boats is an age-old manner of earning a living. Records have been found showing that the early inhabitants of the South Peninsula, the Hunter Gatherers, relied to some extent on the products of the sea to supplement their diet of fynbos plant foods.

The methods of Trek fishing or seine-netting from the beach have not changed over the centuries and it is still regarded as a way to gather food. The fisher folk who have had the trek right for generations, have played their part in the development of Simon's Town and are still an essential part of the background.



A shoal of fish is spotted from an observation post on the hill or a promontory above the bay by the "uitkyker" or "wagter". Blue water or sometimes light yellow, indicated harders; elf gave a bluish tinge; a dark colour showed a compact shoal and an experienced fisherman could estimate the number of fish. When the spread of colour moved within range of the trekkers, a signal would be given by whistle or flag and the boat with the net piled in readiness in the stern sheets, sets out from the shore with one end of the net secured to the shore by a rope manned by all available volunteers, sometimes even including members of the passing public. The net is paid out over the stern and the boat manoeuvres in a circle in accordance with instructions signalled from the look-out post. The other end of the net also has a hauling rope which is brought ashore. The net is pulled in and the enclosed fish are thus hauled to the shore. There are no motors aboard to frighten the fish.

At the turn of the century, fishing from shore bases was a thriving industry. Trekking is a family business going on from generation to generation with the father teaching his son the tricks of the trade. It is a hard and dangerous life offering only a precarious existence. It involves much heavy labour, fighting out through the breakers, followed by the tedious hand-hauling of the net to the beach with the men trudging backwards in a tug-of-war exercise until the cod-end of the line comes out of the water and the catch can be assessed. Work does not end there as the boat has to be dragged above the high water mark and secured.



Setting out



Fish Hawker of earlier days

Trek beaches:

Trek-netting operations are confined to sandy beach areas, free of rock which could foul and damage the nets.

Buffels Bay: the base for Henry Emery from St Ives, Cornwall. He took it over from Mr. McKellar who had also operated lime kilns at Buffels Bay. The rights passed to the de Villiers brothers and when they left, the son of Henry Emery took it over. In 1978 his great grandson, Victor Lawrence still operated from there.

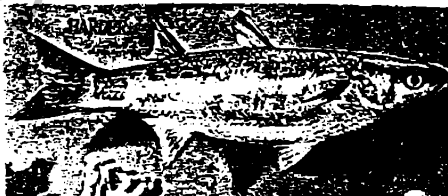
Steenbras Bay: the base for the Muller family. With the building of the East Dockyard the family was granted the sole rights to use Frank's Bay and Fisherman's Beach at Froggy Pond. Two large Indian marquee tents were erected in a field and served as living accommodation until houses could be built. A large shed to store the trek gear, boats and the tubs for salting the fish was put up on Frank's Bay. Later on they moved to a smaller shed at Fisherman's Beach. The lookout was below the present-day Arum Road in Murdoch Valley.

Boulders Beach: Mr. Rietman salted snoek from here and sold them at 1d each. He had sheds and boats on the beach and a house at the top of Bellevue Road.

Jaffer's Beach: The rights were first owned by Sadiek Jaffer. The family had a shack on the beach and on a fair weather day it was a scene of quiet industry - cobbling up a net, mending the dinghies, making up the lines and talking. The trek boat was moored off the rocks with the net flaked out in the stern sheets ready for action.

Long Beach: used by the Emery, Lawrence and Cotton families. George Cotton was the first man to land three large Blue Fin tuna from his nets. His sons, Cornelis and John Cotton are still operating there. Cornelis has had over 40 years of spotting from the hill above the beach or on the wall next to the railway. A look-out hut can still be found off Paradise Road.

Klein Vishoek/Breda's Beach: rights owned first by the Bruyns family who salted harders and mackrel which were dried and hung on "stelassies", put into old "trap-balies" and salted. They were sold to the farmers of Paarl, Wellington and Worcester areas. At first they were taken by wagon to these areas and sold for about £2 to £3 per 1,000 or were bartered for vegetables. Later the fish were put into sacks and sent by goods train. The rights were bought by Gysbert van Reenen van Breda in 1888. The business was continued by K.P. (uncle Kenny) van Breda until he



sold the business in 1959, the same year that Marine Oil Refiners bought Klein Vishoek from him.

Makriel Bay: in the vicinity of Klein Vishoek; the rights were transferred there from Jaffer's Beach when the extensions to the East Dockyard were carried out. Achmat Achmat took over the rights on the death of Jaffer. He has a permanent team of 25 men and three boats. The number of men can swell to 50 in the summer when the south-easter brings in shoals of harder, steenbras and yellowtail. The look out is probably near 15 Hopkirk Way, Glencairn, where a cave is used for shelter, this was used for the fishing off Glencairn beach as well as there was a boat there until about 5 years ago; there is also a look-out above the beach of Klein Vishoek.

HAULING IN THE TREK NET AT FISHERMAN'S BEACH



The problem of supplying fresh fish to the vendors was overcome in the early years by the erection of an ice factory near the railway line at Simon's Town. The ice produced was brown as the water came from the mountain springs. The fresh fish was packed into the ice and railed to the suburbs. Gradually, with the advent of cool boxes and refrigerators, the factory declined and finally the building was demolished.

Procedure:

"Voortrek" man was entitled to at least 4,000 fish. This position was rotated in turn. Failing his taking this amount, the catch was abandoned to the "agter trek" and trekked again. Usually the "agtertrek" man netted the fish that escaped from the "voortrek" nets. The sale of the catch was shared with the Captain, the owner, the boat and the net taking two shares; the rowers and the man on the shore $1\frac{1}{2}$ shares and the owner an additional share for selling the fish. During a 6 month season earnings could range from £25 to £30 with the owner grossing £150 per annum. The fish hawkers and representatives from the

fishing companies bought the fish at a price determined by the size and type of fish.

Boats:

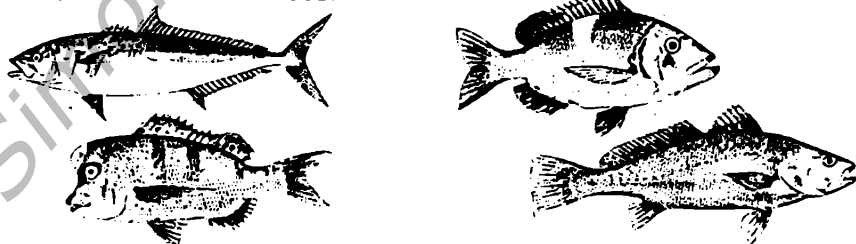
There seems to be no "Cape" design boat. Tradition prevailed with changes being made as the conditions warranted them. The sea eliminated the bad points and gradually the boats began to resemble each other in appearance and handling qualities. They all had to conform to local conditions - be easy to row, sail fast, be of a strong construction, a good surf boat but light enough to handle up the beach in the strong south-east winds of the False Bay area. This was accomplished by passing stout poles through rope strops at the bow and stern; these were then hoisted on to the shoulders of as many as 16 men. The boats had a broad beam for stability; were short-ended with little or no overhang at bow or stern so that it could negotiate steep, short seas and surf; a broad transom for load carrying and work space. The length varied from 5m to 8 m and the beam from 1.6m to 2m. They were pulled by 4 to 5 oars with a rudder steering for off-shore work although the helmsman used a steering oar or "sweep" through the surf. On the whole the boats did not have to do anything well, but, what is more important, they did not have to do anything badly; they were likeable and well-behaved sea boats with no dangerous habits.

The boats were usually retimbered when the timbers failed and rotted. They were re-planked when the planking gave in and so after a generation the only original part remaining would be the shape and the name! We have little knowledge of the boat builders. One who is known was James Thompson, a Scottish boat-builder whose boats were modelled along the lines of those used along the west coast of Scotland. His original shed was on the shore of Steenbras Bay. The original shed was preserved and transferred to the East Dockyard to the south side of the office of the Commodore of the Dockyard.

Usually a rough shelter or shack would house the man who knew how to build and repair the local boats. It was often a part-time occupation and the average fisherman would usually be able to carry out all but major repairs using his own hands, tools and local resources. The local part-time expert often became permanent and a family affair would evolve of a partnership of brothers, fathers, and sons.

Fish types caught:

There has been a gradual shift in the type of catch taken by the trek fishermen. At the turn of the century 83% consisted of "angling" fish - elf, yellowtail and white steenbras and only 5% harders. To-day this has been reversed with harders forming 87% of the catch and the rest being made up of yellowtail, elf, white steenbras and belman.



Top: Yellow Tail (l) Red Ronan (r) Bottom: Red Stumpnose (l) Kabeljou (r)