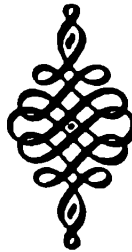




SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



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Corrections to Bulletin of January 1994:

Page 31 Line 1 paragraph 5: delete ISOBEL and please
insert AMY as wife of William.

Page 36 We stated that the article was by Commander Bisset.
It is thought to have been by the Late Col. D.E. PEDDLE
but enquiries have been unable to confirm this.

LIST OF OFFICE BEARERS

PRESIDENT	Admiral H.H. Biermann SSA SD OBE JP
VICE-PRESIDENTS	Vice-Admiral R.A. Edwards SSAS SM Dr. A.M. Davey
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HON. AUDITOR	Mr. E.H. Fry
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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 6 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 1st person of a family - R15 p.p.a

ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS - R5.00 per person per annum

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

PRESENTED BY THE CHAIRMAN MR. G.B. READ CBE AT THE 33RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY HELD IN THE LECTURE HALL, SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM, ON TUESDAY 15TH MARCH, 1994, AT 7.30 P.M.

In accordance with our usual custom the proceedings of this year's meeting will follow the pattern of past years and will consist of the combined Annual General Meetings of the Society and the Friends of the Simon's Town Museum and after the formal proceedings are over my wife and I invite you to enjoy a glass of wine at an informal gathering of Members and Guests.

Members, particularly new members, are reminded that they meet in this dual capacity of Members of the Society and Friends of the Museum. To save time and space I will not go into detail on the rationale for this dual role but I would be quite happy to answer questions on this subject either during the meeting or afterwards during the informal gathering.

With particular reference to the part of the Agenda which deals with the Election of Officers, last year for organisational reasons we elected the Subscribers Representative first and the Hon. Auditor. We will now revert to our previous system whereby the Members will elect first the officers of the Society i.e. President, Vice-President etc. then the Subscribers' Representative, Hon. Auditor etc.

1993 as foreseen in last year's report was a difficult year for the Society as political uncertainty coupled with the increases in the cost of just about everything put further pressure on incomes. Surprisingly membership numbers December 1993 v December 1992 decreased marginally by 8 i.e. 730 v 738 - not too bad a result. It was also a very sad year for the Society. In addition to the tragic death of Mrs. Kay Sweet, there was also the death of the outstanding seafarer and well known writer on maritime affairs, Captain C.J. Harris. The Society also lost Gordon Wilson, one of the most active and successful Chairmen the Society ever had. A tribute follows which your Committee considers should be written into the annals of the Society to record the life, the times and the achievements of one of its most distinguished members. The tribute will appear as a separate article in the July 1994 Bulletin entitled "Gordon James Wilson - In Memorium",

The past year was again a busy one - what year isn't these days! with the Museum's activities providing a wide range of interesting and often novel functions for the Members and Friends thanks to the efforts of the Curator, the Staff and the Volunteers/Friends. It is becoming increasingly clear that to ensure the Museum's survival and viability much will depend on the quality and numbers of the Volunteers/Friends and we shall probably need many more of them as the years go by and the pressure grows to freeze if not reduce the financial assistance currently provided to the Museum by the Provincial Authorities. I know the Curator has this subject very much in mind.

One exciting development in the planned conversion of the CABLE

RESTORER to the role of part Museum ship, possibly part training ship and part leisure facility. Discussions are currently under way to determine how ownership should be structured, what her role should be, where she should be permanently moored etc. Throughout the world Museum ships have proved notoriously difficult to manage on a profitable basis and therefore very careful consideration is being given to the arrangements which should cover the CABLE RESTORER.

Other significant matters which engaged the Society's attention during the year were:

HISTORIC MILE:

It was a year of mixed progress but on the whole St George's Street continues to maintain a lot of its Victorian/Edwardian character which attracts attention from an increasing number of visitors. The Christmas illuminations added some much needed colour to the Festive Season and it was nice to see many residents of the Town on Jubilee Square greeting the New Year in the appropriate fashion.

The Council has voted monies to cover a beautification scheme for the Town - principally the Historic Mile which will provide more flower boxes, benches etc. The project is being progressed by representatives of the Municipality, Traders, Publicity and Ratepayers associations. The results should be very pleasing.

Signage presents a problem and it is doubtful if the Signage Officer has sufficient powers under the present regulations to exercise much control. Residents rightly have complained about signs at one of the Bottle Stores and one of the Take-aways. Rennick's cottage opposite Admiralty House is still in a disgraceful condition and constitutes an eyesore to any visitor entering the Town from the north along the main road.

There are indications of dissatisfaction amongst some Traders in the Historic Mile concerning the Guidelines for Conservation and Development published and usually applied fairly rigorously by the Municipality. This could stimulate an attempt to have the Guidelines removed. Much therefore is likely to depend on the attitude of the authority which succeeds the Council/Municipality. Years of hard work and negotiations, not to mention the attraction and ambience of St George's Street, could be quickly lost.

HOT SHOT OVEN:

A team of archaeologists led by Dr Ute Seemann of UCT excavated the site where the "oven" was presumed to have been situated at the corner of Queen's Road and Runciman Drive. They now believe the first building on the site was a signal station which then became part of Queen's Battery, whose guns did not require a "hot shot oven". The excavations have been filled in and investigations continue in the Archives and elsewhere in an attempt to determine what role this site played in Simon's Town's history.

ENVIRONMENT:

A plethora of organisations concerned with the environment have produced studies, workshops, public meetings, seminars etc etc in which much has been said but little done. Two cases in point are the Jackass Penguin Colony at Boulders (it is reported that there are now 900 of them) and Red Hill where of course a recent bush fire devastated a very large area. It is to be hoped that some time the talking will stop and action be taken on various important issues relating to both these issues. Thanks to Peter van Blommestein's efforts the Municipality are giving further thought to the installation of sprinklers on some of the lower lawns at Seaforth Beach which received a terrible battering from thousands of visitors during the Christmas/New Year period.

OLD BURYING GROUND:

Further progress was made but not enough as further funds did not materialise until the first half of 1994 but further efforts will now be put in hand. One pleasing development in the Garden of Remembrance last year was the re-interment of the remains of three men drowned in the BIRKENHEAD disaster who had formerly occupied a shallow grave at Danger Point on land owned by Irvin and Johnson and now being developed as a fish farm. Apparently I & J expect to discover more remains as work progresses and these will also be re-interred in the Garden of Remembrance, Seaforth. The Society hosted a small function at the Museum for Dr. A.M. Davey and Major Anthony Gordon (British War Graves Committee), H.B.M. Consul in Cape Town and other invited guests also attended.

FINANCE:

The Treasurer will be presenting his usual detailed report but I would like to make some general comments on the Accounts as they reflect a deficit. However, this really comprises three major elements closely connected with the role of the Society/Friends:

a) a transfer to the Museum at no cost of stocks of glassware and 1st Day Covers for the Museum shop.....	R 3,527.00
b) Contributions to 50% of the cost of new Library shelves.....	3,000.00
c) Contribution of 1/3 of 1993 subscriptions ...	2,780.00
Total	R 9,307.00

Thus the Society/Friends were really performing their main role i.e. to provide financial support for the Museum. These figures represent an order of magnitude only. The accounts reflect the actual position.

100 CLUB:

Members will have seen a circular from the Friends' Representative dated 10 January 1994 giving details of this fund-raising scheme. The Society is grateful to member Margaret

Collet for drawing attention to this type of fund-raising which is used by various other associations, societies, clubs etc. here and elsewhere. Implementation of this scheme requires 100 participants; so far 50 members have applied so of course we need more, but at least we will make a start, when the formal proceedings are concluded this evening and the first draw takes place.

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTIONS:

As noted above Membership numbers only dropped marginally from 738 end December 1992 to 730 at the end of December 1993, even though subscriptions were again increased in 1993. There will hopefully be no increase in 1994 but it looks as though a modest increase may be necessary in 1995. Comparable subscriptions of sister societies like the Historical Society of Cape Town are:

Single Ordinary Members R26 per annum
Family Membership R37 per annum

BULLETIN & CHRONICLE:

The cost figures are as follows:

	1992 Actual	1993 Actual	1994 Estimate
2 Bulletins	R7.53	R7.97	R8.99
2 Chronicles	1.10	1.20	1.30
Postage etc.	1.60	2.70	2.80
Total.....	R10.23	R11.87	R13.09

The average subscription per member mindful of sharing arrangements range between R10 - 11 each, the need to increase subscriptions becomes evident based on the 1994 Estimate.

PUBLIC RELATIONS TOURS:

The Society/Friends' Representative organisation mounted 3 very successful one-day Tours, one to the Observatory and two to the Postberg Nature Reserve to see the Spring flowers (also visiting Riebeeck West for a wine tasting/Darling and Mamre Moravian Mission village). After a break for winter Audrey Read recommenced her walking tours in October assisted when necessary by Shirley Jackson and the Chairman.

SOCIETY SPRING TOUR:

For various reasons it was not possible to visit Tulbagh/Ceres area but instead a Tour Party of 40 visited Swellendam and Port Beaufort, Malgas, Bredasdorp, Napier and Caledon in the course of an extensive tour of the Overberg. The main purpose of the Tour was to visit Swellendam to attend the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the opening of the Museum and to learn something about the history and architecture of the Town. Member Mike Munnik conducted a fascinating tour of the principal buildings of historic interest in Swellendam and in the course of this tour we were able to visit the restored Joseph Barry house and also the house on the farm Klip River where subsequent

Presidents of the Orange Free State, Presidents Reitz and Steyn once lived as indeed did Mike Munnik's grandfather. As regards the 1994 Spring Tour it is considered prudent to pause and assess what transpires after the April elections. In any case three, two or even one-night tours are increasingly difficult to mount in view of increasing coach-hire costs, lack of affordable accommodation acceptable to members etc. etc. and the very considerable logistics involved in arranging self-catering for a Tour Party of 60 people. It was noticeable that on the 1993 Spring Tour 40 not surprisingly, was a much more manageable number!! It could be in 1994 we may have to mount only one-day tours.

PUBLICATIONS:

Work on the History of Simon's Town Dockyard buildings continues with the assembly of basic data etc from a variety of sources. Research will require to be done at the Public Records Office at Kew in England if local research does not turn up two important maps.

SIMON'S TOWN MUSEUM:

The Curator has provided a survey of Museum activities which reflect a successful year, and further comment seems superfluous. The Museum is playing a prominent role assisted by the Vice-Chairman of our Society in the organisation of arrangements to mark the 50th anniversary of Just Nuisance's death.

S.A. NAVY MUSEUM:

Thanks to the efforts of Commander Bisset and his team the S.A. Navy Museum now seems well established and visitor numbers seem to be rising rapidly.

S.T.H.S. COMMITTEE:

I would like to thank the Committee, Vice Chairman Nigel Farquharson, Hon. Secretary D. Kinhead-Weekes, Hon. Treasurer Cas Colgate, Margaret Cartwright, Jack Wilkinson, Peter van Blommestein, Grant Brockman, Monica Thorne, Cherry Dilley, Mac Bisset and Audrey Read for their assistance during the past year. The S.A. Navy has again been most cooperative and it was a considerable pleasure for many of the friends to attend Mrs. R.C. Simpson-Anderson's presentation of the S.A. Navy's participation in the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Battle of the Atlantic, supported by some memorable videos.

SIMON'S TOWN COUNCIL/MUNICIPALITY:

This will probably be the last time the Chairman of this Society will extend the Society's thanks to the Council/Municipality in their present form. It is not known what form or pattern of local government will succeed the present: the most likely option seems to range from Simon's Town becoming a part of a super Metropolitan Authority encompassing a substantial area of the Western Cape to one in which Simon's Town becomes part of a smaller authority covering the Southern Peninsula. Be that as

it may, it would be churlish not to acknowledge the great debt the Society and the Museum for that matter, owe to the Council/Municipality for the wonderful help received down the years. Our grateful thanks to all of the past and present members of these two organisations who have rendered assistance to us.

and so to 1994!

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GORDON JAMES WILSON BA B.Com. LLB JP IN MEMORIUM

Gordon was the son of James Morrison Wilson MC FIA (a former Town Engineer of Simon's Town and also former Chief Architect of the Cape Town City Council) and Florence Clementine Lankester. He was born at Studland, St George's Street, Simon's Town on 8th July 1920, a fourth generation Simonstonian. He attended Maitland Public School between 1926-1930 Kindergarten to Standard III; 1931-1938 he studied at Sea Point Boys High School Standard IV to Matric; and in 1939 he entered the University of Cape Town to study BSc Engineering until 17th June 1940 when he joined the South African Army's 2nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Regiment. After he completed his Basic Training at Potchefstroom Artillery Camp as a gunner he moved with his regiment to Kenya on the "Llangibby Castle" and subsequently took part in the Italian Somaliland and Abyssinian campaigns. In 1941 he saw service in the Western Desert where he was involved in very heavy fighting. On 21st June 1942 he was taken prisoner after the fall of Tobruk. From July 1942 to September 1943 he was a P.O.W. at the notorious Campo 85 near Gravina and Campo 52 at Chiavari in Italy.

Along with fellow P.O.Ws he suffered severely from malnutrition, boils malaria and jaundice. When Italy capitulated in September 1943 he was moved by the German army over the Brenner Pass to Munich then to Sagan and to a work camp at Oels near Breslau in Silesia. He escaped in January 1945 and made his way by train to Halle. In disguise he managed to hide for three months. He was arrested and interrogated by the German Intelligence Services but luckily they failed to penetrate his 'cover' story. Faced with the advancing Russian Army he made his way to Colditz where he met advance elements of the American Army. He visited Colditz P.O.W.Camp and found the cell where Group Captain (later Sir Douglas) Bader had been held. He "liberated" one of Douglas Bader's books which the great man autographed during a subsequent visit to Cape Town. Gordon was subsequently handed over to the British Army by the Americans and he was "smuggled out" of Germany in the company of his future wife, by Colonel Bird of the British Army. Gordon married Lithuanian girl Elena Terese Burbulyte on 11 July 1945 in Brussels. After staying several weeks in Cumberland in England with family relations (the Linleys) he was repatriated to South Africa on the RUYS in September 1945. Discharged from the Army in October 1945 he attended a special "crash" induction

course at UCT having switched from BSc Engineering to the Bachelor of Arts course. From 1946-1949 he was an extra-mural student for the Bachelor of Arts Degree. From 1959-1967 again as an extra-mural student he graduated with a B.Com and LLB degrees.

In the meantime in the company of many ex-servicemen who had "lost" 5 to 6 years of their careers through war service he had to find a job to support his part-time studies. He first joined the Civil Service as a 2nd Grade Clerk in the Deeds Office on 16 March 1946. He finally resigned as Chief Examiner on 15 September 1964. He was a Legal Articled Clerk with Prisman and Rubik between 17 September 1964 and 31 January 1967. On 1 February 1967 he was admitted to the Supreme Court to practice as an Attorney, Notary and Conveyancer. He became a full partner in the legal firm in which he worked which changed its name to Prisman and Wilson. He retired as a partner in 1982 but remained as a consultant. He is very well remembered and indeed respected by a large number of young attorneys and legal articled clerks of the time to whom he lectured for the Law Society on conveyancing during the years 1963 - 1977. In 1973 he lectured at UCT on conveyancing for the Law Faculty of the University.

Before touching on Gordon's mind-boggling number of interests and activities particularly during the years 1974-1993, after his return to Simon's Town when he took up residence at 108 Main Road, Glencairn, some family details seem apposite. He leaves a son Mark, who like his father is an attorney and conveyancer, and a daughter Gail who is a Diagnostic and Therapeutic Radiographer. After divorcing his first wife, Gordon married Valerie Shirley Ferry (nee Bester) on 23rd June 1973 and he leaves a step-son Shaun Glen Ferry (a Springbok yachtsman) and step-daughter Sharon - grand nephew and niece of Alderman Gerry Ferry, a past President of our Society.

Gordon's interests were many and varied. The list is so long that only the more important ones can be mentioned below. At Sea Point Boys High School he was a member of the Historical Society, he played hockey and he was Captain at one time of the school's 3rd & 4th League teams, he was a keen Scout between 1931 - 1938, he rose to Patrol Leader and Cub Instructor 2nd Green and Sea Point Scout Troop.

After the war, between 1947 - 1952 he was very active in the Memorable Order of Tin Hats and was Adjutant and Deputy Commander Point 303 Shellhole at Youngsfield. He was a founder member and Departmental Representative of the State Employees Buy Aid Association 1947-1964. He was active in the Breeding and Showing of Boxer Dogs between 1950 and 1966. He was a Qualified Senior Judge of the Breed. He was Founder Chairman of (1) Western Province Boxer Club (2) Cape of Good Hope Boxer Club and (3) Boland Boxer Club. For several years he was a member of the Council of the South African Kennel Union and the Federation of Boxer Clubs of Southern Africa. He judged shows all over South Africa. He was active in charitable work and for several years was an executive member of the Civil Service Benevolent Fund. He was a part-time farmer and owned a 30

morgen farm at Muldersvlei between 1952-66 which produced apricots, cream, poultry and fruit. The farm to-day is Tygerberg Zoo. He was interested in the collection of stone age implements found on his farm and elsewhere and the collection is now on loan to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve.

Politics was another great interest in his life. His mother was Chairlady of the South African Party in Maitland 1926-1930. Gordon's involvement was quite extensive. He revitalised a somewhat moribund Muldersvlei/Kraaifontein/Brackenfell Branch of the United Party in 1960. He was its Chairman until 1966. He was Vice-Chairman of the United Party Divisional Committee of Malmesbury Constituency. He also revitalised the Lions Head Branch of the United Party and was its chairman 1970-1972. He was Executive Member of the United Party Maitland 1972-74. He was also the main representative of Simon's Town on the Divisional Council committee of the United Party (later South African Party) 1974-1979. With the demise of the latter party his involvement in National politics diminished and he turned his attention more and more to Municipal affairs. His entry into Municipal affairs really began with his Chairmanship of the Simon's Town Property Owners Association (now the Simon's Town Ratepayers and Residents Association) 1968-1971. Several Councillors in recent years have followed this same route. He was elected to the Simon's Town Council on 25 January 1975 and he continued to serve until his untimely death. He was elected Mayor in September 1976 and he served four terms until 1980. He contested 4 elections in six years i.e. 25/1/76, 6/9/76, 3/9/80 and 6/2/81. He qualified for the status of Alderman in December 1987. He was appointed a JP by the then Minister of Justice in 1982.

Gordon will be remembered for many things for there was hardly a facet of Simon's Town's life in which he was not involved at one time or the other, even in the correct spelling of the Town's name as two words if it appeared in English which he induced the National Place Names Committee to accept with the help of the late John Wiley MP. Gordon fought very hard to keep Party politics out of Council debates and at one stage, in 1981, he even resigned and fought a bye-election when he felt Council were not heeding his views.

In addition to his birth place "Studland" the first building in Simon's Town to be declared a National Monument he was either responsible for or at least involved in the restoration of a considerable number of buildings i.e. Welcome Cottage, the two Yarra Yarras, the Flagship (formerly De Beers/Standard Bank building), Algoa Cottage, Oatlands Stables which later were also declared National Monuments. Somehow in the middle of all this activity he made himself available from time to time to serve on a bewildering number of Committees concerned with the High School, Country Club, the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, the Sea Scouts Committee etc. etc. He wrote numerous brochures and articles about the Town. He wrote a book containing 16 short stories "Simon's Town - Present Tense" and he even managed to represent the SABC in Simon's Town and mostly at his own expense he arranged a Twinning Agreement between Simon's Town and the

old Crusader city (and former port) of Acre (Akko) in Israel.

Perhaps two of his greatest interests were the Simon's Town Historical Society and the Simon's Town Museum. He joined the STHS in 1966. He had to resign from the Committee in 1970 because of the pressure of work but he rejoined it in 1974, was elected Chairman in March 1977 and served until March 1982. Thereafter he remained as Vice Chairman until 1993. In close co-operation with the then Mayor Llewellyn Gay and Dr. Douglas Hey and the late John Wiley MP, Gordon was closely involved with the formation of the Museum based in part on the Warriors' Room collection of MOTH's memorabilia. He was elected Founder Chairman of the Museum in 1977 and retained that position until shortly before his death.

Towards the end of his life he concentrated all his efforts on the restoration and preservation of a limited area of the old Cape Glass Company glassworks in Glencairn under the cover of a small museum which he erected mainly at his own expense. It was most fitting that in the last months of his life he received the Citizen of the Year Award from the Simon's Town Municipality and also the Paul Harris Rotary Award. Those Society members who are not Rotarians will be proud to know that this is the highest award Rotary can bestow and it is named after the movement's founder Paul Harris who with three companions founded the movement in Chicago in 1906. They used to hold their first meetings in one-another's homes in rotation hence the name and the insignia.

When Gordon became Mayor he lost no opportunity to tell everyone how upset he was about the state of the Old Burying Ground at Seaforth. It was a subject we constantly discussed over the years and several Society members worked long and hard in an attempt to improve matters. Gordon spent a lot of his time and quite a lot of his money there (the Society also contributed) and it is perhaps quite fitting to end this tribute with a poem he gave me some years ago which he had penned in the Old Burying Ground.

RESURGENCE

Our Dead, at rest, midst scenic peace
Their grave-surrounds reduced o'er years;
Faint words on stone: "A last release..."
And time has passed; come no more tears.

On stony ground, the grass grows high;
The mem'ries dim; the kin disperse;
But few remain to give a sigh -
Recall the day when came the hearse.

The liquid calls of birds resound,
From tree, from tomb, from vault, to sky,
As o'er the Old Interment Ground,
They perch, they flit and freely fly.

Some graves are mark'd - but most are lost.
 All lie at peace with quilts of green,
 Through Autumn's rains, by Nature tossed,
 To bring a soft and tranquil scene.

Some tombs are large; some plots are small -
 And this is where one's heart can break -
 Among the grass - beyond recall,
 Rest infants - "Lilies on a lake".

Then Summer comes - exerts its might:
 The leaves are sere - they're yellow, red.
 But seeds are set for next year's sight
 Of green life amongst our Dead.

Penned in the Old Burying Ground, Seaforth, Simon's Town on
 2nd June 1987 by Gordon Wilson.

These well-crafted hymnlike stanzas are reminiscent of the works
 of A.E. Houseman of "Shropshire Lad" fame.

His was an incredible life lived to the full. It was a very
 considerable honour to have known him.

G.B. READ CBE
 CHAIRMAN.

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OWEN PRYCE-LEWIS 17/6/1909 - 19/3/94

Owen Pryce-Lewis was not a member of our Society but for two
 years 1977 and 1978 he was the first Curator of the newly estab-
 lished Simon's Town Museum which the Historical Society and
 others had long striven to bring about.

The Professor or "Prof" as he was known to so many (being an
 Associate Professor Emeritus of Architecture) worked hard in
 those two years to make a Museum in a totally inadequate build-
 ing (this being what is now the Engineer's Offices at the
 Municipal complex). As he said himself "the work, while
 rewarding, became too arduous as the Museum's responsibilities
 increased." He did not waste his "retirement" for we owe him a
 deep debt of gratitude for all the research he undertook in our
 area and town over the next 16 years. Much of this has been
 published in our Bulletin as well as in Architectural publi-
 cations and we still have several of his articles to publish in
 future Bulletins.

As a young boy "Prof" holidayed with his grandparents at The
 Homestead which to-day is the Restaurant in the Cape Point
 Nature Reserve and when he retired from the University of Cape
 Town in 1969 he came to live in Simon's Town. It was a great
 thrill to everyone when in 1986 he was awarded the Cape Times
 Centenary Medal for "outstanding achievements in the field of
 conservation of buildings and the natural environment."

We will miss seeing that familiar figure with walking stick and
 British Airways flight bag over his shoulder! (A.E.R)

GERALD BARKER READ CBE 1924-1994

The sudden and untimely death of Gerry Read on Thursday 31 March came as a great shock to his many friends and associates both here and overseas.

His active life was fully packed with big business, diplomacy, sport, travel and jazz. Since settling in Seaforth upon his retirement in 1979 Gerry involved himself in the local scene, serving on the committee of the Simon's Town Historical Society for 2 years before becoming its Chairman in 1982, which post he held until his death. He was also the Historical Society's representative on the Board of Trustees of the Simon's Town Museum and on the committee of the Simon's Town Publicity Association, as well as being Vice-President of the Simon's Town Proboscis Club, as well as a member of The Owl Club and of the Oxford and Cambridge Society.

Born in Jinja, Uganda in 1924, he spent his schooldays at college in the Isle of Man before moving up to Cambridge to read mathematics. During the War Gerry was in the Army and attached to the Petroleum Board. After the war the oil industry beckoned and as a Shell trainee he served in Australia before crossing the sea to study Cantonese at Sun Yat Sen University and to work in China. The Maoist threat forced a move to the Philippines, then to Nigeria and Sierra Leone. In 1956 came another posting; this time to Kuwait and Qatar in the Persian Gulf. It was here that he met Audrey Mar-Garrison, born in Simon's Town, but then working for Iraq Petroleum; the match led to a London wedding in 1959.

Gerry's rise to the top echelons of Shell was to involve a series of postings to Africa with sessions at the London offices in between: in 1959 it was to Salisbury as Sales Manager (it was here that I first made his acquaintance), to Khartoum in 1965, and to Nairobi in 1971 as Chief Executive of Shell & B.P. Services. Whilst based in London he had to make visits to war-torn Nigeria, where the frontline bisected the oilfields.

Gerry's endeavours in securing oil supplies so urgently needed by Her Majesty's Government and his diplomatic finesse were twice acknowledged, first with an O.B.E. in 1969 and then with a C.B.E. in 1980.

This widely-travelled man had certainly got the wanderlust and in his retirement went on journeys to the Shetlands, Greenland, Iceland, Orkneys, Scandinavia, down to the Antarctic and only recently, to lonely Tristan da Cunha. A rugby player in his younger days, Gerry latterly enjoyed following a golf ball around the Simon's Town links. He loved jazz and in earlier times played the trombone and the guitar. An avid reader and a prolific letter-writer he undertook to resolve some of the thornier problems that were faced by the Historical Society, often using his own funding.

Gerry will be sorely missed: his kind comes around rarely. Our sincere condolences to his widow Audrey and his mother-in-law Isobel Mar-Garrison.
(Nigel Farquharson).

FRANCIS EDWARD DU BEDAT 1851-1919

A.E. READ

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 caused hundreds of Protestants to flee France. Some came to the Cape and many more fled to England and Ireland. There were many able financiers and bankers among them as well as very accomplished silversmiths. The Du Bedats of this story fled to Ireland.

When copying out a death notice from the Dido Valley cemetery records for the card index the Museum is compiling one did not expect to hear much more of "Frank Debedat" who died at Kommetjie aged 70 on 20 July 1919.

Then in February 1994 a relative of his called at the Museum and asked the Curator if she knew anything about F.E. Du Bedat. Well, there was a card (with the incorrect spelling) so the Curator was overjoyed to be able to produce information and the visitor was even more overjoyed and thereupon produced a small booklet written about the family. It was so interesting we thought we must record something of the man and his family.

The Du Bedats were originally a Huguenot family who came from Agen in the province of Guienne, France. The first one recorded in Dublin was Jean (born 1716 at Lacpede, France) either son or grandson of Mathieu Du Bedat, Advocate in the Parliament of Paris. Jean founded the first sugar refinery in Ireland, probably before 1741.

By 1850 the Du Bedats were well established in the banking and stockbroking scene in Dublin. There was Du Bedat and Porter in Dame Street as well as Smyth and Du Bedat also in Dame Street. Others, like William were Transfer Officer of the Bank of Ireland and Peter who was Secretary of the Bank of Ireland 1858-1882.

"F.E." (our Du Bedat) was a grandson of William, Transfer Officer of the Bank of Ireland. F.E's father was William George (1815) who was also a stockbroker. His firm was William George Du Bedat and Sons, Government Stock and Share Brokers in Foster Place, Dublin.

At the age of 20 in 1872 F.E. married Mary Rosa (daughter of Samuel Waterhouse) and in this year he also completed his apprenticeship in stockbroking and they settled into married life at Glenalua Lodge, Killiney. Upon the early death of his older brother William in 1877, F.E. took on family responsibilities such as arranging funerals, tombstone inscriptions and looking after the financial affairs of elderly relatives. He also was a trustee of the French Huguenot Fund from 1874 and later became Treasurer. Many of F.E.'s firm's supporters fell under F.E's personal charm and entrusted their life savings to him to invest.

F.E. by the way was a big man. Five feet ten inches tall and 24 stone in weight. He was very popular and a general favourite on the Stock Exchange, known in some circles as The Baron. In 1889

the year his father died, he was appointed a Justice of the Peace for County Dublin. In 1890 at the peak of his power, he was elected, aged 40, as President of the Dublin Stock Exchange.



Reproduction of a prison photograph taken after he had lost so much weight.

In 1889 F.E. had acquired a granite house next to his father-in-law at Glenalua. This was known as Stoneleigh. It had vast grounds and he also acquired from his father-in-law enough land to give him a private right of way between the 2 houses. F.E. hired the services of the well known Irish architect Albert E. Murray to turn his estate into one of the finest in Killiney. When this was done the house now had 7 lofty bedrooms, 2 dressing rooms with fixed lavatories, drawing, dining, morning, day and billiard rooms, spacious hall, cloak room, 3 w.c.'s, bathroom, schoolroom, kitchens, wine cellars, pantries, servants rooms, electric light and hot and cold water throughout and the principal rooms heated with hot water pipes. Then there was an enclosed yard with coal houses, fuel rooms and closets. There was an aviary, stabling for 8 horses, harness room, bedrooms for 3 coachmen, tool and out-house, cowhouse for 4 head of cattle, dairy, laundry, playroom 60 ft long, sheds, electric house, large hay shed and lofts for corn and hay. The property was now re-named FRANKFORT.

To finance all this he had borrowed heavily from banks. He had encouraged clients to purchase certain stocks and shares but instead of purchasing these stocks in his clients' names he converted same to his own use and benefit. He also "acquired" the money of the French Huguenot Fund. He had invested a lot of money in get-rich-quick schemes, hoping to recoup his spendings. Among these he had invested a lot of money in the Delagoa Bay Co. but this ran into trouble in 1890.

Remember it was October 1890 he was elected President of the Dublin Stock Exchange. By December he was ruined and had debts of over £100,000 - a LOT of money in those days.

F.E. left for London on 17 December 1890 with his solicitor. By Christmas Eve he knew "it was all over". He gave his solicitor a letter for his wife and Power of Attorney to a friend to

realise his assets and settle with his creditors as best he could. Then he disappeared. Rumour began to circulate in Dublin that he had been knocked down by a train in London and killed.

A special meeting of the Dublin Stock Exchange Committee on 29 December though was informed that F.E. had absconded. In June 1891 Frankfort was put up for auction by the Bank of Ireland. The same month F.E. was picked up in Cape Town. He had been living under the name of Denver in a lodging house. He was taken back to Dublin and stood trial for bankruptcy and fraud. In October 1891 he was sentenced to 12 months hard labour and 7 years penal servitude. F.E. was sent to Mountjoy prison where almost from the start his health began to deteriorate. He had a ruptured hernia that had occurred while he was attending his trial and he spent almost all of his imprisonment in bed. By 1896 his weight was down to 10 stone - he had lost 14 stone.

In 1896 his wife Rosa petitioned for his release, as did his father-in-law, one of his largest creditors who in his petition guaranteed to pay for F.E. to go to South Africa direct from prison. The 3rd petition was from "The Working Men of Killiney Village" - 75 of them. The 4th petition was from 54 various members of the Dublin Stock Exchange to the Governor General of Ireland. These worked and on 30 November 1896 he was released. On 11 January he was admitted to the Royal City of Dublin hospital and operated on for his hernia. In due course he made his way to South Africa.

Before his conviction F.E. had also had a base in Paris as he had a fondness for actresses, especially French ones. An actress was said to have accompanied him to South Africa. Many family members drew a veil of secrecy over their relationship. F.E.'s only son died in 1907 and his 2 daughters married and went to live abroad to make new lives for themselves.

F.E. is believed to have been immortalised in George Bernard Shaw's play "The Doctor's Dilemma" produced in 1906. Shaw states that Dubedat had only 2 failings: Money and women. It is probable that he and Shaw were friends as G.B.S. also lived in the Killiney area.

Incidentally the Du Bedat family motto was "Sans tache" (without blemish).

This is the fascinating story behind a little-known man buried in Dido Valley Cemetery. I wonder if he left any descendants in South Africa?

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REV. HAROLD BEARDMORE'S BULL TERRIER: BILL

Extract from "The Sailor" of August 1951:

Bill, born in Simon's Town, crowded more excitement into his life span of 12 years than the whole canine population of Pretoria.

He, while a member of the crew of HMS HOOD was patted by King George VI and by Winston Churchill. He also welcomed General Smuts aboard HMS NELSON and listened attentively while General Smuts addressed the ship's crew from the top of a 16 inch gun turret.

On his first voyage with Rev.H. Beardmore OBE RN, Bill took unauthorised shore leave to chase a black cat sitting impudently close on the quay. He was arrested by two sailors, taken before the captain and punished for deserting. He was made "second class for leave during the rest of the trip" and given "five days negative lamp posts." After that Bill confined the chase to rats and "Fishcakes", a cunning cat, who was also a member of HOOD'S crew.

Bill was sea-sick only once, when HOOD took part in the hunt for the German battle-cruiser SCHARNHORST. Bill had his "baptism of fire" during the sinkings of the French fleet at Oran. Broadships from 15-inch guns were no joke. Italian bombers roared overhead. At the first salvo the ship shuddered. Bill's ears flattened. He growled defiance and then settled down to gnawing a bone which the ship's butcher had given him. In his old age however, Bill hated Guy Fawkes celebrations. He had heard the thunder of naval guns too often to want to be reminded of them.

He lived a sea-dog's life. He was ducked when the ship crossed the equator. He fought with a land-lubber, "Just Nuisance" on the Simon's Town dockside. They had to be separated by being showered by the powerful spray of sea water from the main hydrant. However, later on in Scapa Flow, Bill broke his shoulder in a fight with a sheep dog. It was set by a surgeon in nearby Kirkwall and a silver plate was put in. Recovery took a long time and when a premature report of his death reached the ship, Bill's obituary was solemnly pinned to the board on the quarter deck.

But Bill lived to rejoin the Navy and served until his retirement in 1947. He lies buried under a Jacaranda tree in a Pretoria garden. He has the distinction of having his career written up in "Kommando", magazine of the South African fighting forces.

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OLD BURYING GROUND - SEAFORTH.

N. K. FARQUHARSON.

On a stony hillside south of the centre of Simon's Town lies the Old Burying Ground. Established in 1813 (only 18 years after the 1st British Occupation of the Cape) it may be the oldest public cemetery extant in South Africa.

In the early part of the 19th century, the population of Simon's Town was a mixture of many races and religions, cultures and languages. It had been the practice to bury the bodies of civilians, as well as soldiers and sailors, behind the Barracks, but soon the available area was filled and it became difficult to dig a hole without opening up an older grave. The Government was approached for the grant of a suitable area and with great promptitude provided about 1 hectare in what was to become Seaforth. By the end of 1813 the 60th Regt began building the wall around the grounds. From time to time further areas were added to this original Anglican Section to accommodate Naval burials, Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed and Malay, these being separated from each other by low stone walls.

The Old Anglican section received only two burials in the first year it was open (1814), the small headstone of this twin grave bears testimony to the high rate of infant mortality, for here lie William Davenport Harington (3 years, 3 months) and his sister Margaret (2 months 8 days). Their father Thomas built a fine house and lived for a while on the site of what is now known as "Bonne Esperance". His wife was the niece of the Earl of Seaforth.

The style of the surviving early graves was generally an above-ground structure with an inscribed stone either on top of, or mounted on one side; it is this that makes an attractive feature of the oldest part of the burying ground. The messages were far wordier than they were later to become, when it was more customary to state only the names, dates of birth and death, with normally a biblical quotation as a footnote. In the early days, the 'stones' were all imported, so many months must have elapsed between burial and the completion of the grave.

For many years in the middle of the 19th century it was the custom for Army officers stationed in India, as well as employees of the Honourable East India Company, to spend their long leave in the Cape rather than suffer the long voyage back to England; there was also considerable sea traffic around the southern tip of Africa as the Empire moved men and goods to and from the far-flung colonies. There was sickness aboard ships and many subsequent deaths in shore hospitals, with Simon's Town being a major one. Many of the headstones record the deaths of such personnel and their family members who were not stationed at the Cape. One wonders too, at the story behind the deaths of two Russian sailors, one from a Russian frigate, whose graves are to be found in the old Anglican section: it is possible that they served in a fleet that had to sail halfway round the world, via the Cape, to get from one end of their country to the other, calling here to coal on the way.

In the Naval Reservation, now called the Garden of Remembrance, were laid to rest many sailors and soldiers and here are memorials erected to the memory of those buried at sea. There is evidence here of the heavy losses sustained in fighting the slave traffic on both the East and West coasts of Africa. The South African War Graves Board decided early in the 1970's to group together all the military and naval graves from the other sections and in a major revamp the re-interments were effected, some headstones being moved for display on sloping panels; also erected were memorials to those lost in specific accidents, such as the loss of 20 crew from RMS GLENDOWER who drowned when their boat capsized on 10 March 1826 while on their way back to their ship moored in Simon's Bay. Here lie sailors who "fell from aloft", killed at "maxim gun practice", together with Kroomen (Africans from the West coast of Africa recruited on the ships' outward passage to the Cape) with such unlikely names as John Bull, Tom Cockroach, Deadeye Dick and Flying Jib, just to mention a few. One memorial stone deserves special study, it is in Latin for a Dr Johannes Stewart who died in "Simonis Oppidum".

There were not many Roman Catholic residents in Simon's Town during the 19th century: those originally buried in the R.C. section were either naval (and have been moved to the Garden of Remembrance) or Italian workmen brought out during the construction of the new East Dockyard, many being killed while working in the stone quarry situated on the slopes of the mountain nearby. To-day only 10 identifiable graves remain.

There are two noticeable features in the Dutch Reform section that lies at the southern end of the grounds. One is the memorial to Boer prisoners of war who died of enteric fever while being held in the nearby camps (together with one p.o.w. who was killed by a shark while swimming off Windmill Beach) and the other noticeable feature, the strange predominance of English surnames, presumably the result of local Dutch girls marrying English men but retaining their religious affiliations.

(This article first appeared in "Capensis" the journal of the Western Cape Region of the Genealogical Society of South Africa who gave permission for us to reprint it.)

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ROYAL MARINES IN THE WAR 1914-1919 (THE SOUTH AFRICAN HEAVY ARTILLERY, R.M.A. CONTINGENT)

(FROM: Britain's Sea Soldiers: A History of the Royal Marines 1914-1919 by General Sir H.E. Blumberg KCB RM. Simon's Town Museum Library)

Chapter 32 begins "Organisation - Campaign in German South-West Africa - Formation of the South African Heavy Brigade - Service in France".

Please note that the personnel of the South African Heavy

Artillery, R.M.A. Contingent were enlisted in South Africa, and as it formed part of the South African Forces, this record only deals with the R.M.A. nucleus of Officers and other ranks, who were lent with the 4-inch and 12-pounder 18-cwt guns by the Admiralty to organise the unit.

"Colonel J. Markham Rose, Major W.H.L. Tripp, Lieutenants A.E. Rann and H.R. Purser with 50 N.C.O.s and men, R.M. Artillery left England on 21 October 1914 in s.s. SAXON taking with them four 4-inch and 4 12 pr. 18cwt. guns on field carriages to assist the South African Forces in their campaign against German South-West Africa. They arrived in Cape Town on 19 November and encamped at Groot Schuur. After arrival Sergeant-Majors Jenvey and Reynolds were granted commissions in the Union Defence Forces, the latter as quartermaster; they were later transferred to commissions in the Corps.

The batteries were organised as follows:-

- In command of the Brigade - Major W.H.L. Tripp
- C.I. battery, two 4-inch guns - Lieutenant Rann
- C.II " " " " - Lieutenant Purser
- 1 Battery, two 5-inch howitzers
- 1 Battery, four 12 pounders
- 1 A.A. battery, 1 15-pdr gun on special mounting.

The detachments were formed of Cape Garrison Artillery and officers and men drawn from the South African Forces, together with new recruits. Each battery had a small nucleus of R.M.A. The batteries were trained and equipped by Colonel Rose and his staff.

On 24 November after testing the guns in the sand, it was found necessary to replace the mules by oxen in the 4-inch batteries and also to replace the wheels by large steel wheels made at the Salt River Works at Cape Town. On 1 December C II battery under Lieutenant Purser embarked for Luderitzbucht, being attached to the Central Force and took part in the investment of Aus.

After the Falkland Island Battle on 8 December as a temporary protection Captain Rann with Sergeant-Major Jenvey and a detachment manned an armoured train with a six-inch gun at Fish Hoek to assist the forts in case of an attack on Simon's Town by the escaping German cruisers.

On 25 December C.I. battery (Captain Rann) landed at Walvis Bay. The landing was covered by HYACINTH and ALBION. The Royal Marine Artillery saw much service in the ensuing campaign between December and the following May when Windhoek was occupied. Colonel Rose was on General Botha's staff. The batteries returned to Cape Town by the end of July 1915, where all troops were paid off and discharged.

Col. Rose then set to work to organise the South African Heavy Artillery for service in France; it consisted of 5 batteries recruited: No.1 in Western Cape Province, No.2 in Eastern Cape Province, No.3 in the Transvaal, No.4 in the Kimberley district, No.5 in Natal. The Brigade left South Africa for England in the KILDONAN CASTLE on 28 August, numbering approxi-

mately 650 officers and men.

For their services in South Africa Col. Rose was awarded the D.S.O., Major Tripp the M.C., Captain J.E. Reynolds the D.S.C., whilst Captain Harrison and Sergeant-Major Flaye were mentioned in dispatches. Sergeant-Majors Flaye and Jenvey were given commissions in the Corps.

On arrival in England the Brigade of the South African Heavy Artillery retained their South African cap badge but were incorporated with the R.G.A. Siege Batteries.

71st Siege Battery (Transvaal) - Major Harrison, Captain Rann, Battery-Sergeant-Major Dacombe

73rd Siege Battery (Cape) - B.S.M. Guest R.M.A.

74th Siege Battery (E.Cape) - B.S.M. Davis R.M.A.

75th Siege Battery (Natal) Major W.H.L. Tripp, B.S.M. Osborne.

There was still a nucleus of Royal Marine Artillery in the Batteries but they were gradually withdrawn; the Batteries however served throughout the war in France. They earned many decorations for valiant service and for showing courage and determination throughout and setting a fine example under fire.

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Our attention was drawn to this episode by Commander Bisset of the South African Naval Museum.

FLAG OFFICERS OF THE CAPE

V. WHITE

PART XI Rear Admiral Hon. Sir F. Grey K.C.B. 1857-1860

Rear Admiral Hon. Sir H. Keppel G.C.B. 1860-1861

Eighteen fifty-seven the year in which **Rear Admiral the Hon. Sir Frederick Grey** assumed command of the Cape of Good Hope Station, flying his flag in HMS BOSCAWEN (Flag Captain Captain A. Powell RN) was a year of changes. The Cape of Good Hope Station was extended to include the West Coast of Africa.

In 1815 the Mediterranean, Halifax, West and East Indies squadrons were supplemented by new ones at the Cape of Good Hope, West Africa and South America. Each squadron comprised a flagship of the line supported by a varying number of frigates and sloops. The training ship HMS ILLUSTRIOUS, later to become BRITANNIA, was substituted for the R.N. College, Portsmouth, whilst 1857 was the year when standard uniform was adopted for men in the Royal Navy. The uniform of officers in the Royal Navy continued with variations in style for another 30 years.

The Indian mutiny which broke out on 10 May 1857, when Sepoys in Meemt revolted, and trouble in China re-affirmed the strategic importance of the Cape sea route to and from the Far East. The Indian mutiny continued until July 1858 when peace was proclaimed. At the end of 1857 British and French troops entered Canton to avenge insults to their nationals, the Chinese

having boarded a Hong Kong registered vessel, the ARROW, in the previous year and imprisoned the crew for alleged piracy. It was not until November 1869 that the Suez Canal was opened, when 2 sea routes to the Indian ocean and the Far East were available to British transports and the Royal Navy.

Frederick Grey was born on 23rd August 1805, into a distinguished family. His father was Earl Grey, England's Prime Minister from 1830 to 1834, and was married to Mary Elizabeth the only daughter of Lord Ponsonby. Frederick's eldest brother became Secretary of State for the Colonies, another brother was a Member of Parliament, whilst his youngest brother served as a Captain in the Royal Navy. His uncle the Hon. Sir George Grey Bt. KCB was a Captain RN and held the appointments of Resident Commissioner Portsmouth Dockyard and also Marshall of Barbados. A first cousin Charles Conrad Grey was a Commander in the Royal Navy. Frederick himself was later to become First Sea Lord.

He entered the Royal Navy in January 1819 and was promoted Lieutenant in 1825, on being appointed to HMS VOLAGE (28 guns). Two years later he was commanding HMS HERON, a sloop on the South American station and in 1828 he was promoted to post rank in command of the ACTAION (26 guns) in which he served on the East Indies and China stations. In 1843, the year in which Gentlemen Volunteers in the Royal Navy were re-christened Naval Cadets, Frederick Grey was awarded the C.B. Despite this award and his distinguished service Grey found himself like many other Royal Naval officers in the mid-1800's without an appointment. His fortunes changed in 1857 when he became C-in-C Cape of Good Hope and First Sea Lord at the end of his naval career. During their stay in Simon's Town Admiral and Lady Grey were particularly well thought of for their kindness to children of local schools, when they entertained at parties in Admiralty House and on board the flagship.

The name Keppel outside of naval circles is associated in modern times with Alice Keppel, one of the most celebrated beauties of the Edwardian age. She became famous for her liaison with Edward VII, which started when he was the pleasure-loving Prince of Wales. Alice was married to Colin Richard Keppel the son of **Admiral the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel** the 5th Earl of Albermarle, who was C-in-C Cape in succession to Rear Admiral the Hon. Sir Frederick Grey.

The Hon. Sir Henry Keppel was a descendant of Arnold Joost van Keppel KG, who served at sea under the Prince of Orange in 1688, and who was made Baron Ashford, Viscount Bury and Earl of Albermarle. The 3rd Earl, also an Admiral was court martialled in 1778 for allowing the French Fleet to escape off Ushant, notwithstanding which he became a First Lord of the Admiralty in 1782. Henry Keppel was the 4th son of the 4th Earl of Albermarle and the Hon. Ely Southwell, the 4th daughter of Edward Lord Clifford. Henry Keppel joined the Royal Navy at the age of 13 years and entered the Royal Naval College, Portsmouth, in February 1822. In 1828 he passed his Lieutenant's examinations in HMS TWEED, and the following year obtained his first commission serving first in HMS GALATEA (42 guns) under Captain Charles Napier RN and subsequently in HMS MAGICIENNE

(24 guns) under Captain T.H. Plumridge RN, both on the East Indies station.

Henry Keppel was promoted to Commander in January 1833 and served in command in HMS CHILDERS (16 guns) in the Mediterranean and West Africa Station until 1838 having been promoted to Captain the previous year. From 1841 to 1845 Keppel was in command of HMS DIDO (18 guns) on the China station and in Borneo. In March 1842 DIDO visited Simon's Town. She was paid off in 1845, when Keppel left the service until 1852. His return to Simon's Town was in 1860, when as C-in-C Cape of Good Hope in succession to Admiral the Hon. Sir Frederick Grey and flying his flag in HMS FORTE (Captain Edward Turnour RN) he sailed from Sheerness on 28 January. On board was his 19 year old nephew Midshipman Henry Stephenson and a passenger Captain Grant after whom Grant's gazelle were named. The FORTE did not proceed directly to the Cape, but was held up in Plymouth until the end of April whilst extra cabins were constructed, to accommodate the Governor of the Cape Colony Sir George Grey and his party of seven.

As a result of a fracas between the Admiral and the Governor, details of which are recounted in the Society's Bulletin of January 1987, Admiral Keppel hauled down his flag in 1861 and was on half pay until 1867 when at the intervention of the Prince of Wales he was reinstated on the Navy List. On 21 January 1867 he hoisted his flag as a Vice-Admiral on board HMS CUMBERLAND at Sheerness bound for the Far East as C-in-C China Station. His appointment lasted until October 1869, when he returned to England a full Admiral and a KCB, this time, however, as a passenger on board a steamship. Highly thought of in the service, Keppel had been invited on his return from the Cape in 1861 to be the principal guest of Captain Cochrane RN when the WARRIOR, the Royal Navy's first iron battleship was moved down river to Greenhithe. From 1870 to 1876 Keppel was Admiral in command at Devonport.

Keppel first married in February 1839, Katherine Louisa daughter of General Sir John Crosbie GCH of Watergate. Sadly she became an invalid in 1857 and died in 1859. In 1862 Keppel re-married, to Jane West sister of Sir Algernon West. They were blessed with a son Colin Richard who also served in the Royal Navy and became a full Admiral, and with a daughter Maria Walpole.

At the age of 90 Keppel travelled alone to Singapore to be present at the opening of Keppel Harbour, newly built and named after him. When he died in 1904 at the age of 95 years, Keppel was Admiral of the Fleet, and described as "Father of the Navy", holder of the Order of Merit and of the G.C.B. He was buried on 21 January at St Mary's Church, Winkfield, in Berkshire, when a wreath from Queen Alexandra was placed on his grave, bearing the words "In loving memory of my beloved little Admiral, best and bravest of men - rest in peace".

Sir Henry Keppel's autobiography in 3 volumes "A Sailors Life Under Four Sovereigns" is in the Simon's Town Museum Library.

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VICE-ADMIRAL E.R.G.R. EVANS: HOW I MET HIM

MARGARET GRAY

In 1933 when Vice-Admiral Evans was Commander-in-Chief at Simon's Town, my father the late James Aberdein, knew that Evans had lantern slides of his journey with Scott to the Antarctic. My father had a very powerful lantern with arc lights capable of throwing up these slides on a screen. He formed a Committee after Evans agreed to give his illustrated lecture in the City Hall, Cape Town, in aid of the Citizens' Unemployment Relief Fund and the Commander-in-Chief's Benevolent Fund. The lecture was well publicised and booking was at Darters. Evans gave the first lecture on Tuesday 15 August 1933 and another later on. Each time the City Hall was packed and I shall never forget the event.

Evans then invited members of the Committee, my mother, eldest brother and myself to lunch at Admiralty House. However, the Tshekedi affair in Bechuanaland took place and Evans and his marines rushed up there to settle the matter. Nevertheless, later on Evans said his flagship DORSETSHIRE was arriving in Cape Town harbour soon and invited the Committee, my mother, eldest brother and myself to lunch on board. I was then 20 and working for an Attorney in Cape Town and got leave to go with my parents. When we arrived at the old Victoria Dock, we were piped aboard and had lunch in the officers' wardroom. It must have been summertime as I wore a white pique voile dress and I think a white panama hat. Lieutenant Airey sat next to me but I cannot remember the rest of the officers. Neil McKinnon, Evans' Flag Lieutenant (very tall) was there.

Before lunch the Ship's Band played Norwegian music (Evans' wife was Norwegian) and various speeches were made and toasts drunk. My father had noticed that Evans' slide box was dilapidated, so, as he was a skilled craftsman, he bought a piece of stinkwood, made a new box with hinges etc, and with divisions, then lined the box with green baize. Then Mr. Evans of Carmichael & Evans the jewellers, one of the Committee, put an inscribed silver plaque on the box. This was presented to Vice-Admiral Evans at the lunch and he was greatly moved. He presented my eldest brother with an autographed copy of one of his books, as my brother had helped my father operate the lantern. After lunch we were shown over the ship by various officers and I remember being impressed with the bakery, the men of course with the machinery, the guns etc. As I am now over 80 this event left a wonderful memory.

My parents were asked by an old friend in Falmouth, Cornwall, to befriend one of the crew of DORSETSHIRE (Mervyn Oatey then aged 16). My mother would collect him at Claremont Station with his friend Davies from Portsmouth, bring them home to tea with our family and go on an outing. Davies unfortunately went down in REPULSE. Oatey survived the war and married a Scots girl and settled at South Queensferry (near the Forth Bridge). He never forgot my mother (my father died in 1934) and sent her calendars and presents until her death in 1961. I still have some teaspoons and Maltese lace mats he sent her.

"PLUM PUDDING" AND "ROAST BEEF" ISLANDS.

A. E. READ

Have you ever wondered how these islands got their names. They were rich in guano in the previous century and the guano was collected at one time by Messrs de Pass and Spence who were responsible also for erecting the first Patent slipway in the country here in Simon's Town. Whalers also used these islands from time to time, they came all the way from Nantucket in the United States.

Plum Pudding: the flesh at the junction of the whale's fluke.

Roast Beef: tried out whale blubber - to "try" blubber was to melt it down in order to extract the oil. The remains of the blubber after trying out were used to fuel the fire under the try-pot.

We have five or six of these pots in various places in Simon's Town. Look at them next time you see one - they are all slightly different

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HMS SWALLOW 1879.

She was a wooden screw gun vessel. 664 bm. 805 tons. 170 x 29 ft. 1 x 7-inch and 2 x 40-pounders. She was built at Portsmouth in 1868 and sold on 18 October 1882 to A. Tobin.

While based at Simon's Bay she was selected to carry out the recommendations of the Cape Government concerning the Dorsland Trekkers. The trekboers, made unwelcome by both Kamaharero and Jan Jonker Afrikaner, trekked into the Kaokoveld. Cape traders operating from Damaraland had informed Special Commissioner Coates Palgrave that the trekkers had suffered severe privation and fever, and in May 1879 were in a very distressed state. A Relief Committee was set up in Cape Town, public opinion proved sympathetic towards their plight, and generous supplies were donated for alleviating their distress.

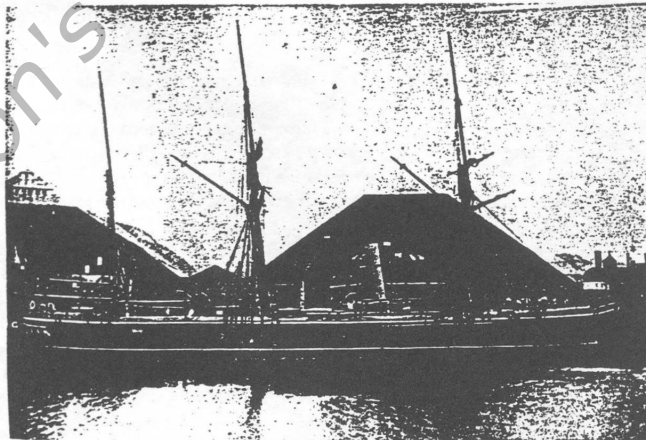
In September 1879 the Cape Parliament recommended the despatch of a vessel up the west coast to Fort Rock, to land Palgrave as head of a relief expedition designed to distribute supplies to the starving trekboers. Strategic, rather than humanitarian reasons, motivated this official assistance: the Cape Government feared that the Portuguese might extend the southern boundary of their territory to Fort Rock, or that the trekboers themselves might claim the area. The SWALLOW's voyage would establish where exactly the 18th parallel (the acknowledged Portuguese boundary) lay on the coast. Her captain could assess Fort Rock as a landing place and investigate the rumours of another anchorage on the coast (Ogden's harbour) in latitude 21° south. The voyage of the SWALLOW then would ascertain whether Walvis Bay was indeed the only practicable entrance to the

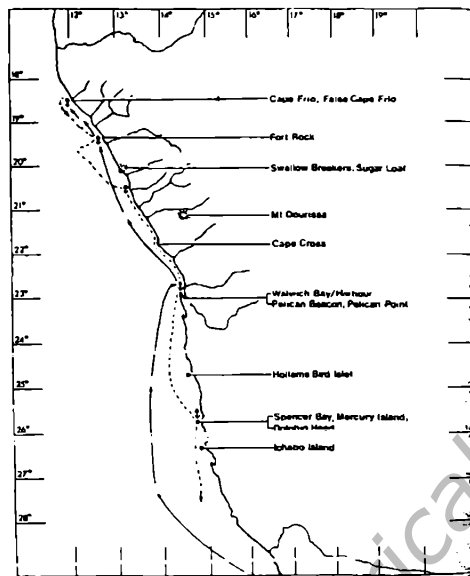
interior, or, if there were other landing places which could afford foreign powers access to the interior, alert the Cape Government to this before the trekboers might wish to establish their independence. SWALLOW's Captain Commander J. Borlase Warren set out for Cape Town and on 24 September embarked Commissioner Palgrave and anchored in Walvis Bay on 29 September. On the way to Fort Rock the ship passed a dangerous reef at about 20 5' S and christened this Swallow Breakers. After anchoring for a day off Fort Rock to observe the surf and other conditions, Navigating Lieutenant H. Baynham went in to sound. That afternoon the schooner CHRISTINA relief vessel loaded with horses, arrived. Alas no landing place was found so it was decided to look further south between Ogden's Harbour and Cape Cross. SWALLOW proceeded south, making a running survey of the coast as she went. Ogden's Harbour by the way is named for William Ogden, a young sailor who had tragically drowned off Mercury Island while sealing there with Benjamin Morrell. Despite careful examination no harbour was found and indeed at Cape Cross it was immediately apparent that landing would be impossible.

SWALLOW returned to Walvis Bay to land the stores, CHRISTINA following with the horses and mules. The Herero stated they had no objection to supplies being brought through their territory to the trekboers: indeed, should the trekboers wish to be returned to their own country by ship, they could pass unhindered through Damaraland to Walvis Bay.

SWALLOW returned to Simon's Bay on 9 October having made a very detailed survey of the west coast. On current charts Fort Rock, named by Captain Owen the famous hydrographer, is shown as Rocky Point. It is of interest that Commander Warren noted "it is my opinion that if 'Ogden's Harbour' ever existed, the constant action of the heavy seas which always appear to be breaking on the shores have washed the reefs away mentioned by Morrell". He also noted that Dassen Island much wanted a light house.

(From the original remark book in the Hydrographic Office, Taunton, Somerset, England and "By Command of Their Lordships" by Jill Kinahan)





Track of HMS Swallow, 1879, on a return voyage from the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Frio.

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VICE-ADMIRAL JAMES JOHNSON'S SPEECH AT A GENERAL BOTHA OLD BOYS REUNION, ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY c 15.3.1972
EXTRACTS FROM:

HUMPHREY E. PEARE (1925-26) remembers:

" It was January 25 1925. Our batch of about a dozen new boys arrived at Simon's Town by the steam train of those days. Mr. Johnson, the ship's Physical Training Instructor and "Jaunty" was there to meet us. Taking us under his protective wing with a "come laddies" he chaperoned us to the jetty like a teacher with a batch of retarded children in a game reserve.

The first sight of Simon's Town was rather disappointing and somewhat depressing, because there was hardly a soul in sight - one road to speak of and only one row of shops. "Never mind" I thought "we chaps will paint the town red on Saturdays". But I did not know, of course....

The 8 oarsmen comprising the duty cutter crew, sat erect and silent on their thwarts with their oars "tossed" awaiting the order TO LET GO FOR'ARD. Their stares of impartiality and disdain made us feel like polecats. Whispers and smirks were thrown in for good measure. But these were smartly wiped off their faces by the Sou-easter as the cutter left the lee of the jetty and "weighing us up" made way for the prevention of "Catching crabs".

The ship, some 200 yards away, made it a hard pull for the boys,

I felt sorry for them. With the wind on the Starboard beam we seemed to make no headway at times. I looked towards the Admiral's beach hoping that it was a sandy one and without rocks. However, we reached the good ship safe and sound with a completely changed and subdued bunch of heroes, now quite disinterested in we comic strip characters, because they now had their work cut out to recuperate and to breath. I had a big smile on my face watching them, but that moved to the other side of my face a few days later. A howling Sou-easter heralded us as we scrambled up through the hatches at the double where I came a wallop when I tripped over the coaming. So my first lesson came from an "old salt" behind me, who said: "You pick your.....feet up on a ship you .. new"

To youths who would like an interesting career with plenty of adventure and opportunity of seeing the world, and be paid for it as well, this is it. And to work with colleagues under a strict code of comradeship and ethics in preference to the drudgery of office and urban life, could wish for no better.

C.W. FOSTER (1926-27) remembers:

How we pushed our noses to the window of the train on approaching Simon's Town to catch the first glimpse of the ship anchored in Simon's Bay. She was painted white and proudly flew the Blue Ensign. Another walk from the station to the pier where a cutter was waiting to take us aboard. Then the shambles of getting rigged out. We wore square rig onboard in those days and shoes were worn only for Sunday Divisions or shore parades. How those flannels scratched our tender skin and what a struggle we had to make up our hammock and then master the art of getting into it without falling out the other side. Bert Costick was our guiding light. Apart from teaching us signals - with the liberal aid of a "stonnetjie" - he taught us how to wash clothes, darn socks, repair clothes - in fact he was a general mother to us. How many of us still treasure phtos taken by Bert. Postcard size at 6d a time. Poor old Bert passed away a year or two ago.

Water was supplied from the shore by hoses we used to run out in the cutter. It always blew a South-Easter on these occasions. Coaling ship was another job done by the cutter. We would pull across to the Naval Dockyard, shovel the coal into bags and carry them back to the boat. Then row back to the ship and hoist the bags aboard and run the coal into the bunkers. Now that I think about it, we never had a motorboat. The pride and joy of the boats was the Captain's Gig, moored at the port quarter boom. What a pride we took in manoeuvring the cutter alongside the quay. "Back Port, Up Hard Starboard" when the Kalk Bay rollers tried their best to make a laughing stock of the coxswain.

A vast number of things flash across my mind as I turn back the pages. That horrible institution known as "weighing in" when the new boys had to run the gauntlet down the port side and up the starboard side of the upper deck while the old salts stood by with ropes ends and had a whale of a time beating hell out of the runners. After this ordeal, the lads had to stand on the

washdeck locker and sing a song. If it didn't meet with approval there was no option but to chew a piece of that unpalatable yellow naval soap.

C. J. HARRIS (1933 - 34) remembers:

One of the memories that will, for me at any rate, remain alive for all-time, will be the two years spent on board the white ship off Simon's Town, the old GENERAL BOTHA restlessly chewing on her four mooring cables year in and year out, in sunshine and shower.

The Instructors (Messrs. Mercer, Costick, Goff and McDonald) took us in hand and after sorting us out, escorted us on a conducted tour of the ship. Mr. Goff was my particular "Sea Daddy" and I so well recall him pointing to a dowel let into the deck, telling us what it was, and urging us to remember it in case the Captain should ever ask us! He never did, but, ever since, I would recognise a dowel anywhere!!

So many things serve to remind me of that old ship. The smell of Worcestershire sauce to this day recalls how we used to invest our hard-earned weekly ten cents in this condiment, in order to drown the smell and give some tang to the thoroughly unappetising choc duff. In that respect at least, the bountiful printed menus in the prospectus did not live up to their glowing descriptions.

The South -easter whistling and hissing across Simon's Bay recalls diminutive bare-footed youngsters battling with the 16 foot oars of the duty cutter, and the "Heavy Weather" cutter's crew being called away in oilskins.

To-day when I hear the rumble and beat of a drum or the blare of a bugle, I remember how proud we were of our band and how smartly we stepped out behind it for our monthly church service ashore and the rare excursions into Cape Town.

To-day when I have occasion to go bare-footed, I am very conscious of where I place feet. Forty years ago the soles were tougher than biltong and the colour of pitch after two years of only a nodding acquaintance with shoes. The latter were for "going ashore" which we seldom did, and then always under supervision. Will anyone who ever served in the old ship ever forget the smell of soft soap? A clean antiseptic, but all-pervading odour that spoke of the hustle and bustle of Saturday's "clean ship" and the Rounds that followed and which odour lingered for days. How many of us to-day I wonder, could rig a hammock and, if so, how many of us could heave our middle-aged bulks into it and snug down for the night?

How well I recall the uneasy movement when the so-called "Kalk Bay Rollers" made their unwelcome appearance and caused the ship to fret at her moorings and the heavy cable to talk and groan in protest.

And that august and remote being, the Captain Superintendent, taking the Sunday service in the absence of the Padre,

addressing us on the subject of Loyalty, and quoting the book "Commando" by Deneys Reitz as an example of loyalty above and beyond the call of duty. And the SAME captain telling us that no man could have greater ambition than to command a great ship.

I recall with affection, the weekly entertainment which took place on pay-day each Thursday. Old silent movies, enjoyable and riotous evenings because every movie came in for its share of vociferous criticism. Mainly schoolboy wit, but some of it sharp and discerning none-the-less. And the occasion when we were piped to "stand-by hammocks" half-way through the film- the reason being given that there were exams the following day. But we knew it was because the story was becoming more and more "blue" with every reel. How to-day's permissive society would laugh at what, in 1933, was considered unsuitable for youthful eyes! So familiar did one's shipmates become, and so much a part of one's life, that to-day, 38 years later, I could sit down and record the names of the 60 of my term with scarcely a pause.

Where are they now I wonder? Some I still see from time to time. Some are scattered to the uttermost parts of the earth. Some paid the supreme sacrifice in World War II, which claimed us all in the prime of our youth. Some have prospered and some have struggled. Some have never been seen or heard of since we said our farewells on the old Cape Town railway station. How splendid it would be if the class of 1933/34 could have their own personal reunion - or has too much water passed under the keel and would we meet again as strangers?

The GENERAL BOTHA had been in existence as a training ship for a bare 11 years when I joined her. Now we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the institution. What a great pity the old ship, ugly as she was, could not have been preserved for she would now be nearing her century. As it were yesterday and the years between as nought, I can in memory hear the explosive crack of the 2100 gun and, overhead as I in imagination lie in my hammock, the drawn-out, plaintive, notes of the Last Post as the duty bugler salutes the passing of the day.

Days that have gone forever but not beyond recall for one whose proud privilege it was to have served in the old ship.

D.F. SILBERBAUER (1943-44) recalls:

SOLDIER, STATESMAN, SCHOLAR - I looked at those words for the umpteenth time and I confess that my attention wandered from the Service. From where I stood the Roll of Honour was clearly visible but the names were not. I didn't have to get closer to see the names of those I knew - I remember them as if it were yesterday! Porky Bingham (died at Walcheren), Fink (lost in tankers) and Kerruish (killed in an air accident). What about Lance who died in Viet Nam?

One can marvel that a few middle-aged Merchant Navy officers plus four retired Naval P.O's and a handful of dedicated

teachers could turn 75 cadets a year into something useful. I wonder what the secret was, because many of our term have become Masters of their own ships, skilful pilots, and above all, successful in the sea-going profession.

Perhaps we learnt earlier than most the true value of people. We certainly knew very well, other people's evaluation of us. We never suffered any delusions and we always received plain, straight-forward honest treatment. And we learnt loyalty. I doubt that any establishment anywhere contained such a fantastically loyal collection. We were loyal to each other, our seniors and juniors, our teachers and the ship. And what was the ship? It was nothing but a symbol really and we only went aboard once, but it was a living thing nevertheless. We were proud to be the S.A.T.S. GENERAL BOTHA, very proud. In short, tradition gave us inspiration and this in turn gave us pride. But this is hindsight. Certainly none of this occurred to us at the time.

Bell-bottomed trousers and well-scrubbed blue jean collars. Cap tallies set just so with an ornate bow to show that we were real sailors. And the brass-buttoned cadet officers' uniform for special occasions and to impress the schoolgirls at home. How strange those uniforms would look to-day with their shortish jackets, widish trousers, and the old-fashioned starched collars with rounded tips. But how PROUD we were of them and to be known and recognised wherever we went as "Botha" boys.

We were given a week to settle in and Davis, Metcalfe and Noone prepared us for the travail to come. I think that I mentioned before that all our forebodings with regard to our pending confrontation with the dreaded "old salts" were more than realised. But we learned a lot about life from this. For the most part punishment for real and imagined affronts to our senior's dignity was swift and painful but there were only one or two out and out bullies and no doubt they have their memories too.

It was here that I suddenly developed a hitherto unsuspected love for the classroom. I was never happier than listening to Jock Frame or Bisset because this was ONE time of the day that I was safe from the marauding Old Salts. It was lunch hour and the period after tea when one had to be on one's guard!!

Mind you, retribution knew no class distinction if ship's rules were broken. I swear that smoking was a worse offence than rape. Certainly the preparation for punishment was enough to send cold shivers running up and down guilty and innocent alike. What would loving parents do to-day, if they saw their little Jimmy in a duck suit lashed down over a "horse" so that he could not struggle, being given six hefty wacks by a wiry PTI called Chapman. A doctor WAS in attendance. Of course smoking was not the offence - it was the disobedience of orders that was being rectified. Smoking did not stop - even the threat of an early, exceedingly horrible death hasn't done that - cadets coming off leave used to hurl packets of cigarettes into the bushes outside the gates and retrieve them at night.

So far as I know none of us went on the stage (to make a living

that is) but one of our seniors was a born comedian. He looked like an ugly Orang Outang and he not only knew it but traded on it. Imagine lots of Junior Cadets lying in their hammocks waiting for lights out when onto the hammock bar leaps this apparition. Its hairline is only divided from its nose by its eye-brows and these are twitching up and down. Then it bursts into song with an introduction like "You lucky Chummies I'm going to sing to you" And the song? "Have You Ever Seen a Dream Walking". The catch to all this was that if you laughed, and it was not possible to keep a straight face with this character performing, you had to report to his hammock later for a thumping. Unless you were the possessor of abnormal night vision you invariably disturbed others en route which not result in a restful night for you.

And there was Andy. The soundest teaching in Navigation we received from this man. I suppose I've endured a greater variety of Navigation Instructors than most but Andy will always be tops. He knew youngsters and he knew Navigation. This helped - he also had fiery red hair and a fiery temper - this completed the requirement. One doesn't dare drop off to sleep when there's more than a sporting chance that a speeding dust-pan may come your way. I'd go so far as to wager Ten Rand that any survivor of OUR term is as au fait now with first principles, as he was then.

Random thoughts - disjointed - but that's the way these memories come flooding back. I should really be listening to the service but there's this other irreverent thought. What was it the Duke of Wellington said - "The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton"? Didn't know Blucher was an old Etonian. But thinking of that, lets consider Sailor Malan and Nettleton - was the Battle of Britain perhaps won on the well-scrubbed decks of the Bothie?

By 1944 about 1200 cadets had been trained. Of these 83 gave their lives and there were 58 awards including 1 Victoria Cross and 17 Mentioned in Despatches. An astonishing three-quarters of the ship's company played an active role in World War II - what a record. Of those who died 24 were in the merchant service, 17 in the Royal Navy or its reserve or volunteer service, 8 in the Seaward Defence Force or SANF, 14 in the RAF and 11 in the SAAF while 9 were in the Union Defence Force. The balance died in war-related accidents.

And now a Post-War Memory - IVOR C. LITTLE (1953-54)

Because of this, everything we did in our early careers (at sea that is) had the BOTHA as an anchor - "how would they do this at the BOTHA"? - "WE never did it THAT way at the training ship, Sir", etc. etc. As our careers progress this fades but is never entirely lost, as witness our own nostalgic thoughts when we enter the present Naval College at Gordon's Bay. The starboard roadway still evokes memories of long gone cadets. There is also that faint quickening of the pulse when we enter the present BOTHA and encounter the same routines and come face-to-face with the same brass plate of "IF" which generations spent so much time polishing.

These then are tales of mere mortals. The birthday we now celebrate is that of one of the immortals. The BOTHA dies - the BOTHA lives. The old original ship ex HMS THAMES died but the BOTHA lived on at Red Hill. Red Hill had it's day, and the BOTHA moved to Gordon's Bay. Gordon's Bay served its purpose and the BOTHA moved to Granger Bay. The man-built structures, poor ephemera, serve their time and become but faint memories: but the spirit, the essence, the soul if you like, of BOTHA goes steadily on. Fifty years, you say, is a long way short of the immortal life. Of course it is, but everything must have a beginning - didn't someone once say something about great oaks and little acorns - and we can look at the embryo and see at a glance if it is of the stuff of survival. And the fifty-year old offspring of the eternal sea is of that stuff. Think not of its spacious halls, elegant parade grounds, tidy harbour. These will go, as some day ships will go, but there will linger on that something that is in the air when one man says to another - "Ex-BOTHA" and the other answers "Yes". Then the room is charged with BOTHA and the comradeship, fellowship of being children of the great Alma Mater. Who knows but that already beyond the grave, and many BOTHA men have found lonely ones in their country's cause, the words "Ex-BOTHA" have been heard.

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SIMON'S TOWN CONNECTION - CAPE TOWN CITIZENS' SERVICES

S. KINKEAD-WEEKES

These services ran from 7th July 1940 to 7th October 1949. They were instigated by Mr. R.R. Brydone who had run similar services in the 1914-18 war.

The meetings were held on the first Sunday of every month at 3.45 p.m. in the City Hall, Cape Town, with His Worship the Mayor presiding. They were essentially a Token of Remembrance, that the Boys on service would not be forgotten.

Every meeting opened with the Promise:

"When you go away, we will be with you.

In all your wanderings, we will think of you.

In your time of danger and loneliness we will pray for you.

When you march, we will march with you.

When you come back we will rejoice and the Re-union will bring peace once more to our hearts."

Illustrated Souvenirs with the monthly proceedings and news from home, election results etc., were sent free of charge to camps and naval stations overseas, and to YMCA's and Toc H establishments. In all, by the end of the 60 months, 350,000 booklets had been distributed to every battlefront.

These booklets were greatly appreciated by servicemen of every nationality as far afield as U.K. and Australia, many of whom, or their families corresponded with the Secretary.

(contd. on page 79)

ROYAL NAVAL GRAFFITTI IN THE WEST DOCKYARD, SIMON'S TOWN.

WARREN FISH

In 1810 the British decided to permanently move the main naval station from Table Bay to Simon's Bay. A number of buildings were erected in Simon's Town to serve as the shore establishment, the Masthouse being one of them. Erected in 1815, the ground floor served as a storage area for masts and as a boathouse, while the upper floor was used as a sail loft. It is presumed that the attic was used to store spare material for the repairing of old sails and the production of new ones, as old pieces of sail canvas and various lengths of rope were found during recent restoration. Some interesting graffiti can be seen on the attic beams. See Appendix A for a plan of the attic. Graffiti is also to be found on the rear wall of the Detail Clothing Store, which is situated alongside the Masthouse (now part of the S.A. Naval Museum).

When standing in the sail loft attic facing the rear of the building, the graffiti can clearly be seen painted on the stinkwood beams. The names on the left hand side are those of Royal Naval ships based in Simon's Town from roughly 1890 until the outbreak of the 1st World War.

	OFFICERS
WEDGEON	ENGINEER
THRUSH	ENGINEER
SWALLOW	CARPENTER
BAHACOUTA	CARPENTER
HADDON	CARPENTER
PHILOMEL	BOATSWAIN
PHILOMEL	GUNNER
PHOEBE	FLAGSHIP
PHOEBE	
MAGPIE	
BLONDE	R.N.V.R. SOUTH AFRICA
BAROSSA	PENELOPE
	CLOCK TOWER

Here follows some facts about these ships:

HMS PENELOPE (1865):

On 24 August 1889 Thomas Poorfellow, Krooman, died on board. His grave can be seen in the Old Burying Ground. Hailing from West Africa, Kroomen were crew who enlisted in the Royal Navy. Crew enlisted from the East African coast were called Seedie Boys.

"FROM GLENCOE TO SIMON'S TOWN. WAR PRISONERS ON THE PENELOPE.

We learn upon Imperial authority that preparation is being made to accommodate the prisoners of war taken at Glencoe, Dundee and Elandslaagte. The carpenters have been at work day and night in order to fit the ship up with a reasonable amount of accommodation." (Simon's Town and District Chronicle 28/10/1899). HMS PENELOPE became a landmark in Simon's Town due to her long period of stay. She was broken up in Cape Town in 1912.

HMS BAROSSA, HMS BLONDE, HMS BARRACOUTA (1889):

These 3 British warships were all 3rd Class Cruisers and were based at Simon's Town for the same period of time: 1900-1905. HMS BARRACOUTA played an important role in the final phase of the Anglo-Boer 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. Port Nolloth, the copper mining port of Namaqualand was threatened but HMS BARRACOUTA was in the harbour. A party of blue jackets was landed with a ship's gun and this helped in securing the approaches to the port. This enabled a relief force to be sent by sea from Cape Town and saved the British from an arduous march across the desert. O'Kiep was relieved on 14 May 1902 after Smuts' forces had withdrawn. Smuts was not present as he had left Port Nolloth at the end of April to begin negotiations for peace. The trio of ships were sold in England in 1905.

HMS MAGPIE, HMS THRUSH, HMS WIDGEON (1889):

1st class Composite Gunboats. On 21 December 1900 HMS MAGPIE stuck on No.1 slip in Simon's Town after undergoing repairs. She had to be hauled off by HMS PENELOPE. During the Anglo-Boer War HMS WIDGEON patrolled close inshore, beyond Plettenberg Bay, reassuring the coastal dwellers that Britain still reigned supreme over the seas. HMS THRUSH sailed for England in 1903 where she remained until she was wrecked near Glenarm, Northern Ireland in 1917.

HMS PHOEBE, HMS PHILOMEL (1890):

3rd Class Cruisers. HMS PHOEBE was based in Simon's Town from 1894-1898. HMS PHILOMEL was transferred to the Royal New Zealand Navy in 1913.

HMS RACCOON (1887):

Based in Simon's Town from 1892-1897, she was mainly employed in cruising the western coast of southern Africa.

HMS SWALLOW (1885):

Composite Twin Screw Sloop based in Simon's Town from 1890. Sold in 1904.

HMS MAGICIENNE (1888):

3rd Class Protected Cruiser. In 1890 she was used in Beira as a

guard-ship with HMS BRISK and a gunboat HMS PIDGEON. HMS MAGICIENNE "was a beautiful but uncomfortable ship. Engine rooms took up an immense space and the accommodation of the crew seemed to be of little importance. The kitchens were as perfect as the engine rooms".

While the ship was in Beira the ship's doctor, Dr. Todd, attended to the pioneers in the interior as far as Umtali (from: Adventures in Mashonaland by Nurses R. Blennerhasset and L. Sleeman).

It is not known when the RNVR South Africa inscription was painted. RNVR South Africa stands for Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, South African Division". These were South African naval volunteers.

Some doubt arises however, as to the origins of the remainder of the graffiti e.g. gunner, carpenter, boatswain etc. It is known that the sail loft was used for temporary accommodation during the First World War. RNVR sailors were billeted in the sail loft while waiting to be drafted, ratings in the sail loft and officers in the Dockyard Church.

On 4 August 1914, according to orders issued from Simon's Town, Commander Price and Officers of "B" Company, together with 101 men, entrained for Simon's Town where they were quartered in the Dockyard Chapel and the Sail Loft, the latter being rigged like the mess-deck of a man-o'-war, the men sleeping in hammocks slung from beams secured down the side of the loft, the hammocks being lashed up and stowed in the day-time. The officers slept in the Chapel adjoining the Sail Loft, which also had to act as Officers Messroom. To give an idea of the daily life of the men whilst employed at R.N. Dockyard, Simon's Town, a copy of the routine and work of one day, taken from a log book, is set out below:

5.00 a.m.	Hands called. Hammocks stowed
6.00 a.m.	Breakfast
6.45 a.m.	Hands fell in and working parties detailed
9.00 a.m.	Rounds. Visited sentries
12.00	Dinner piped
1.15p.m.	Hands fall in. Large party detailed to take 4.7 gun carriage to arsenal, mount 4.7 gun and return with it to Dockyard.
3.30 p.m.	Party detailed to take HMS HYACINTH out of dock
5.30 p.m.	Work parties returned
6.00 p.m.	Commander Price, CPO Instructor Lamerton and party of 12 proceeded to Cape Town in connection with reported scuttling of Prize ship in Table Bay.
6.15 p.m.	Evening quarters
6.30 p.m.	Party from Cape Town returned. Report re Prize ship unfounded.
9.00 p.m.	Rounds. Visited sentries. Obtained countersign from Admiral's secretary.
12.00p.m.	Rounds. Visited sentries.

(signed) Maurice Green Lt. (countersigned) T.S. Price, Commander.

(From:History of the RNVR South Africa Division by Commander the Honourable Sereld Hay OBE RN)

It is possible that at some stage accommodation in the Sail Loft and Church was at a premium and that alternative billets were sought. The attic could have solved this problem, albeit less than perfectly. This could account for the graffitti, demarcating certain living areas or sleeping quarters. Some areas of the inside of the roof are lined with canvas, possibly to create more comfortable sleeping areas. One should keep in mind that this accommodation would have been merely temporary. Seen in conjunction with "RNVR South Africa" this could be a plausible theory.

The Detail Clothing Store ("slops") was built by the Dutch East India Company in 1743 when it was decided to use Simon's Bay as a winter anchorage. The building was originally a long double-storeyed structure which served as a malthouse, hospital, barracks and store-house. Another storey was added in 1878 and the building was divided into two halves, facilitating access to the rear of the building.

Some historically interesting graffitti is to be found on the back wall of the building, on the level closest to St George's Street. As is the case with most of the Sail Loft graffitti, those behind the Detail Clothing Store consist of the names of Royal Naval ships which visited, or were based at Simon's Town. A summary follows:

HMS HERMIONE (1895):

3rd Class cruiser. Arrived in 1907 and was relieved by HMS FORTE in 1909.

HMS TERPSICHORE (1890):

2nd Class Cruiser based in Simon's Town from 1901-1906. Sold in 1914.

HMS. TARTAR (1886):

3rd Class Cruiser. On 17 January 1901 she was involved in the rescue of survivors from the wreck of HMS SYBILLE off Lamberts Bay. The events leading up to the disaster and the wrecking have been written up in Bulletin Vol.XIII No.3.

HMS GIBRALTAR (1892):

1st Class Cruiser based in Simon's Town from 1901-1904. Broken up in 1923.

HMS PELORUS (1896):

3rd Class Cruiser based at Simon's Town from 1905-1908.

HMS FORTE (1893):

2nd Class Cruiser. She moored in Simon's Bay for the first time in 1901. On 1 August 1909 she sailed in search of the Blue Anchor Liner WARATAH which was en route from Durban to Cape Town carrying 211 souls, including crew. She was last seen on 27 July 1909. "It was not known when she (WARATAH) would arrive in Table Bay, but every preparation was made for her to dock at Cape Town during the forenoon of Thursday 29 July.

Thursday came and went without the WARATAH being signalled. It was presumed that heavy weather had delayed her." There was still no sign of her by Sunday 1 August.

The facts meanwhile, had been telegraphed to Durban, where the vessels of the Cape Station were paying a visit, and on Sunday afternoon HMS FORTE put out to sea to look for the WARATAH. She was joined by HMS PANDORA and the flagship HERMES." (FROM: SHIPS AND SOUTH AFRICA by Marischal Murray).

The WARATAH was never found.

HMS FORTE on 30 November 1909 sailed into the New Graving Dock in Simon's Town to have a condemned gun replaced, making her the first commissioned ship to enter the new dock.

On 19 April 1909 she had sailed for the wreck of s.s. LUSITANIA which had run aground on Bellows Rock, south of Cape Point. She was hard aground and gave no indication of sinking, so many of the 800 crew and passengers decided to stay on board. "The signalman at Cape Point, meanwhile, had heard distress guns and had seen the rockets which were being sent up. He immediately got in touch with the authorities in Simon's Town, and shortly before 2 a.m. the tug SCOTSMAN was speeding on her way towards the wreck. HMS FORTE, in the meantime, had been ordered to get up steam. By daylight some 400 survivors had been taken on board the SCOTSMAN and were landed at Simon's Town during the course of the day. The FORTE, which came along a few hours later, picked up most of the remainder and these she brought round to Table Bay in the afternoon." (From: Ships and South Africa by Marischal Murray). No lives were lost.

HMS FORTE departed from Simon's Town in 1913.

HMS PANDORA (1898):

3rd Class Cruiser. Together with HMS FORTE, HMS PANDORA was involved in the search for the missing WARATAH. ON 14 April 1911 Petty Officer James McGlenaghan died on board. His grave-stone can be seen in the Old Burying Ground. HMS PANDORA left Simon's Town for the last time in 1912.

HMS HYACINTH (1897):

2nd Class Cruiser. She arrived in 1903 and was one of the first ships in which African sailors served during the 1st World War.

"HMS HYACINTH arrived from the East Coast on 10 August 1914 and the following day 2 petty officers and 41 men of the RNVR joined the ship as part of her crew...The RNVR ratings did not take long to "shake down" to nautical life on board the Flagship though they found the discomfort of the life on the lower deck of a cruiser somewhat trying. HMS HYACINTH was first detailed to protect the trade routes round the Cape of Good Hope and consequently had to spend a considerable time at sea in the somewhat boisterous waters of the South Atlantic and South Indian Oceans." (From: History of the RNVR South African Division by Cdr. the Hon. Sereld Hay OBE RN).

The British warships based at Simon's Town were employed

primarily in patrolling the waters of southern Africa. They voyaged as far afield as Mauritius and the Seychelles on the eastern coast, and Sierra Leone on the western coast. They also acted as guardships at various ports and harbours along the coast, relieving each other periodically. During the Anglo-Boer War guns drawn from HMS FORTE and HMS TARTAR were used to fortify Durban as it was feared that the Boers would overrun the whole of Natal.

Rudyard Kipling was very fond of Simon's Town and many characters, events and places can be identified in his work. While at the Cape he penned The Captive and Mrs. Bathurst, in TRAFFICS AND DISCOVERIES, first published in 1904. An excerpt from The Captive follows:

"...the little BARRACOUTA nodded to the big GIBRALTAR and the old PENELOPE..."

Whilst there is no danger of the graffiti being erased (apart from exposure to the elements), it is important for them to be recorded, as they serve as vivid reminders of the ships and men who manned them or repaired their sails. Graffiti is a phenomenon which most of us regard with displeasure but the graffiti in the Masthouse has probably only been seen by a few former members of the St George's Dock Yard Church Congregation who visited the attic in their Sunday School days, and it serves as a gentle reminder of the rich maritime heritage that this country possesses.

Those who work in the West Dockyard are doubtless all aware that most of the buildings there are of a considerable age, but few are aware that a few reminders of the ships that were based here in the last century and early years of this century are still to be seen there.

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contd. from p. 73.

Pieces of fynbos and silvertree leaves - pressed by the Girl Guides, were often included. In 1941 heather picked on the Minicki farm at the back of Red Hill, Simon's Town, was the feature. Miss Josephine Minicki who now lives in Fish Hoek and is a member of the Historical Society, tells me this was Klaas-jagersberg farm, now part of the Cape Point Reserve. The old house was knocked down after they sold c. 1963. They still own land on the mountainside of the Main Road opposite the farm.

The City Hall meetings were always well attended by the public and many celebrities were invited to give the Address. Among them were J.H. Hofmeyer, Sir Harry Hands, Margaret Ballinger, Dr. Skaife, Lady Baden Powell, Brand van Zyl and Admiral Sir Robert Burnett (then at Simon's Town).

Sunday Services were started in Simon's Town in March 1943. In September of that year Mr. Brydone died aged 81 and Mr. Harvey took over the writing of the monthly booklets. Rev. W. Rea and Rev. G. Reindorp, Naval Chaplains & Rev. Lasbrey of Simon's Town also participated in the services on occasion.

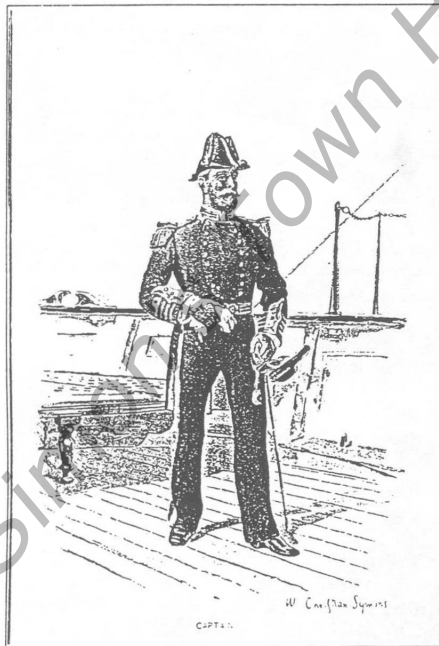
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SIMON'S TOWN & WAR TIME ESPIONAGE:

FROM: GONE DOWN THE YEARS by G.H. Wilson. (p.144)

"In July, the German gunboat SEEADLER arrived in Table Bay, and the German Consul in Cape Town had the padraos, which the gunboat had brought to Cape Town, sent to Dr. Peringuey at the South African Museum - with a bill for £96 for freight and other charges. The account for £96 seriously disturbed Dr. Peringuey. He had not been authorised to incur any expense, and he wrote to the German Consul and said that he could not imagine how he could present an account of that kind when there had obviously been no costs of freight, and seeing that he himself had sent Bushmen models to Berlin free of all cost to the Berlin Museum. There was lively correspondence for a day or two, and then the German Consul came to see Dr. Peringuey and said that he was unable to remit the charges for freight and other expenses. But he had a proposal to make. Dr. Peringuey had one or two models, approved by the Defence Department, of some of the South African ports. The German Consul now suggested to Dr. Peringuey that if he could supply him with an exact model of the docks and defence system of Simon's Town, he would remit the charge of £96 for freight. Dr. Peringuey then realised the ingenuity of this plan, and reported the matter to Mr. Merriman, who was chairman of the Museum Trustees. Mr. Merriman was extremely angry, and told Dr. Peringuey to pay over the £96 and tell the German Consul to go to blazes. This was effectively done, and a few weeks later the war broke out."

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CAPTAIN



POST CAPTAIN

Taken from a set of postcards produced by the Naval Museum at
Portsmouth