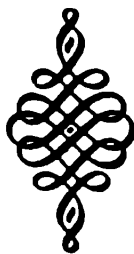




SIMON'S TOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BULLETIN



PRICE TO
NON-MEMBERS
R8.00

VOL. XXIII No.1
JANUARY 2004

C O N T E N T S

List of Office Bearers	2
Simon van der Stel (1639-1712)	3
Francois Renier Duminy (1639-1812)	7
Wedding of Lt Gordon & Miss Beamish 1923	9
Louis Hablutzel Posthumus (1926-2002)	11
Cape Town Volunteer Artillery	16
Knysna's link with Simon's Town	17
" Historical Simon's Town "	20
Magistrate's Court building	20
Electric Cinema & Criterion Bioscope	21
Sir Henry Bradwardine Jackson (1855-1929)	22
S.A.S. JOB MASEGO	25
Children's Friends Society	26
Church Lads Brigade	26
HMS OWEN GLENDOWER	27
Rear Admiral Sir Th.S. Lyne KCVO RN (1870-1955).....	29
Lt Cdr Duncan H.Carmichael R.N.	38
Christ's Hospital, Sussex U.K.	39
H.E.I. Co. (Honourable East India Co.)	39

LIST OF OFFICE BEARERS

PRESIDENT:	Vice-Admiral G. Syndercombe SSAS SD SOE SM SAN (Retd)
VICE-PRESIDENTS:	Mrs N. Holderness Mr M. Munnik B. Arch Mr N.K. Farquharson
CHAIRMAN:	Mrs A.E. Read
VICE-CHAIRMAN & FRIENDS' REP.	Captain T. Korsten SAN (Retd)
HON. SECRETARY	Mrs S.Hodge
HON. TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP SEC.	Mrs M. Thorne
COMMITTEE:	Miss M.F. Cartwright Mrs S. Kinkead-Weekes Captain W.H. Rice SAN (retd) Mr. M. Saggerson Mr L. Sweet
S.T. MUSEUM REP.	Mrs C. Salter-Jansen
EDITORIAL BOARD:	Mrs A.E. Read, Miss M.F. Cartwright & Dr. E. van Heyningen.

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 and acknowledgement given in reproduction.

Exchange copies of other historical society publications will be welcome. SPARE COPIES OF THIS BULLETIN & COPIES OF PREVIOUS BULLETINS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE CHAIRMAN – PRICE R8.00 excl. postage. Articles dealing with matters of historical interest to Simon's Town and the surrounding area will be considered for publication.

PLEASE NOTE:

Present subscription rates (due 1st January each year) are:

Single members (or 1st person of a family)	R35.00 per person per annum
Additional family members	10.00 “ “ “ “
Overseas members	£ 10 sterling per annum

Please address correspondence to : Hon. Secretary, P.O. Box 56.Simon's Town 7995 R.S.A.

SIMON VAN DER STEL (1639 – 1712)

The late Gordon Wilson

Simon van der Stel was born at sea off the island of Mauritius, aboard the vessel CAPPEL, during a howling gale, on 14 October 1639. His father Adriaan, had been appointed Commander of the island. A few years later, having been transferred to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), his father was assassinated by the Sengalese in 1646. Growing up in Batavia, Simon became conscious of his lower status among the Dutch, due to the fact that his grandmother Monica da Costa, was an Eurasian of mixed Portuguese and Indian blood. This seems to have acted as a spur to his future career for, at the age of 20, he sailed from the East to the Netherlands in Admiral Sterhemius' Return Fleet of 1660, aboard the PAERL.

MARRIAGE & FAMILY:

By 1663 he believed he had overcome the prejudice of the Dutch against his ancestry, for he courted and married the daughter of the wealthy, influential Catharina Six, whose husband was Mayor of Amsterdam, without any objections from her distinguished family. His wife Johanna presented him with 5 sons and 1 daughter. Their married life, however, did not prove to be a happy one, while he was preparing himself for the future.

In the event Simon worked assiduously to obtain the appointment to represent the Dutch East India Company at the Cape and on the death of his wife's uncle, Governor Johan Bax van Herentals, he was appointed to the post at the Cape with the rank of Commander. A strange event now occurred. for van der Stel came alone to the Cape, leaving his wife in Holland. He did, however bring his six children, now aged between 7 and 14 and to look after them, he brought his wife's youngest and unmarried sister, Cornelia, who however died within two years of her arrival at the Cape.

ARRIVAL AT THE CAPE:

Simon duly arrived aboard the VRIJE ZEE and was installed as the Commander

two days before his 40th birthday on 12 October 1679. Thus began a 20 year period of great progress at the Cape, brought about largely through the energetic, organisational, administrative, supervisory, if not strict, capabilities of this somewhat swarthy, short, friendly yet haughty, man of destiny. It would take a book to record all the improvements, activities and successes achieved during the period while Simon was at the helm at the Cape – suffice that the following be mentioned:

Within 4 weeks of his arrival, Simon explored the Eerste River Valley and on an island in the river he decided to establish a “Colonie” – which he named Stellenbosch. Within 6 months, eight families were farming in this fertile valley and 3 years later there were thirty families, leading to a significant increase in the yield of wheat for the Settlement. He consistently visited Stellenbosch thereafter encouraging better productivity and farming methods.

Another move was to settle farmers in the Berg River Valley in 1685, which area he named Drakenstein. In 1688 and 1689 he enthusiastically received the Huguenots and settled them in this and surrounding areas, among existing Dutch settlers, so as to hasten their assimilation into the community.

Simon van der Stel also established a large number of outposts: at Kuils River, Klapmuts, Vissershok, Tygerberg and Rietvalley. He was also instrumental in improving the Castle in Cape Town, wherein he lived, building the impressive KAT cross-bastion and the present gateway.

GROWTH OF THE WINE INDUSTRY:

He received the grant of his farm CONSTANTIA in 1685 and set about improving the viticultural aspect of farming in a controlled manner, setting an excellent example by his own manner of production. He also brought about improvements in the distillation of Brandy. Soon his red Constantia and white Frontignac wines enjoyed the highest reputation abroad.

His elaborately planned 5 month long expedition to the North to locate the copper deposits of Namaqualand in 1685 is well documented and, though copper was found in abundance, he reported that the mine was too far from the coast to be exploited economically.

He is also remembered for his great encouragement to the colonists in the planting of thousands of oak trees over the whole settlement, as well as fruit trees, olives, chestnuts, walnuts and fig trees. His restoration of the then almost derelict Company Garden in Cape Town under gardeners Oldenland and Hartog, as well as detailing the Cape Floral kingdom, earned it world-wide praise as a truly botanical garden. His anti-pollution placards for the cleanliness of houses, streets, squares and canals were well known.

EXPLORATION OF FALSE BAY:

In November 1687 he embarked on his historic exploration of False Bay and boarded his galiot NOORD at Kalk Bay. His sixteen day journey coursing about False Bay was accompanied by a detailed hydrographical survey of rocks, depths and conditions. He was so impressed with the smaller bay known up to then as Ysselsteyn's Bay, that he renamed it SIMON'S BAY, after himself. His report on the favourable conditions for anchorage during the winter months within the small Simon's Bay was duly forwarded to his masters, the Lords Seventeen of the Dutch East India Company, in Holland. No further significant official action followed immediately thereafter. This would not happen until 1743.

The various Commissioners of the Company who called at the Cape and concluded inspections while Simon was energetically administering the Cape Settlement all reported that they were impressed with his efforts and this brought fruit, in that in 1691, he was promoted to the rank of Governor – only the second to hold that post with that rank, followed a year later with the rank of Extraordinary Counsellor of India.

RETIREMENT:

Simon retired from office of Governor on 11 February 1699, devoting himself to

his farming interests at Constantia and adding to his considerable involvements in fishing, oil extraction and sealing at Dassen Island. He was succeeded as Governor by his eldest son Willem Adriaan, who was later recalled to the Netherlands in disgrace in 1707 following the alleged misuse of the Company's slaves and materials in building up his own farm, Vergelegen at Somerset West.

Simon died on 24 June 1712 and was buried in the Groote Kerk, Cape Town. His memorial was lost during restoration work on the church in 1830. After his death his magnificent farm Constantia was subdivided into three portions and disposed of. In contrast to most of predecessors and successors, he never applied for a transfer away from the Cape. He considered it his home.

We are to-day proud of this great man who gave our town its name, first as SIMON'S BAY and then after 1814, SIMON'S TOWN and we jealously maintain it as two words, although in Afrikaans is is Simonstad.

ooooooooo000ooooooooo

NAVAL SLANG:

"GROG" the navy's name for the rum ration which used to be given to sailors. Admiral Vernon, whose nickname was Old Grog after the grossgrain (a tweedlike material) coat he wore, ordered that the rum should be watered down - he decided it was too strong to be drunk neat. The tot of rum became official in 1731 but in 1970 the tradition came to an end when it was decided that the modern Navy and all the high-tech kit did not really suit the daily tot of an eighth of a pint of rum. A tot is only issued now on special occasions.

ooooooooo000ooooooooo

FRANCOIS RENIER DUMINY (1747- 1812)

A.E. READ

Francois Renier Duminy was a signatory to the surrender of the Cape in 1795. This was the 1st British Occupation. After the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 the Cape was handed back to the Batavian Republic and F.R. Duminy was appointed as Captain of the Port & Commandant of Simon's Town. His deputy as Port Captain was G. Olthof (CO.4821/10). They were holders of their offices till 30 January 1806 when relieved of their posts by the British Actg. Colonial Secretary Mr J.C. Smyth and D. Ross took over (CO.4821/95).

Duminy had done extensive surveys of the Cape waters as far as Plettenberg Bay. Some of his charts are in the Johannesburg Public Library. He had also been one of a 3 man commission which had negotiated with farmers in the Piesang Valley & Keurbooms River area to arrange for cutting timber for the supply of ships and we know that in August 1788 he transported the first shipload of timber in DE MEERMIN of which he was captain.

Duminy had had a varied life and this has given his descendants quite a headache when they came to write his story. Francois Duminy appears to have been the son of Antonie Duminy and Anne Legoffs. He appears to have had a step-brother or half-brother Mathiell Ronel Duminy (whose parents are given as Antonie Duminy and Marthe Duminy). Mathiell was about 15 years older than Francois. Both were employed by the French East India Company. Francois had first gone to sea aged 9 in 1756 or 1757. With the French Revolution he transferred to the D.E.I. Co (VOC) and was made the Captain of one of their vessels. The Headquarters of the FEICo were in Lorient in Brittany - the town where Francois was born on 4 October 1747. Francois came to the Cape quite often while in French service and in 1777 he married Johanna Nöthling (born 1757 in Cape Town) at the Lutheran Church in Strand Street. They had 5 children.

Francois appears to have first met Johanna in 1771 or 1772 when she was 14 or 15 years of age. At this time his step-brother called here too in the ship GERION and his diary is amongst the Duminy papers in the Archives in Cape Town. In 1783 he transferred to the service of the VOC and in 1786 he is shown as "equipagemeester" at the Cape. He left the Company service for a short while and was until about 1789 the Captain of DE MEERMIN until being given a new ship THE DAISY but later re-joined and in 1793 he was appointed Harbour Master at Simon's Bay. It is obvious that he was unlikely to have held the post between 1795 and 1802 during the 1st British Occupation; but as I have said in the first paragraph he was here in that post between 1802 and 1806 when the British occupied the Cape for a second time. On 26 February 1793 he planted the Dutch flag at Walvis Bay and annexed it on behalf of the DEICo. The same year he was awarded the Grand Cross of Limburg-Luxembourg and was then known as Chevalier Francois Duminy. Around this time he was granted the farm BOK RIVIER near Riviersonderend.

He was an active Freemason and involved in the establishment of the Goede Hoop Lodge in Cape Town. With his dismissal in 1806 by the British authorities he became hard up and had to sell many of his possessions. Johanna died at Bok Rivier in 1807 at the early age of 50. Duminy tried to re-establish himself and sailed to East Africa and Mozambique to collect slaves for the Company. It is doubtful if, as claimed in some recent books, he ever 'made his fortune' trading in slaves. He died in 1811, probably heartbroken by the loss of Johanna and the hard time he had had since 1806.

oooooooo0000oooooooo

NAVAL SLANG:

A kippered herring is known as a "spithead pheasant"

WEDDING OF LT GORDON R.N. & MISS A.M. BEAMISH

In the January 2003 Bulletin we printed an article recalling Lt Gordon's days in Simon's Town in HMS VERBENA in the 1920s. A few months later someone gave us an old photograph album and in there was an account of his marriage in 1923 so we thought members might be interested to read about it.

"The marriage took place at St Frances' Church, Simon's Town, on Wednesday afternoon of Lieutenant Oliver Gordon R.N. of HMS Sloop VERBENA, son of Mr & Mrs L.M. Gordon of Brechin, Forfarshire, Scotland, to Miss Aileen Mabel Beamish, daughter of Mrs Broadley Beamish of Croy Lodge, Paignton, Devon. The bride who had arrived from England the previous Monday, was the guest of Sir Rudolph and Lady Bentinck at Admiralty House. The officiating clergy were the Rev. Francis W.R. Metcalf R.N. and the rector Rev. W.E. Slingsby.

The bride who was given away by Commander Manfred J. Palmes R.N. of HMS VERBENA looked very charming in a simple frock of white charmeuse, girdled with ninon and caught at the waist with a spray of orange blossom. The bell-shaped sleeves were also of ninon and the court train was of white charmeuse. A handsome veil of embroidered net was worn over a narrow wreath of orange blossom, and she carried a bouquet of white chrysanthemums.

The three bridesmaids were: Miss Bentinck, daughter of the Commander-in-Chief and Lady Bentinck, and the Misses Graham Green, daughters of Mr & Mrs Graham Green of Simon's Town. They wore becoming dresses of "love-in-the-mist" blue georgette, swathed round the hips and caught with silver buckles, the points of the sash falling below the hem of the skirt. Filmy veils of blue tulle were held in place by silver ribbons with small clusters of flowers on each side of the head. They carried posies of pink, white and mauve flowers, and wore ivory necklaces, the gift of the bridegroom. The best-man was Lt Cdr C.F. Hammett RN of HMS VERBENA.

On leaving the church the bride and bridegroom passed beneath an arch of swords formed by the bridegroom's brother officers. Their car was then dragged by an enthusiastic body of seamen [from HMS VERBENA] to Admiralty House, where through the kindness of the Commander-in-Chief and Lady Bentinck, a reception was held.

Lady Bentinck was wearing a white gaberdine coat and skirt, the skirt made with small knife pleats. Her hat was of shot blue and peacock green. Mrs Shipway was in black marocain with a black hat and white fox fur. Mrs Sturdee was in grey georgette and a smart black toque. The bride's going away dress was of brown morocain with touches of tango. With this she wore a close-fitting hat of straw in the same colours. Among the many presents received was a handsome silver fruit-stand given by the ship's company of HMS VERBENA."

This article appeared in a Cape Town newspaper on 2 May 1923.

Oooooo00000ooooooo



Admiral Bentinck's
Daughter in her
Bridesmaid's
Dress.

Louis was born in Tarkastad although his parents had married in the Dutch Reformed Church in Simon's Town on 11 May 1926. His father had been a gunner in the Cape Coast Garrison Artillery before his marriage. His mother Ivy was the daughter of Heinrich Pieter and Wilhelmina Elizabeth Hablutzel of "Morgenzon" (now Flagstaff House), Forest Hill, Simon's Town. His grandfather always flew the South African flag - it was never a naval house as has sometimes been claimed.

They stayed at Tarkastad with a relation while Louis' father obtained employment. They then moved to South West Africa where his parents farmed at "Rooibandfontein" about 100 miles from Gobabis - not too far from the Bechuanaland border. It was a tough existence with little vegetation and the only water came from windmills.

When Louis was just over 7 in 1933 he was told that he was going to live with his grandparents. At that time there were few houses on Forest Hill and there was an extensive pine forest. Louis and his mother arrived from South-West by train at Cape Town then took the suburban train to Simon's Town before catching one of Mr. Foster's buses to the corner of Forest Hill Road before the steep climb up. His mother stayed for a month and then returned to the farm. In 1934 his brother Frank was born. Soon after that his parents returned to the Cape, forced by the drought and financial difficulties to abandon farming. It was the time of the great depression. Fortunately after about 6 months of living with her mother, the family moved to Tokai Reformatory where his father obtained a job as a supervisor. Louis stayed on with his grandparents and attended Simon's Town School and had to learn to speak English instead of Afrikaans.

Before the Hablutzels moved to Forest Hill they had lived in the Goede Gift area of the town and then at "Vine Cottage" Arsenal Road. Attached to the cottage was a small shop which his grandmother managed. It sold groceries, confectionary, cool drinks, paraffin and coal. Robbie Lotters helped in the shop and was the delivery boy. When the family moved to Forest Hill, Ouma handed over the running of the

boy. When the family moved to Forest Hill, Ouma handed over the running of the shop to her son Heinrich "Boy".

After school Louis played with his friends in Forest Hill Road. These included Lennie and Reggie Culver, the Williams brothers (John, Lewis, Lionel, Alfred and Ronald), John Reid, Tommy & Norman Bent, Walter Hawkins and George Irwin - who called themselves "The Forest Hill Gang". They lived in a very quiet, traffic-free road. Charlie Wright had a chevrolet and Tommy Bent Snr had a Model T Ford which he kept in Mrs Williams' corrugated-iron garage near his home and "Speurder" Mostert, the plain clothes detective garaged his motor-bike and side-car in Oupa Hablutzel's garage alongside Oupa's trap. This was a very handsome, 2-wheeled carriage drawn by a single horse. He must have been very sturdy to have pulled the cart up that hill! It could seat two in front and had a "dicky" seat for 2 more at the back and these 2 sat with their backs to the driver. There were elegant brass fittings on either side to hold brass lanterns with candles inside. These were legally necessary but did not give much light on the road but did act as warning lights. They had clear glass lenses facing forward and circular red glass windows facing rearwards. The trap was painted a glossy black with delicately painted swirling patterns. There was a dome-shaped brass knob on the floor between the 2 front passengers. Underneath the floor was a brass bell and if one stamped hard on the knob, the bell clanged loudly as a warning to pedestrians.

The Forest Hill Gang got up to all the usual boyhood pranks both in and out of school. The gang built a secret underground hideout. This was on land alongside the wall of the Old Burying Ground as you go up Forest Hill Road. They hacked a tunnel into the thick bush which covered the site but left enough bush to hide the entrance to the site. They excavated an area 8' x 6' and then covered it over, leaving a trap-door by which they could enter and leave. All went well till they decided to excavate to a greater depth so that they could stand upright. After finding a human skeleton interest waned when Ouma said they should not disturb the dead! There were many people buried outside the cemetery walls, slaves, murderers and suicides. When the School built its tennis courts in 1939 a number of old unmarked graves were unearthed.

In Louis' Junior Certificate year there were only 9 pupils in his group. They were Sheila Green (eldest daughter of the Headmaster), Audrey Bedford, Gladys Luxton, Louis Lachenicht, Tertius van der Poll, Laurie Willis, David Phillips and Graham Palmer. When he was about 15 Louis became fascinated with anything to do with the undersea world. He decided that building a submarine was beyond his capabilities so he would try his hand at making a diving helmet!. He very nearly came to grief.

Louis' grandfather died in 1942 and this was the year that Louis began at Rondebosch High School. One of his companions was Fritz Raubach (whose mother owned "Bonne Esperance" at Seaforth). They travelled together. Louis was kept very busy because as well as going "up the line" to school he collected rents for the family properties, unblocked drains etc and also mowed the lawn at "Morgenzon". This did not leave him much time to sun bathe and swim with the gang at Seaforth. However, on 12 January 1943 he did decide to go for a swim and take the afternoon off. This was to lead to him meeting his future wife Elaine, who was holidaying at Gay's Camping Ground at the top of Seaforth Road. She lived at Steurhof, on the suburban line to Cape Town. The two managed to meet on the train going to and coming home from school so their friendship flourished, Louis' grandmother being warmly accepting of Elaine.

At 17 he enrolled at University of Cape Town to read Psychology and Social Science (Sociology) but was able to continue staying with his grandmother. He was 21 on 19 October 1947 and she gave him £50 as a gift. On 21 November 1947 he and two friends Vere Parkins and Bob Green, having finished their exams, went to spend a few days camping at Smitswinkel Bay. On their first day word came that Louis should return home as his grandmother was not well. A couple of days later she lapsed into a coma and passed away around midnight on 24 November 1947.

A few weeks later Louis graduated from UCT. He had already applied for a position to the Department of Social Welfare, hoping he would be appointed to one in Cape Town. This was not to be, it was in Durban. His grandmother had left him a property in Belmont Road (Folkstonia) which he let to give him a small income.

He set off with a heavy heart for Durban at the end of January 1948, leaving behind Elaine who had a job as a teacher in Cape Town and two parents who needed her presence. With his new job in Durban's Social Welfare Department Louis had many harrowing experiences which taught him to be cautious and compassionate in his dealings with the public. He returned to Cape Town at the end of 1948 and began work the next month at the Department of Social Welfare in Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town. His area was in the slum areas of Cape Town and provided a high learning curve. He realised that he really did not have the heart for this type of work and decided to apply to train to be a teacher. Meanwhile he moved in with his parents who now lived at Retreat. This gave him a greater opportunity to see Elaine who lived not far away and also taught in Retreat. They decided to marry on 7 January 1950. Fortunately the tenants of his property in Belmont Road gave notice to leave so he and Elaine had somewhere to live. They duly married at the Baptist Church, Wynberg, had the reception at the Anglican Church Hall at Steurhof and set off for Simon's Town. They were thrilled to discover that friends had been during the day and stocked the house with fruit and vegetables. This greatly helped their near non-existent finances! Louis commenced teaching in January 1950, the Standard IV class of 49 children at Plumstead Primary School. At the end of 1950 he managed to get a job nearer home at the Fish Hoek Primary School.

Louis and Elaine's daughter Marianne Louise was born at Fish Hoek on 4 May 1951. In 1953 he was promoted and received an increase in salary which was very useful as Lucia Elaine arrived on 22 April 1953. In 1954 he sold his house in Belmont Road, paid his mother the money due to her under his grandmother's will and bought a plot of ground at Murdock Valley (near the Hugo Vault) and built the house "Entabeni" (a Xhosa word meaning "on the mountain"). Near him the trek fishermen still had their look-out on the mountainside and Charlie Muller still did trek-fishing from Fishermen's beach. On occasions Charlie came and had tea with Louis when he regaled Louis with yarns about fishing and all the signals that went with it.

Louis taught at Fish Hoek Primary for 3 years and at the end of 1954 decided he wanted the experience of teaching in a boys school. He was lucky to obtain a post

commencing in January 1955 at Rondebosch Boys' Primary School. Later in the year he applied to Consolidated Diamond Mines of South-West Africa for a teaching post at Oranjemund and in July 1955 he and Elaine set off on a South African Airways Skymaster for Alexander Bay where the airport was. He also taught cricket in the summer and soccer in the winter. He often took his class out into the desert to introduce them to the flora and fauna. During his time there he was lucky to accompany the security officers on their visits to prospectors and learn about diamond mining. Louis and Elaine returned to Simon's Town in June 1957 having saved enough money to complete their Murdock Valley house. He obtained a teaching post (teaching English, History and Geography) at Simon's Town School. Six months after that he was appointed principal of the Kalk Bay Primary School in January 1958.

At the end of 1959 he was approached by Maitland Public School. Sadly this meant moving from Simon's Town and trying to sell his house. Politics were now troubling Louis and the inequalities of the system encouraged him to apply for a teaching post in Australia. Nothing had been heard from the authorities in Australia so he started at Maitland as Principal in January 1960. It was his experiences at Maitland School which finally made him determined to emigrate. He made a provisional booking to go by sea in July 1960, there being a 12 month waiting list for passages. Then came the Sharpeville incident on 21 March 1960. The bottom dropped out of the property market and they were lucky to obtain £2,200 for their Simon's Town house. You can't buy a plot for that to-day! Louis told George Cook, the headmaster of Simon's Town Secondary School, that he was leaving and was greatly surprised a week later when Cook announced that he and his son Leslie were sailing too on 4 July. He could not get passages for his wife and other 3 sons on the same ship and they would have to follow later. There were several other South Africans on the ship and presumably they had also received visits from the Special Branch as was customary for would-be emigrants in those days!

Louis and Elaine and family disembarked in Sydney and Louis was particularly touched as he stepped ashore 62 years after his great-grandfather Louis Glaeser had arrived to start a new life. Louis has retained his love for Simon's Town and has

paid a couple of visits while he was researching the Hablutzel and Hugo families but felt he was too old to up-root himself and return permanently. In his last years he and Elaine moved to Adelaide to be near the family. Louis had a major heart operation a few years ago and did not fully recover, but did manage to finish his book on the NEPTUNE, the convict ship. He passed away peacefully in the first half of 2002 at his home in Adelaide.

(The above is an abridged version of Louis' life story which he wrote for the Simon's Town Museum's archives)

oooooooo0000oooooooo

CAPE TOWN VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY

A notice appeared in the Cape Argus on 26 August 1857 as follows:

"The Cape Royal Rifle Corps, whose ranks are being daily augmented are about to aid in organising a Foot Artillery, in addition to the present corps. A meeting of those desirous of forming this new company will be held in The Town House this afternoon."

So was formed the Cape Field Artillery now 145 years old. This regiment is the oldest volunteer artillery regiment still in existence in the world to-day. The Honourable Artillery Company in Britain was founded in 1537 but was only accepted into the British Army in 1869. The regiment played a significant part in the troubles in the Eastern Cape Frontier wars, the South African Anglo-Boer War, the 1st and 2nd World Wars, operations in Angola and has performed numerous peace-keeping duties within South Africa. Their H.Q. is at Wingfield with the Officers' Mess in the Castle as is the case with four other Cape-based Reserve Force Regiments. On 26 August 2002 serving and ex-members of the Regiment together with military and civilian guests and spouses re-visited the Old Town House in Longmarket Street facing Greenmarket Square, to commemorate the founding of the regiment.

oooooooo0000oooooooo

BOET DOMMISSE

On 12 March 1815 Rear Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton KCB, a veteran of the Napoleonic wars, took up his appointment as Naval Commissioner at the Cape of Good Hope. Jahleel is a biblical name meaning "hoping in God". Napoleon Bonaparte was in exile on the island of St Helena and the commissioning of the island also fell within Brenton's duties. He was stationed at the headquarters of the Naval Establishment at Simon's Bay. One of his first considerations was to obtain timber for the Royal Navy. Having read about and heard about the extensive indigenous hardwood forests along the south coast of the Colony about 300 miles east of Cape Town he undertook an overland journey to Knysna in December 1817, despite being incapacitated by the severe wounds he had received before being taken prisoner by Napoleon. (see STHS Bulletin Vol.XIII No.2 p.78 for details of Brenton's earlier life). Brenton visited several towns, including Genadendal, along the way and in Knysna he stayed with George Rex.

Timber had until then been felled and sent from Plettenberg's (sic) Bay to Cape Town by sea - notably on Francois Duminy's sailing vessel DE MEERMIN, as well as on other brigs and transport vessels. However, there had been a shipwreck or two with vessels being blown up on these shores in gales. About 20 miles to the west was the large river Knysna emptying through two steep headlands to the sea. This estuary was a fine natural harbour with a hinterland of extensive forests of hardwoods. There were, however, two bars across the entrance to be crossed and entry and exit depended a lot on wind and tides. It took a lot of persuasion and lobbying of the Cape and British Governments and the Navy Board to establish a harbour and port of entry at "the Knysna" (as it continued to be called for the next 60 years or so).

Brenton loved the area and was confident that it would develop into a very useful source of supply of timber for the Navy. He had a shipbuilding yard established on the shore of the lagoon; he also had a scheme for growing hemp for the production

of rope and had a village laid out to be settled by "meritorious seamen" i.e paid-off seamen who had fought in the late wars. This became the village of Melville-on-Knysna, named after the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Melville. But alas for his schemes, the timber shipped to England proved to be unsuitable for shipbuilding; the soil was unsuitable for growing hemp for rope (although there was plenty of the "dagga" variety flourishing for smoking); and the little shipbuilding yard was burned down by a suspected arsonist.

The village of Melville took a long time to be settled and was done so by colonists and none of the "meritorious seamen" Brenton had so much wanted to help. The erven that were marked out were known as Admiralty erven, and the Admiralty reserved the right of reclaiming the land or any portion of it on six months' notice, allowing the lessees either to remove the buildings on the relevant erven or to be paid for them on the valuation of impartial persons. The erfholder was restricted from transferring his right to occupation to any other person without the previous consent in writing of the Naval Storekeeper at Simon's Bay. This was all very unsatisfactory and unsettling and negotiations were eventually put in place for the entire area of the village of Melville to be exchanged with the Colonial Government "for certain land in Simon's Bay on which lay the town jetty and its attachments".

Thus the 40 morgen of land on the farm "Eastford" originally acquired by Brenton for the naval settlement and now the nucleus of a tiny village struggling for survival, was to revert to the ownership of the Colonial Government - with the proviso that the strip on the waterfront be reserved for the Admiralty - just in case!

The correspondence on this matter of the exchange, which was basically between the Government and the Admiralty, was presented to both Houses of Parliament in June 1860*. The Deed of Transfer from the Admiralty to the Government was finally issued on 6 November 1860 and the way was now clear for the erf-holders of Melville to buy their properties for the prices fixed by their own Civil Commissioner and to receive their own Title Deeds. With the formation of the Municipality of Knysna in 1882, Melville lost its identity, together with another little hamlet Newhaven-on-Knysna, the newly formed town taking its name from the river.

Jahleel Brenton was a talented artist and the Fehr collection in Cape Town has a large unfinished panorama of Simon's Town by him. A detailed, labelled water-colour of Simon's Town by his sister Mary is in the Africana Museum, Johannesburg. (So good an artist was Brenton that he almost went to Italy to study art instead of joining the Royal Navy - Editor).

During his time in Simon's Town Brenton was responsible for the building of the Naval Hospital (now Old Hospital Terrace), the Mast House and Sail Loft in the West Dockyard and the Dockyard Wall. His first wife Isabella Stewart, is buried in the Old Burying Ground at Seaforth in the Anglican section. On the death of Napoleon on St Helena on 5 May 1821 orders were dispatched to the Cape for reducing the establishment of the dockyard at Simon's Bay and consequently Brenton sailed for England on 6 November 1821. He retired with the rank of Vice-Admiral in 1840 (aged 70) and died on 3 April 1844.

References:

- * Cape of Good Hope Parliament. Annexures to Votes and Proceedings 1860.
Correspondence on subject of exchange between Colonial Govt and Admiralty,
Cape Town 1860.
- Dictionary of South African Biography (1972) Vol.2 p.86
- S.T.H.S. Bulletins: Vol. IV No. 2 p. 46 Vol. V No. 2 p. 39 Vol. XIII No.1 p.39
and Vol. XIII No. 2 p.78
- Simon's Town Museum archives.

oooooooooooo0000oooooooooooo

NAVAL SLANG:

Do you fancy munching on babies heads? Don't react with horror! It is the navy's nickname for steak and kidney pudding.

HISTORICAL SIMON'S TOWN

During 1978 "Historical Simon's Town" was printed and published by Balkema. The Editors were Brock and Brock and both "Dumps" Willis (Chairman of the Society) and Barbara Willis had done much to help during its gestation period. Just under 1500 copies were printed. It sold for R18.75. In 1990 Balkema's son-in-law gave the then Chairman (Gerry Read) 100 unbound copies which he and Nigel Farquharson collected from Balkema's office. Nigel had to climb up onto the shelves to pass them down to Gerry. Gerry paid for them to be bound and sold them for Society funds. As inflation soared so did the prices of the book and the last 6 sold for R300 each. The last two copies were sold in October 2002. During that month a copy was sold by a 2nd hand bookshop in Cape Town for R700!

oooooooo0000oooooooo

MAGISTRATE'S COURT, SIMON'S TOWN.

The present Court House is at the corner of Cole Point Road and St George's Street opposite Belmont House. The previous Court was in The Residency (now the Simon's Town Museum). The new Court House was built on the site of Jewell's Garage and Jenks Building (which abutted the Police Station). Jenks Building had been built in 1902 by Lionel Jenks to the design of the architect R.M. Robertson of Cape Town. The original building had 7 shops fronting onto the main road with a dwelling behind. In 1908 the tenants were: Mr. B. Benjamin (Agent at Law, Auctioneers etc), Mr Ormond (Practical Hairdresser), Simon's Town Café & Confectionary ("the best place for Luncheons & Dinners, English & French Confectionary & Cakes, Fruit, Tea, Coffee, Cocoa, Minerals etc.Cleanliness Guaranteed"). By 1974 the only shops trading were Raffee's Trading Store,H.N. Kalidas & the Delhi Butchery. Jewell's Garage had become Leih's Garage and had been defunct for several years before the 2 buildings and the cottages behind them were razed to provide the site for the new Court House started in 1975.

oooooooo0000oooooooo

ELECTRIC CINEMA, AND THE CRITERION CINEMA.

the late Reg Noise (one time resident of Simon's Town).

THE ELECTRIC CINEMA , listed in the Directory in 1911, was a bioscope which operated in the Masonic Hall above the Masonic Club next door to the present Town Hall. It was run by a Mr "Cocky" Williams, an obvious nickname as he had a very decided squint! As a small boy I occasionally helped Mr. Williams on a Saturday morning to rewind the films - by hand in those days, in return for a free ticket for the next afternoon showing. Prior to 1914 the more common word when referring to these was "bioscope" not cinema.

THE CRITERION BIOSCOPE was built c. 1916 when I was 10 years old, for we boys used to watch the bricklayers at work and used to play around on the scaffolding when they had knocked-off. I think it was built by George Lowings and was managed by Mr. Wallace who was the manager of Cuthberts shoe shop. One of the earliest films was "Lady Windermere's Fan" in which Ronald Coleman made his debut, and William Farnum was a popular hero in the early Zane Grey films. These were all silent films of course and suitable music was supplied by local pianists.

(As reported to the Society in 1978. Mr Noise lived well into his 90s and as a lad had lived in "Constantia house" later the site of Narshi's shop.)

This site (Criterion) was originally a "pakhuis" or storeroom, owned by Maude & Robertson which in 1814 became St George's Anglican Church, the first Anglican Church in South Africa. It is now the home of "Pescado" a very popular restaurant.

oooooooooooo000oooooooooooo

SIR HENRY BRADWARDINE JACKSON (1855-1929)

A.E. READ

It is always amazing how many famous names have passed through Simon's Town and not the least is Sir Henry. He was a pioneer of wireless telegraphy. He served in Simon's Town in 1878-79 as a junior Lieutenant aboard HMS ACTIVE and as such took part in the Zulu War.

Sir Henry was born on 21 January 1855, the eldest son of Henry Jackson (a farmer of Cudworth, Yorkshire) and his wife Jane (nee Tee of Barnsley, Yorkshire). He was educated at Chester and at Stubbington House, Fareham, Hants. He joined the Royal Navy in December 1868 aged 13.

He was always interested in the more scientific aspects of life. After his service in Simon's Town he was appointed to HMS VERNON, the torpedo-school ship at Portsmouth, finally qualifying as Torpedo Lieutenant. He was in VERNON for 3½ years. In January 1890 he was promoted to Commander and this was the same year that he conceived the idea of employing wireless waves to announce to a capital ship the approach of a friendly torpedo boat. He had little chance to experiment until 1895 when he became aware of the experiments of Dr Jagadis Chunder Bose on coherers** Jackson made and experimented with many types of coherer. At this time he was attached to HMS DEFIANCE at Devonport.

He worked rather secretly on his coherers and in this he was helped by a Mr Pimlott, the Inspector of Moulders in Devonport Dockyard. Unfortunately one day when the "parts" were en route between the foundry and Jackson's office, the Dockyard Police "pounced". The whole force of the Admiralty descended on Mr Pimlott and he was demoted from Inspector to Labourer. This brought deep shame on the Pimlott family and Mr Pimlott never got over this, even in later life. After a high-level enquiry it was realised that Jackson had been deeply involved privately

and illegally but the Admiralty also realised the importance of his work to the Admiralty and Mr Pimlott was re-instated as Inspector. In June 1896 Jackson was promoted to Captain and in that September he met Signor Guglielmo Marconi at a conference at the War Office in London. Jackson and Marconi frequently met up after that at Pimlott's house in Albert Road, Devonport.

In 1897 Jackson was appointed Naval Attache in Paris and in 1899 appointed to command the torpedo depot ship VULCAN in which he continued his experiments. Finally, in 1900 a contract was placed with the Marconi Co. for the supply of wireless installations to many Royal Navy ships. In 1901 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and in 1902 he communicated his most important scientific paper to the *Proceedings* of that body. They were now able to communicate over distances of 140 nautical miles. Also in 1902 Jackson was appointed Assistant Director of Torpedoes at the Admiralty and in 1904 Captain of HMS VERNON. February 1905 saw him appointed 1st Sea Lord of the Admiralty and Controller of the Navy and it was during his years of control that recommendations were approved for building the first turbine battleship DREADNOUGHT and the famous INVINCIBLE class of battle-cruiser. He was also involved in the design of the FROBISHER and HAWKINS class. He was Controller till 1908 when he was appointed to command the 3rd (later known as the 6th) Cruiser Squadron in the Mediterranean.

In 1910 he represented the Navy at the International Conference on Aerial Navigation in Paris and in 1911 he assumed Direction of the newly created Royal Naval War College in Portsmouth where he trained the first War Staff Officers. In February 1913 he returned to the Admiralty in London as Chief of War Staff. It was suggested he take over as Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean when war broke out in 1914 but in the end it was wisely decided to keep him at the Admiralty. He was 1st Sea Lord during the Battle of Jutland. He afterwards said that what convinced him that the German fleet was coming out for action was the result of the observations made by a radio direction-finding station, a change of 5° being shown in the angular position of a German ship. From 1916 to 1919 he was President of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

From 1917-1919 he was First and Principal Naval A.D.C. to King George V. In July 1924 he retired from the Navy. In 1926 the Royal Society awarded him the Hughes Medal in recognition of his work. He received numerous honours i.e. KCVO (1906), KCB (1910) and GCB (1916). He also received Honorary degrees from Oxford, Cambridge and Leeds universities. Foreign honours bestowed on him were : the Grand Cross of the Spanish Order of Naval Merit (1909), the Japanese Order of the Rising Sun and the Russian Order of the White Eagle (1st Class) and he was a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour. He was also a member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers and Hon. Vice-President of the Institution of Naval Architects.

{** COHERER - an instrument used in early experiments on radio communication as detector. Loosely packed iron filings cohere and thus become conducting, on the passage of electromagnetic waves. The coherer was included in a battery-operated circuit with a bell or relay, acting as a switch which closed the circuit when waves impinging on the coherer made it conducting.}

Information from Mr Martin Wills of Plymouth who visited the Museum in September 2002 and is a friend of Mr Pimlott's great-grandson.

oooooooo000oooooooo

DID YOU KNOW?

That there is a connection between the famous London store of Liberty's and the Royal Navy. The Tudor shop on Great Marlborough Street off Regent Street was built in 1924 with timbers from two old warships – HMS HINDUSTAN and HMS IMPREGNABLE.

With the fall of Tobruk and the imprisonment of 10,000 men as prisoners-of-war, 35,000 British and Commonwealth forces were lost in that action, but it hit South Africa hardest. This terrible day of the fall of Tobruk was 21 June 1942. Maj.General H.B. Kloppe was the commander of Tobruk, otherwise the general officer commanding the 2nd S.A. Armoured Division. His forces included 4th S.A. Infantry Brigade (2nd Royal Durban Light Infantry) 1st Umvoti Mounted Rifles and 1st Kaffrarian Rifles together with a composite battalion; the 6th S.A. Infantry Brigade (2nd Transvaal Scottish, 1st S.A. Police and 2nd S.A. Police); 21st Guards Brigade; 11th Indian Infantry Brigade; 32nd Tank Brigade (with around 50 tanks) and most of the 4th Anti-Aircraft Brigade. There were also 3 field artillery regiments, two of them South African, and two under-strength medium artillery regiments. Artillery ammunition was in short supply and there were only 61 anti-tank guns to cover the various expected avenues of attack from the panzers.

A number of individuals managed to break out and trek through the desert, to the east. Most of those remaining were transported to prison camps in Italy. Some were kept behind to serve as a labour force. Among them Lance Corporal Job Masego stands out. Captured earlier, before the attack on Tobruk, Masego was now forced to work at unloading German and Italian ships bringing supplies in to Rommel's Afrika Korps. Perhaps the German guards did not believe that black POWs were capable of any resistance. In any case they were not closely monitored.

Masego used his knowledge of explosives, gained on the Daggafontein mine on the East Rand to concoct an incendiary device using cordite from cartridges, which he stashed in a condensed-milk tin. This he planted in the hold of a ship, among tins of petrol, while five of his compatriots diverted the attention of the guards by dropping a case of ammunition into the harbour. The resultant explosion and fire sank the freighter and substantially delayed the German replenishment.

Later Masego and an accomplice, Private Samuel Masiya, escaped. They walked

hundreds of kilometres under the blazing sun for 23 days to reach the Allied lines. Masego was afterwards awarded a much-deserved Military Medal for his initiative and bravery. To-day 60 years on his name lives on in the S.A. Defence Force: a naval strike craft is named after him.

oooooooooooo000oooooooooooo

THE CHILDREN'S FRIENDS SOCIETY

This was founded in 1830 by Captain Edward Pelham Brenton with a view to training poor and vagrant children who functioned on the periphery of delinquency and crime in "*useful habits through a combination of labour and an humble religious and secular education*". Though in the Cape of Good Hope white labourers were not generally favoured because of the ambiguity of their role when compared to a slave, the colony was having to adjust to the prospect of the application of the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. Through public pressure it was disbanded in London in 1845 though a local Cape committee monitored its child immigrants until 1848.

From: The Children's Friends Society at the Cape, Victorian Studies 1984.

E. Bradlow.

oooooooooooo000oooooooooooo

CHURCH LADS' BRIGADE

This was founded in 1891 to make lads faithful members of the Church of England or other Episcopal Churches in communion with it. The Church Lad's Brigade worked in many parishes under the incumbent and lay readers, using uniform and drill to instil discipline. The movement spread through the Commonwealth and provided many clergy from its ranks, two of whom held the Victoria Cross. Camps were held, badges were awarded for many worthwhile activities, and training was given in good citizenship. Its headquarters were at 58 Gloucester Place, London W1.

From: Everyman's Encyclopaedia Vol. 3 p.458

A.E. READ

HMS OWEN GLENDOWER was the first ship of this name. She was built between 1806-1808 having been laid down at Paul near Hull in 1806. She was launched on 21 November 1808. She was a 5th Rate ship of 36 guns and 951 tons.

OWEN GLENDOWER (Owain Glyn Dwr) (1359-1415) was the last independent prince of Wales, more correctly described as Owain ab Gruffydd, lord of Glyndyvrwy in Merioneth, a man of good family, with two great houses, Sycharth and Glyndyvrwy in the north, besides smaller estates in south Wales. His father was called Gruffydd Vychan and his mother Helen. On both sides he had pretensions to be descended from the old Welsh princes. He studied law at Westminster. Further details of Owain's life may be found in Encyclopaedia Britannica.

HMS OWEN GLENDOWER left Portsmouth on 22 February 1825 via Madeira and Teneriffe for Simon's Town where she arrived on 28 April 1825 (Cape Archives CO.6098). She made a trip to Mauritius from which she returned on 17 March 1826. She had seen service on this station from 1811-1812 and India and China 1812-1816.

On Friday 10 March 1826 a very fresh gale was blowing in Simon's Bay when a pinnace was returning from the West Dockyard with a working party and it was swamped by a wave and went down. At this period there was no East Dockyard if you remember and ships had to anchor in the Bay. It was 5.30 p.m. when the accident happened. Immediately the Officer of the Watch sent away a gig and a barge to pick up survivors. The number is not stated in the log. At 7.30 p.m. he mustered the ship's company and found the following men were lost:

Midshipman J.M. Rawson and J. Smith; Chas. Appleby, Sam Rush, John Welsh, Edward Turner, Thos. Curtain, David Brophy, Chas King, John Ryall, John Mahoney, ? Evans, John Gardner, Richard Collins, Geo Wright, Thos. Webster,

Thos. Bull and John Webb (Boy Seamen) and Thos. Cornwall (Boy Drummer),

On Monday 13 March 2 boats were employed looking for bodies and found those of Smith and Gardner and sent them to the hospital (now Old Hospital Terrace). They were interred on 14 March on which day they found the body of King. Wednesday 15 March 2 boats were again employed looking in vain for bodies. Friday 17 March the bodies of Rawson and Welsh were found and duly interred that day. It was Wednesday 22 March before another body was found and it was interred on 23rd. On 23 March 2 bodies were found and interred the same day. On Saturday 25 March 3 bodies were picked up and interred the same day. Sunday 26 March they found 6 bodies. Monday 27 March they found 2 and the last 2 on Tuesday 28 March. They had been in the water for 11 days.

(This makes 21 casualties whereas the memorial in the O.B.G. mentions 20 in one place and 19 in the other. Our list was taken from the Ship's Log - ref. ADM.53/946 & 947 PRO KEW). On 17 March the sloop HMS HELION arrived from Table Bay with 9 seamen who had volunteered to be transferred to HMS OWEN GLENDOWER.

On Tuesday 4 April the dead men's clothing and effects were sold. The money so raised was then forwarded to the family and dependents as was customary. From S.T. Museum records the ship was here until 31 December 1827. She was a Convict Ship in October 1842 and was only sold in 1884, at Gibraltar, to F. Danino. This was a good age for a ship in those days.

oooooooo0000oooooooo

**REAR ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS JOHN SPENCE LYNE KCVO RN
(1870-1955)**

A.E. READ

Thomas John Spence Lyne as a Warrant Officer in the Royal Navy during the Anglo Boer War 1899-1902 was stationed in Simon's Town. He was one of those outstanding figures whom you meet once in a life-time.

For over a century he was the only man who had entered the Navy as a bluejacket boy and risen to the Flag Rank. He was born in 1870, the son of William John Lyne (who was also in the Royal Navy) and Janet, daughter of Colin Reid of Cromarty. Thomas married Ethel Louise (died 1943) daughter of Ralph Stobbart of Newcastle and of Rochester, Kent. They had one daughter. Lyne was educated at Beers Private School, Stoke Damerell, Devon. He entered the Royal Navy as a Boy Seaman aged 15. He was promoted to Lieutenant for his services in the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 and passed through the various stages to reach the rank of Captain in 1918. He commanded many ships during his time both at Home and abroad. He was promoted to Commodore Reserve Fleet Exercises in mid-1924. He commanded Central Reserves and Impregnable Boys' Training Establishment. He was placed on the retired list in 1925. He was Mentioned in Despatches in the Anglo Boer War and also in the 1914-1918 War. He retired as a Rear-Admiral in 1931.

Lyne published 3 books "Navigation of the Han Kiang, China", "Something about a Sailor" and "From Sailor Boy to Rear-Admiral". His recreation was golf. In retirement he lived at Hamilton House, Wolverstone, Ipswich. His Club was the Junior Army & Navy.

The whole of Lyne's career was a series of successes due to his great personality, good humour, never-failing resource, leadership and determination. Even from his earliest days he went ahead of his contemporaries, but the opportunity that came to him for rendering unique service was during the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902. The

important part that the Royal Navy played in this war is often overlooked.

In the early part of 1901 the Boer force under that famous and wily commandant General de Wet, was attempting to raid the Cape Colony. They got within sight of the coast hoping to receive munitions and supplies from gun-runners or friendly neutrals. It is true that when they reached the coast they DID see a vessel, but instead of being a friendly neutral vessel, she hoisted the White Ensign and welcomed them with a volley of shots, for she was no other than Her Majesty's Torpedo Boat No. 60 - small in size but large in importance, and commanded by T.J.S. Lyne, at that time a Warrant Officer. Because of her colour she was known by the nickname of "The White Calf". The Commander-in-Chief at the time was Sir Arthur William Moore and he had at his disposal a relatively small force of ships to deal with the lengthy coastline that had to be watched to prevent supplies etc from being landed for the Boers - from Delagoa Bay through to Walvis Bay.

Torpedo Boat No.60 had been held in reserve, but eventually the C-in-C decided to place her in commission. Although this vessel was only built for harbour defence and making attacks on enemy ships at night, he decided to use her for patrol work and searching the coast, carrying dispatches, and a variety of other duties. The vessel was only 135 ft long and carried torpedoes and small guns. Her total complement was 20 men. Normally she would have been commanded by a Lieutenant, but owing to the many calls already made on the Navy, the C-in-C found himself with no lieutenant available. Running over who would be suitable he thought of Lyne whose career he had already watched with great interest and whom he knew at first hand to be a capable petty officer.

At this time Lyne was employed in looking after the reserve gunboats at Simon's Town, a tedious job with no excitement and no chance of active service. He had continually applied to be sent to the front, but he could not be spared as, although the job was dull, it was a very essential one; but now the Admiral saw an opportunity of fulfilling this young sailor's ambition. So he sent for Lyne, and informed him that he would be placed in command of Her Majesty's Torpedo Boat No. 60 to carry out "arduous and possibly dangerous service on the coast"; but the

Admiral told him that he had the greatest confidence in his ability to handle any situation that might arise. Little did he think what a strange situation Lyne would soon find himself in.

Lyne was overwhelmed with excitement at this lucky chance that placed him in command, with Midshipman Robertson Harvey as his second. In order to waste no time or run the risk of the Admiral changing his mind, Lyne hurried down to the dockyard, hoisted his pennant on board No. 60, and at once proceeded to get his vessel ready for sea, taking on board a full stowage of ammunition, coal, stores and provisions, not forgetting a good supply of delicacies such as sardines, bangers and other items not included in the Admiralty menu.

Lyne was ready within 24 hours and the following morning he received permission from the C-in-C to proceed to sea, the Admiralty accompanying his formal signal with one wishing Lyne and his crew good luck. One can easily imagine with what pride Lyne steamed out of harbour, with his pennant flying at the masthead and the largest White Ensign he could find, flying over the stern.

His orders were to patrol the coast about 400 miles northward between Cape Town and Port Nolloth. He was fortunate in having not only a good midshipman, but also an excellent chief engine-room artificer, Mr Watkins, in charge of the machinery. Together with the men, these formed a cheerful and contented crew, a thing most essential in a small vessel such as No. 60, when conditions both of living and of service made discipline hard to maintain except with a lot of give and take. The crew's quarters were so uncomfortable and cramped that there was no room on board the small ship for grouse. The food and cooking appliances were limited, and owing to the small room for stowage, their diet lacked variety, except when they had the good fortune to run alongside a Transport ship and pick up a few delicacies.

Lyne soon found that his job was no sinecure, for the weather on this coast is very bad at times and the heaviest seas are frequently encountered. The heavy sea was specially dangerous for a small ship, as it caused the propeller to race, and thus

brought a great strain on the shafts and engines. None the less, Lyne and his crew thoroughly enjoyed their job, as there was so much variety. Sometimes they would have to search small sailing vessels tucked away in suspicious little coves. At other times they would search vessels at sea and, if necessary, take them into harbour. Again, they would be carrying important dispatches or equally important passengers of the military, diplomatic or intelligence services. This latter job often gave them an opportunity of a night in harbour in Cape Town. Another of their duties was to watch for spies on the coast and sometimes to protect coastal villages where an attack from the Boers was expected.

Fair weather or foul No 60 was never adrift when fulfilling her various duties and painted white as she was, she soon became a conspicuous and well-known object on the coast, receiving the nickname of the WHITE CALF. One of Lyne's great anxieties was that of navigation. Fortunately, in spite of the fact that he had been brought up on the lower deck, he was a qualified navigator. But it needed careful watching to keep even his small vessel clear of the reefs surrounding the part of the coast where they were working. Many a ship had gone aground in those parts and once ashore had never been re-floated.

The crew were continually being spurred on to continue their work by the fact that they were attracting the attention of the authorities, and messages of congratulation etc were frequently received from the Admiral and sometimes from Lord Kitchener. It was a great shock to Lyne when his happy little band were broken up by Midshipman Harvey having to rejoin the base in order to continue his scholastic studies; especially as Lyne was of the opinion - and no one was likely to disagree with him - that the lad was learning far more as second-in-command of the torpedo boat than he ever could by studying books. Lyne soon got over his disappointment of losing Harvey when he got to know his new second-in-command - Midshipman E. Bruce-Gardyne (who finally retired as a Captain with a Distinguished Service Order and who at one time was in command of the big training establishment in connection with Greenwich Hospital at Holbrook in England).

In April 1902 thanks to the pressure brought on them by sea and land, the activities

of the Boer forces on the coast were gradually reduced, but No. 60 still continued her patrols and it was at this period that Lyne had the opportunity of showing what stuff he was made of. No. 60 was on her way to Lamberts Bay. She was about 100 miles from her base and some 25 miles off the reef-bound coast, which was to leeward. The weather was very threatening, and a strong breeze was blowing from the south-west, accompanied by a heavy swell. Lyne and his chief engineer were spinning a yarn together near the after hatchway, rather bemoaning their fate that things had quietened down, with little chance of performing any very distinguished service. Suddenly, just as Lyne was going forward, the vessel gave a shudder which shook her from stem to stern, and the engine began to race madly. All hands rushed up on deck whilst Watkins dashed below followed by Lyne. They realised that something serious had happened, but as far as could be seen, there was nothing wrong with the engines. Then it flashed through Lyne's mind that perhaps the propeller had fallen off. Running aft, in spite of the fact that the swell was lifting the stern up and down in a dangerous manner, Lyne crawled over until he could see through the clear blue water that the propeller was still there, though it appeared in rather an abnormal position.

In the meantime, Watkins had climbed down into the stern compartment and discovered that the propeller shaft had broken clean in two, the plates were buckled and water was coming in through the stern. Lyne at once gave orders for the pumps to be started. Meanwhile the vessel had swung round broadside-on to the heavy swell, and was rolling gunwale under, from side to side. The men were ordered to take off some wires and tackles with which to secure the propeller, whilst the engineer was busy seeing what effect the pumps were having on the inflow of water. He was soon able to report that he anticipated no trouble in keeping the water under control; but this was not sufficient and Lyne had to think out quickly how to save the ship. The greatest danger lay in the fact that they were only about 25 miles from the reef. In view of the freshening wind and the fact that the Agulhas current would carry them towards the reef, the situation was one of great anxiety. The vessel was also out of the track of all shipping so it was useless to hope for assistance from that quarter.

Lyne was, not lacking resource. He had been brought up under sail and he quickly decided that if he could not steam he could sail and the fact that there were no sails on board did not deter him. Ordering his crew to gather aft, he addressed them as follows: "I have sent for you men to explain to you the situation. We have broken our main propeller shaft outside the ship. Repairs are out of the question and you will understand that further steaming is impossible. We are about 100 miles from our base out of the track of shipping and the nearest anchorage is Saldanha Bay, which is about 35 miles distant. We can expect no help, so something has to be done. We cannot steam but we can sail".

Observing the look of surprise on the faces of the men, he quickly added: "I know at the moment it seems impossible as we have no sails on board, but we have the wherewithal to put up a show and we must do it. The wind is freshening, but for the time being it is favourable to us and unless it hauls to the northward, we have no immediate danger to fear in that direction. We have got a few days grub on board and we will share and share alike. The engineer can keep us going with fresh water through his condensers. Now then, men, every one of us, from myself down to the cook, has got to work now as we have never worked before. There are no sails on board but we have an awning which will make the sails and we have strong backs and bearing-out spars which will make the masts. Before dark Her Majesty's Torpedo Boat No. 60 under my command will be under full sail." In spite of the fact that during his address the vessel was drifting helplessly towards the reefs, beam-on to the wind and sea, Lyne's brief speech had a magnetic effect on the men. Appreciating that they were under a leader who did not know what defeat meant, they hurried away to fulfill his orders, fully realising that unless they saved themselves, no one else would save them.

Special jobs were allocated to certain men. The chief engineer and a couple of his staff saw that the pumps were kept going and a supply of fresh water ready, whilst the coxswain and two or three seamen got ready a sea-anchor in order to get the stern on to the wind. As the different pieces of canvas were brought up from below, Lyne superintended their conversion into extemporé sails. Some of the awning needed cutting into the proper shape, whilst other bits had to be sewn

together to a suitable size. The largest awning was hoisted on the foremast, that being the strongest mast available, whilst the smaller awning and spare canvas were hoisted on the rigged-up jury-masts. Ever thoughtful of the welfare and comfort of his men, Lyne ordered the main-brace to be spliced whilst this work was going on! This consisted of issuing an extra tot of rum to the crew. Whilst they were drinking it Lyne proposed the Toast of a Soldier's Wind (a fair wind). When some of the sails were ready Lyne gave orders to "make plain sail" and as soon as the first canvas was hoisted he ordered the coxswain to take the helm and steer NNE. It was a great relief when the vessel slowly came round to the course ordered. It proved that they were making some progress through the water. The last sail was hoisted just as night fell, and an extremely black night it was, with not a light anywhere in sight. Once under way, with the men attending the sails and steadying the rigging of the temporary masts, all hands were piped to supper and the men relieved each other one by one to carry out this order.

An extra ration of cocoa, bread and bully beef was issued in order to renew their strength after their strenuous efforts and to fortify them for the night before them. The night dragged on wearily as the wind and sea increased in strength and the weather became more threatening every minute; but there was no rest for anybody, as the temporary mast, sails and rigging needed careful attention all the time and the coxswain, who reckoned that he was the only man who knew how to steer a sailing vessel, insisted upon remaining at the wheel all night.

One of the great difficulties Lyne had to contend with was the estimation of the speed, for the cherub log failed to register. Luckily they still had on board an old-fashioned ship's log, though Lyne was the only person with practical experience in using it. However, he quickly explained the operation to some of his men and after several casts, he was able to estimate their speed as being about 3 knots. In the early hours of the morning the wind hauled away slightly to the North and Lyne ordered the sails to be trimmed accordingly, though his speed was somewhat reduced. At daylight land was sighted on the horizon to the eastward and in a few hours they recognised the high land at the entrance to Saldanha Bay.

No sooner had Lyne fixed the position of his ship by bearing than he had the reefs to negotiate. This was going to be no easy job under extemporé sail but by trimming the sails and navigating carefully he was able to alter course so as to avoid the reefs, though at times his speed was only 1 knot or so through the water; but all hands were confident that if the wind held they would reach harbour before nightfall. As they closed the "heads" Lyne gave orders for distress signals to be fired. There was no proper ship in the Bay, but a few fishing boats came out in answer to the signal and in due course they took No. 60 in tow and with this aid Lyne got his vessel to a safe anchorage off the village. At last he was able to order "shorten sail" and the "pipe down" thus allowing all hands to turn-in for a well-earned sleep. Their slumbers were not of long duration, as during the night the wind shifted to the northward and blew a whole gale. Had this happened a few hours sooner it is probable that No.60 would never have been heard of again; so it was the resource and prompt action of Lyne and his crew, combined with a good display of seamanship and navigation, that avoided another naval disaster. As soon as Lyne informed the C-in-C at Simon's Town of what had happened, the news was reported to the Admiralty, who telegraphed their congratulations to Lyne on his effort.

In the meantime the cruiser FORTE was dispatched from Simon's Town to rescue No.60 and in due course the latter left Saldahna for Simon's Town under tow. But even then her troubles were not over for they met with tremendous gales coming up from the southward, with very heavy seas, especially off the Cape of Good Hope. The leak became considerably worse and Lyne spent many anxious hours as the water increased to an alarming extent, but eventually Simon's Town was safely reached. As No. 60 was approaching Simon's Bay, flags were seen to flutter at the mast-head of the flagship. In a moment the sides of all ships in the Bay were crowded with men, for the flags at the masthead were an order to "cheer ship" and as the little craft was towed through the Fleet, ringing cheers broke out on all sides.

Congratulations poured in from everywhere. Although only a Warrant Officer, Lyne had the honour of being invited to dine at Admiralty House to meet a distinguished party. But these congratulations did not disturb his equilibrium, for his mind was too intent on getting his vessel ready for sea again. One day a few

weeks later, however, his calm demeanour was somewhat shaken. As he was sitting in his little rubber bath in the early hours of the morning, he suddenly heard a lot of cheering on the upper deck. Rushing up on deck with only a towel round him to see what was happening, and giving orders for the noise to be stopped, he was met by the signalman, who handed him the following message from the flagship:

"Admiralty informs me that Mr Thomas Spence Lyne has been promoted to the rank of Lieutenant for Distinguished Service. I feel that all officers and men under my command congratulate this officer on his well-merited promotion."

For once Lyne was completely taken aback as promotion of this sort was extremely rare in those days. From then on he never missed an opportunity of making further strides in the service, bringing to bear his knowledge, resourcefulness and skill.

Lyne spent some 6 years in and around Simon's Town and in 1912 was promoted to Commander, establishing a record which as we have stated earlier, was not equalled for over 100 years. During the 1914-18 War he was in charge of minesweeping operations in the Channel and in addition to being Mentioned in Despatches he was awarded the DSO. The honour that appealed to him most, however, was that of entertaining His Majesty the King to luncheon on board his ship.

Lyne's last command was the training ship HMS IMPREGNABLE, the ship he had joined as a Boy Seaman 40 years earlier. He was placed on the retired list in 1925 thus ending a distinguished career which began in 1885. It was men like this who formed the backbone of that marvellous service, the Royal Navy.

oooooooo000oooooooo

DUNCAN H. CARMICHAEL (Lt Cdr R.N.)

This officer saw service here in HMS ST GEORGE on the Cape station as a Midshipman. We have a model of this ship on display in the Simon's Town Museum. His brother was also in the Royal Navy. Duncan retired about 1908. Prior to that he had been in command of a Destroyer for several years. When the Great War broke out he offered his services and was made Provost Marshal at the Crystal Palace (London) to the R.N. Division, with the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

He was unfortauntely invalided from the Navy not long afterwards after an operation. The Navy gave him permission to try for employment in German East Africa. He stayed with his brother en route on the brother's farm near Bremersdorp and then proceeded to Mombasa in Kenya. He was unable to obtain employment in Mombasa as all the appointments were made in Pretoria so he returned southwards. Sadly he caught pneumonia and after only a few days illness died in Pretoria Hospital. Such were the trials of being a naval officer that he and his brother, who was also in the Navy, only saw one another three or four times over a period of 25 years.

As he had no close relatives in Pretoria it fell to the Sons of England Society to arrange for him to be buried "with the respect due to an officer".

From: a report which appeared in the Knysna Herald, George Town, Wednesday 30 August 1916. [It appears from the write-up that he had many friends in Knysna. In those days Royal Naval ships called regularly at Knysna.]

ooooooooo000oooooooooooo

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL (or The Blue-Coat School)

Many naval officers who served on the Cape station had attended this school. It is a public school for boys founded in 1553 by King Edward VI. The original buildings were those of the monastery of the Grey Friars in Newgate Street, London. The dress of the boys has scarcely differed in style since 1553; they wear a long blue coat and knee-breeches with yellow stockings and white neckbands, the only difference being that the yellow petticoat and flat blue cap have been discarded. In 1902 the school was removed to new buildings at Horsham in Sussex, which were designed by Sir Aston Webb; the building was on an entirely new plan for public schools, accommodating over 800 boarders (there are now no day scholars). Among the pupils were Charles Lamb, S.T. Coleridge and Leigh Hunt. The girl's school was also in Newgate Street, but in 1793 it was moved to Hertford and now takes 280 boarders.

To-day Christ's Hospital still has about 40 RMS (Royal Mathematical School Presentations) places for children aged 11 to 18, of Naval families. The school has connections with the Royal Navy dating back to 1673 when Charles II granted a Royal Charter so that a Mathematical School would be erected at Christ's Hospital for children to be educated in Mathematics and could then soon begin their seven-year apprenticeships to ships' masters. It advertises with the slogan "*The Best Education that Money Can't Buy*".

Everyman's Encyclopaedia p.442 Vol. 3 and
Navy News, U.K.

Ooooooooo000ooooooooo

THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY (H.E.I.Co)

The British East India Company was founded two years before the Dutch East India Company. In the early years of the 17th century the Company operated and crewed the ships but from about 1650 very few East Indiamen were actually owned by the Company – they were freighted from consorts of private owners who,

represented by their Principal Managing Owner or “Ships Husband”, were also responsible for providing the officers and seamen.

The Company through its Committee of Shipping exercised a right of approval over the officers. The qualifications required – such as matters of minimum age for specific ranks, and experience as reflected in the number of voyages made – were formally codified by the 18th century. Officers and seamen essentially signed on for the duration of a particular voyage and to this extent the service was always less “regular” than the Company Civil Service or its Bengal, Madras and Bombay Armies. Although in practice most officers spent most of their careers with the Company, it is equally true that careers often began with or were interrupted by periods in other merchant ships and/or the Royal Navy. Professional skills were acquired at a much earlier age than in the Company’s Armies – 12 or 13 was the normal age for a first voyage – and command, given with good connections, could come by the mid-20’s. Pay was modest. The real attraction of the service lay in the Company’s system of private trade privileges for officers and seamen, which permitted them to export and import their own goods, subject to varying restrictions on the type of commodities and the amount of space/tonnage they could occupy. The welfare of aged and/or infirm officers and seamen was provided by the Poplar Hospital Fund in London. Deductions were made from pay and deserving cases or their dependents, according to status and financial circumstances, could be granted pensions or admitted to Poplar almshouses.

The Simon’s Town suburb of Seaforth was so named by Capt T.T. Harington of the D.E.I.Co who traded with the Far East (see Bulletin Vol. V No. 2 p.45). His house stood above the site of the house “*Bonne Esperance*” at Seaforth. He owned the vessel SCALEBY CASTLE. He was born in 1778 at New Sarum, Wilts, U.K., the son of John and Rachel Harington. He entered the Company’s service in 1793 and by 1804 captained his first ship, the GANGES.

.From: Biographical Index of the H.E.I. Co. Officers (1600-1834) p.353 by

Anthony Farrington, British Library, 1999 ISBN 07123 4647 3

Ooooooooo000ooooooooO