



**SIMON'S TOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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EDITORIAL

The 28th February 1983 marks the 100th Anniversary of the first meeting of a popularly elected Council which was later to become the Simon's Town Municipal Council. It seems only right therefore that a considerable part of this Edition should be devoted to a brief description of events which led up to its formation, the early struggles to establish itself, some of the major personalities involved and some of the problems they had to face. The Editorial Committee makes no apology for the fact that the contributions which follow concentrate principally but not entirely upon the early history of the Council and the content of its initial proceedings rather than the later years. These and indeed many of the major events which have played such an important part in the development of the Town over the past 100 years i.e. the establishment of a modern naval base, the coming of the railway, the construction and extensions to the Dockyard and the effect of three major wars and so on and so forth have already received fairly detailed treatment in previous Editions of the Bulletin and there seems little point in wasting the Reader's time or taking up valuable space to cover the same ground all over again. Much of the material which appears is hopefully unfamiliar to many readers and we are deeply indebted to a former distinguished Editor of the Bulletin the late Mr. F.P.Chapman whose published researches have assisted us considerably in our task. We are also indebted to the Vice-Chairman of the STHS Councillor Gordon Wilson particularly for the information culled from the Council's Minute Books. Other valuable contributions have come from staff members of the Simon's Town Museum and of course the STHS.

THE SIMON'S TOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

1883 - 1983

IN THE BEGINNING.....

Much has been written of the loss of ships and men and of equal if not more concern to the Dutch East India Company of the loss of valuable cargo when unwieldy sailing ships lying in Table Bay were swept to destruction on Woodstock Beach by the sudden north-westerly gales of the winter. This prompted the then Commander in the Cape, Simon van der Stel to survey False Bay in 1687 in order to find a safe winter anchorage for the Company's fleet.

In January 1743 Baron Gustaaf Willem van Imhoff on his way to the Dutch East Indies to take up the appointment of Governor General arrived with instructions from the Heere XVII to set up a base in Simon's Bay. Accompanied by Governor Hendrik Swellengrebel and his Secunde, Rijk van Tulbagh, van Imhoff selected a site for the Long Building (which still stands in the West Dockyard) to house the first garrison comprising a few soldiers commanded by the first postholder, Sergeant Justinus Blass, their stores, ammunition etc. It also served as a hospital and bake house. By 1st May Blass had formally established his authority over Simon's Bay and so became the first person charged with the administration of local affairs with the title of Postholder. In the years that followed the title was changed to Postholder or Resident in 1761, to Commandant under the First British Occupation 1795-1803 which title continued through the Batavian Administration 1803-1805 and well into the second British Administration after the re-occupation of the Cape in 1806. Until 1814 each British Commandant was assisted by a Deputy Fiscal primarily concerned with civilian affairs.

The post became that of Resident Magistrate in 1825 - temporary financial difficulties caused a downgrading of post and pay from 1834-1848 - but thereafter the occupant's influence and power seemed to grow considerably until the appointment on 1st July 1876 of Frederick Johannes Perryn van der Riet who had much to do with the founding of the Simon's Town Municipal Council as we know it to-day.

THE COMMITTEE OF SIX GENTLEMEN

Before six weeks had elapsed after assuming office, Resident Magistrate van der Riet called a Public Meeting for the purpose of the formation of a Committee of "Six Gentlemen" to help him in advising and deliberating on all matters connected with the general improvement of the Town. The aims of this body were to raise funds by voluntary subscription for sanitary improvements and to make representation to the Government on a very strongly held view that the inhabitants of the Town be assisted in the formation of a Municipality by allowing the Naval and Military Establishments here to be taxed for the payment of rates.

The Town was divided into six wards and the members were Messrs. A.N. Black, Fred Hugo, P.D. Martin, E.G. Bower, George Phillipson and G.R. Budge, who were armed with authorities under the Public Nuisances Act. The Chairman was the Magistrate and the Secretary, the Residency Clerk Mr. J.C. Hoets. Regrettably this first real essay in purely local citizen involvement in administration proved to be shortlived as in less than three months the last meeting was held on 8th November, 1876. It is not recorded why this apparently worthwhile effort came to an early demise. Perhaps the main reason was the proposed passage of what was to be Act 36/1879 whereby a fiscal division of Simon's Town was to be created and where a local Divisional Council could be elected which could also perhaps do the Committee of Six Gentlemen's work.

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Act 29/1881 which provided for the Management of Villages and other communities not being Municipalities, seemed to our worthy Resident Magistrate and Civil Commissioner van der Riet a useful instrument to help him run Simon's Town after the abortive Committee of Six Gentlemen of five years before. When the Smallpox scare developed in the winter of 1881 he called a public meeting to make the Contagious Diseases Act of 1856 applicable to Simon's Town.

It showed, however, that the townsfolk were not at all keen, or, at any event, indifferent to the formation of a Village Management Board and he urged the Colonial Secretary to extend the Village Management Act to Simon's Town. The latter official concurred and by virtue of Proclamation 154 of 7th September 1881 the Act was made applicable to Simon's Town. Resident Magistrate van der Riet lost no time in setting up an election and on 18th September 1881 he announced that the following three gentlemen were elected to form the Board of Management for the Community of Simon's Town: Fred Hugo, Charles Rees and George R. Budge. Charles Rees was elected Chairman and the boundaries were defined.

This body apparently did not last long and was soon defunct. Its books and assets were subsequently handed over to the Municipality on 4th June, 1886.

THE SIMON'S TOWN DIVISIONAL COUNCIL

It took three years after the passing of Act 36/1879 for the eight Simon's Town Divisional Councillors to be elected - for on 24th October 1882 Messrs. Fred Hugo, G.R. Budge, J.E. Storrier, P.J. Hugo, H.J. Hugo, G. de Stadler, J.H. Carlsen and H.A. Auret were announced as the successful candidates. The main duty of the Divisional Council was road construction and maintenance. On 21st November 1882 the Council met for the first time under the chairmanship of the Resident Magistrate F.J.P. van der Riet.

Unfortunately this Council did not live up to the expectations that had been held for it. There were widespread complaints that the population of the Division was small; that the revenue was insufficient despite the rate being one and a half pennies in the £1 (a rate three times higher than the Cape Divisional Council); that the roads traversed difficult terrain and had deteriorated through greater use by Cape Town people rather than those of the Division; that the Navy and Army authorities owned vast tracts of land and were acquiring more but were paying neither rates nor tolls yet Government traffic on the roads was heavy.

A petition was placed before Parliament to abolish the Divisional Council and Parliament duly passed the enabling act but refused to deproclaim the Council until the main and divisional roads had been put into a reasonable state of repair. In addition the Council had to pay all its debts, repair other minor roads and a public dam for watering domestic animals. An appeal was made to the Prime Minister, Thomas Upington, for financial help which was refused but convict labour and supervision was rendered and some twenty months later the roads appeared to be reasonably restored and the Council had paid its debts and by Proclamation 66/1888 of 16th April 1888, the Fiscal Division of Simon's Town, its Council and the post of Civil Commissioner were deproclaimed and the area was re-incorporated in the Cape Divisional Council.

THE FORMATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY

As Resident Magistrate van der Riet was trying to persuade the Colonial Secretary to extend the Village Management Act to Simon's Town a new draft bill was announced and the following year was passed into law. It was Act 45/1882, the Municipal Act, providing a more simpler process whereby Municipalities could come into being. Up to this time it had taken a special act of Parliament to create a Municipal Council, a process both expensive and cumbersome. All that was now needed was a petition of twenty-five parliamentary voters of the area directed to the Governor and he could then proclaim the Municipality.

Over the seventy year period of 1810-1880 there had been remarkable progress in the Town. Its population had grown, its commercial worth and volume of traffic had increased and the town was thriving. Yet there was this reluctance of the local people to assume the duties and responsibilities required of true local government.

There were difficulties of topography and water supply to be sure; but the Town cried out for attention to the provision of drainage and health facilities among many others. Resident Magistrate Pinney had petitioned the Governor Sir George Grey after the great storm of 1857 for Municipal regulations to be extended to the Town. Sir George replied that he had long been surprised that the inhabitants had not formed a Municipality - Magistrate Pinney could not manage to get a Municipality together.

Again nearly twenty years later Resident Magistrate Burrowes complained he was unable to improve the unsalubrious state of the Town as his powers under the Public Nuisances Act were too limited. Other Towns had formed Municipalities which had demonstrated their efficiency - why this stange delay in Simon's Town?

The reason was really quite simple and it remained a hotly discussed topic for many years. Listen to Resident Magistrate Burrowes' words after discussion with leading inhabitants on the subject:

"I have been given to understand that the introduction of any measures for establishing a Municipality will be strongly opposed by the Town's people unless some assurance be given them that the liability to be rated for sanitary purposes will not be limited to private property but will extend to property belonging to the Naval and Military authorities, or else that the Naval and Military authorities will contribute a fixed sum annually for such purpose."

However, Resident Magistrate van der Riet's manoeuvre to have the Village Management Act extended to Simon's Town broke the ice. There was now, whether people liked it or not, a form of Local Government in the Town. Worthy George Ryall Budge and thirty-four others now petitioned the Governor for the creation of a Municipality which would be a more effective instrument for progress than a small Board of Management.

Quickly and almost predictably a counter petition was drawn up and forwarded to the Governor. The latter petition was held to contain no valid grounds for opposition to the constitution of the Municipality and accordingly the Governor Sir Hercules Robinson by virtue of Proclamation 9 of the 25th January, 1883, brought into being the Simon's Town Municipality.

THE FIRST ELECTION

Wednesday 14th February 1883 was set by Resident Magistrate and Civil Commissioner van der Riet as nomination day for the election of the first Councillors, such election was to be held at the Residency at 12 noon on Saturday 24th February. The following six of the seven candidates were declared elected: William Alexander, George Ryall Budge, Frederick Hermanus Scheurndorff Hugo, William Runciman jnr., James E. Storrier and Edwin Turner. The first meeting of the Council was held on Wednesday 28th February and at that meeting G.R. Budge was elected Chairman (not then termed "Mayor"). The boundaries of the Municipality, on proclamation, were the same as those that had been established for the now superseded Board of Management.

Resident Magistrate and Civil Commissioner van der Riet could now sit back and relax as a fair amount of his former duties would be performed in future by the new Council.

No doubt the new Councillors of Simon's Town still had to contend with the one worrying factor which had by almost common consent turned the minds of the Townsfolk for many years against the establishment of the Municipality and Ordinance 9 of 1836 was promulgated. Would the Government pay its fair share towards the costs of running the Town and providing the essential Municipal services so needed by the Royal Naval and Military establishment? As it happened it took many years to resolve this question. But at least the new Council was now in existence and ready to do its work of Local Government of Simon's Town.

THE EARLY YEARS

The infant organization began its activities under a very wise and public spirited Chairman George Ryall Budge whose toughness of mind surely saved it from an early demise!

A study of the records of the early proceedings certainly emphasises the truth of the old adage "The more things change the more they are the same". The problems the early Councillors faced have a familiar ring to-day. Perhaps the main difference between the proceedings of that time and those of to-day can be identified as greater informality, greater bluntness of speech and far less consistency on the part of the Councillors in attending meetings - in marked contrast to their modern day counterparts. But the differences seem to disappear! At the first meeting on 28th February, 1883, the Council dealt with.... nuisances, irregular occupation of Municipal land, wrongful conduct by citizens, faulty and malodorous drains, uncontrolled cattle, horses, dogs and two major problems Finance and the promulgation of its own set of Bye-Laws and Regulations so that the enforcement of Local Government at least had some legal basis!

The first financial problem the council had to face was the payment of the salary of the first Town Clerk Mr. D. Watson and certain other expenses during the period in which a valuation roll of immovable property could be drawn up, objection heard, the rates fixed and the monies collected. Council authorised the Chairman to raise a loan of £50. This the Chairman promptly did. He put up the money himself and charged an interest rate of 6% per annum!

To achieve promulgation of the Bye-Laws and Regulations took rather longer. At the first meeting Councillors Budge, Storrier and Runciman were entrusted with the task of drafting a Code of Regulations. With commendable despatch at a special meeting of the Council on 9th May, 1883 the draft Bye-Laws and principal Regulations had been approved followed by the Pound regulation five days later. By 23rd May the documents having been deposited for inspection in the Municipal Offices for seven days were confirmed and forwarded to the Government for consideration and hopefully promulgation in the Gazette. This process was necessary as in those days there was no Municipal Ordinance in existence which laid down general rules and regulations for the conduct of Local Government. Each Municipality therefore had to draft and seek Government approval for its own set of Bye-Laws and Regulations even on matters of detail such as markets, water and pounds, etc.

In this instance Government (as Governments sometimes do) took its time. As weeks and then months went by and the local residents called for action Council were obliged to keep them at bay with the somewhat lame excuse "wait until the Bye-Laws are promulgated". Council even considered suspending its activities - but fortunately changed its mind!

Following a visit by Councillor Budge (at Council expense) in October, Government produced some "corrections, omissions, alterations and suggestions" which were promptly considered and agreed by Council and the draft document returned in the hope that approval would soon be forthcoming.

One would have thought that having adjusted the Regulations and Bye-Laws as requested these would now be promptly promulgated. But no! At the adjourned bi-monthly meeting of 26th November, the Chairman, Councillor Budge, dramatically ruled that "he did not consider the

Council a legally constituted body until the Bye-Laws had been sanctioned and promulgated". Accordingly the Government was "to be urged to consider the bye-laws without delay as questions of paramount importance were cropping up, especially from the Military and Naval Departments and the general welfare of the town cannot be entered into without them, and great loss and inconvenience are occasioned to the Municipality through their retention".

In response to this Municipal 'cri-de-coeur', the Colonial Secretary replied in early December that the Bye-Laws were with the Secretary of the Law Department. The Town Clerk, Mr. D. Watson, was instructed to write at once to establish the cause of the delay.

Eight days later, Council resolved to send a deputation consisting of The Chairman Councillor Budge and Councillors Fred Hugo and Runciman to wait on the Colonial Secretary. Apparently the submissions made by these Councillors bore fruit as on 4th January, 1884, the Bye-Laws and all except the Water regulations were gazetted. Now Local Government could function more or less properly in Simon's Town nearly eleven months after establishment.

Swift action followed: It was resolved that an advertisement be placed in the Cape Times that the Bye-Laws had been promulgated and would be put into effect. Any contravention after 1st February, 1884, would be dealt with according to law.

All dogs were to be registered and the Town Clerk was instructed to obtain badges to signify that the annual dog tax of five shillings had been paid. Any unregistered stray dogs would be destroyed or their owners prosecuted with penalties ranging from a minimum of £1 to a maximum of £3. As the Bye-Laws now contained penalties for non-observance, the Town Clerk was instructed to write letters of demand to all those in arrears with their rates and/or taxes.

The Chairman and Councillors Hugo and Runciman would wait on the Resident Magistrate Mr. F.J. van der Riet, to take over the Market and arrange the duties of the Police in respect of Municipal affairs.

Later in January, the Council learned that the Resident Magistrate would surrender control of the market to the Municipality on 1st February and the Police and Court would enforce all Municipal laws. The Chairman reported that he had taken it on himself to order 50 copies of the Municipal Bye-Laws to be printed by James Ferguson of Wynberg for 42/-. Council agreed but considered 42/- to be rather dear, but promptly ordered another fifty copies!

During February it was agreed that a Bell man be hired to go about the town with a notice on a board informing that any infringement of the Bye-Laws would be dealt with in accordance with the law. From that moment no-one could plead ignorance that Local Government had been instituted in Simon's Town.

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THE FIRST TOWN CLERK - MR. D. WATSON

The first mention of Mr. Watson in the Council Minutes was purely fortuitous. After its inaugural meeting held on 28th February, 1883, the Council's next meeting was held on 30th March and adjourned to 2nd April. One of the first letters ever read by Council was from a Mr. D. Watson who applied to the Council for a grant of a piece of land. A Commission of two Councillors was appointed to look into the application. There is no record of the Committee reporting back to Council the success or not of Mr. Watson's application, but later we find he was paying Municipal rates on a property valued at £400, which at the prices of those days must have been a fairly substantial dwelling, situated in the Kloof.

At the same meeting, Councillors Budge and Storrier reported that the Simon's Town Divisional Council had asked if the offices of the Secretary to the Divisional Council and the Town Clerk could be amalgamated. Council agreed thereto provided it did not cost the Council more than £75 per annum. So we find the Council deciding at its meeting of 18th April to call for applications for a temporary Town Clerk for a period of three months at £6.5/- per month and on 23rd April 1883 at noon, a special meeting was held to select this temporary Town Clerk. There were two applicants: Mr. Charles Rees (a well-known resident of Simon's Town and former Chairman of the Simon's Town Village Management Board) and Mr. D. Watson.

Strangely enough not much is known about his background. His spelling smacked of the New World i.e. "labor", "laborer", "harbor", "odor" and he consistently referred to Simonstown and Capetown and misspelt place names such as "Steenbrass" (Steenbras), "Good Gift" (Goede Gift), "Rickits" (Ricketts), "Lazaret" (Lazarette) and so on. He liked using Latin expressions but somehow seriatim became "seriatum". His minutes were blunt and very much to the point. One wonders what present day Councillors would say if their discussions were recorded in the Council Minutes by to-day's Town Clerk as "a good deal of desultory conversation with nothing definite being arrived at" !

When no individual tendered on two occasions after calls for tenders to do the valuation of properties in Simon's Town for the Valuation Roll, the Town Clerk commissioned to undertake this very necessary activity so the Town Council could obtain the necessary funds to meet expenditure and Council resolved that his remuneration therefore was not to exceed £15. In the event the Council saw fit to resolve to pay him £12. On 25th June, 1883, Council re-appointed Mr. Watson again as temporary Town Clerk, but with a salary increase of £1 per month to bring him to £7.5/- per month!

Another amusing example of his minuting of Council decisions is in connection with the Meeting of 23rd January 1884 when the action of the Chairman (the Mayor) Cllr G.R. Budge, in directing the Town Clerk to write to the Resident Magistrate regarding the cancellation of all Sufferance Grants (rentals paid by individuals for occupation of Crown Land) within the limits of the Municipality, without the consent of the Municipality, was discussed. In Mr. Watson's words "a great deal of discussion ensued in which such act of the Chairman was considered reprehensible".

When the next ordinary meeting of the Council took place on 6th February only three Councillors - the Chairman Mayor Budge, and Councillors Edwin Turner and Fred Hugo turned up. Cllr Budge took umbrage to the

Town Clerk's manner of reflection of the proceedings in the minutes of the previous meeting for the Town Clerk recorded that the minutes were read and confirmed, but the Chairman refused to sign these as he considered there had been some unnecessary reflections cast upon him with reference to a certain act done or sanctioned by him without the consent of Council "although correctly recorded" the Town Clerk adroitly added to the Minute!

The Mayor's feathers were definitely ruffled, so he put it to Council that this meeting, which barely boasted a quorum, should be adjourned for a week, which was agreed to by all present and when the well attended adjourned meeting of 13th February was held, the Chairman promptly referred to the reflections cast upon him as recorded in the minutes of the meeting of 23rd January and the Town Clerk then faithfully recorded that "the Council expressed themselves to the effect that no reflections were meant, or intended, and perhaps the Town Clerk had worded the minute in question rather strongly - the Chairman then signed them as previously confirmed" ! Poor Mr. Watson - but he never seemed perturbed by the variety of jobs he was given!

Apart from fully minuting the meetings in clear longhand, as the only permanent office employee, he had many additional duties thrust on him, such as writing all the letters called for in terms of Council resolutions, compilation of valuation roll and voters' roll and keeping the Council's cash book recording the Council's income and expenditure. He also had to chase up defaulters regarding amounts due to Council in respect of rates, dog tax and water levies and he was appointed Municipal Prosecutor to obtain redress. The Town Clerk was also "empowered to make a house visitation and employ a person to accompany him to see if all dogs were registered and to report monthly on the sanitary state of the Town generally". Hereafter he was "authorised to employ a scavenger to clean drains or other places and to supervise his work etc".

Then on 24th April 1884 came a bit of a bombshell: Mr. Watson tendered his resignation as Town Clerk. A special meeting of Council was held to consider it, but it was decided to defer discussion to a later Council meeting. Eventually at the meeting of 14th May, the Town Clerk recorded that his resignation "was descanted upon by the Chairman, but was considered by Councillors Fred Hugo and Black that they were informed he should give three months' notice and not one, to which the Town Clerk demurred". (Obviously the Council wanted to retain his services for as long as possible!) The Town Clerk stated he required some further augmentation of his salary, to the extent the Market fees would allow and if that were agreed to he had no wish to resign. The Town Clerk recorded: "The Council blamed the late Government and due to the non-proclamation of the Water regulations which prevented them from carrying out the provisions of C IVI (sic) Section of the Municipal Act of 1882 they were considering sending in their resignation en masse and requested the Town Clerk to remain a little longer and to leave the question of further remuneration in their hands". The Town Clerk having no doubts (he recorded) "in the integrity of the Council, agreed to do so and with reference to his resignation in the matters remain statu quo" !

How misplaced was Mr. Watson's trust in the integrity of the Council in regard to an augmentation in his salary is reflected in the Council records, for on eventually leaving the Council's service more than five and one-third years later, we find this faithful servant's salary was still £7.5/- per month !! (No annual cost of living adjustments in those days.) His successor as Town Clerk on 1st August 1889 was William Smale Gillard and his starting salary was raised to £8.6.8d !!



A STORM IN A (SILVER) CUP

At the first meeting of the New Mayoral Year held on 5th August, 1887, Councillor A.N. Black was elected Chairman.

Among the items on the agenda was a letter from Councillor Runciman acting on behalf of the Executor of the Estate of a well-known resident and businessman, the late P.D. Martin, whereby was to be handed over "to the Municipality, as representing the public of the town, a case containing a Silver Challenge Cup won in competition by the Simon's Town Cavalry Corps many years ago and which body is now defunct and of which the late Mr. Martin was a member."

Council duly resolved to accept the Cup on behalf of Simon's Town's public, but then arose the problem as to where it should be kept. Some of the Councillors were in favour of the case being securely screwed to the wall of the Council office, while other Councillors felt it should be kept by the Chairman-in-office as custodian so as to ensure its safety. The matter of custody of the Cup was put to the vote, resulting in a tie of 3 - 3. The new Chairman was thus put to the position of exercising his casting vote in order to resolve the position, which he did by voting that the Cup be kept in the custody of the Chairman, from time to time. So we can visualise the new Chairman returning home from his first Council meeting as Mayor with the beautiful Cup in its case under his arm.

To the Council's consternation at its bi-monthly meeting of 2nd September 1887, a letter was tabled from Mr. J.J. Huskisson claiming that the silver "vase" given to the Municipality by Mrs. Martin was his bona fide property. Council duly resolved that the Cup and all papers and correspondence be brought by the Chairman to the next meeting to ventilate the matter before replying to Mr. Huskisson.

At the next meeting the Councillors examined the inscription of the Cup which, as recorded, "is to the following effect, viz. 'Presented by George Kittle (actually Kettle) as a prize to be shot for by the Rifle Corps of the Western Province, Cape of Good Hope February 10, 1860' and documentation therewith, it was evident that Mr. Huskisson had failed to prove his claim and resolved that the Cup remain in possession of the Council until Mr. Huskisson shall clearly establish a legal claim thereto".

Thereafter the whereabouts of the Cup, over the years, is not known but many years ago the beautiful chaste and moulded Cup came into the possession of the Simon's Town Historical Society and today may be seen, in its case, in the Simon's Town Museum; a joy to behold and a tribute to the silversmiths of a hundred and twenty years ago.

THE DISPUTED ELECTION

The popular Alexander N. Black of Cole Point served the Council well during five annual terms during the Council's first six years, one of them as Mayor. There was much sorrow at the Council's regular fortnightly meeting held on 29th March 1889 when the death of this popular Councillor was recorded.

The Council unanimously resolved to record a minute expressing their appreciation of his services as Councillor and Chairman and the loss caused by his decease and a letter of condolence was to be written to his widow. The Council then adjourned its meeting as a mark of respect to the deceased. When the fortnightly meeting came round on the 12th April, there was no quorum, only Cllr. the Rev. Ellis J. Williams and Cllr. Charles Boon, the newly elected Councillor in the late A.N. Black's place, turned up for the meeting; so the meeting was adjourned sine die.

On 26th April the next regular fortnightly meeting was held at which Cllr Boon was present, but the Chairman Cllr Runciman was not. Cllr. O.J. Hugo was voted into the Chair for the meeting and after Council had granted the Chairman a fortnight's leave of absence, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting until Cllr Runciman's return unless an emergency arose, whereupon the Town Clerk could call a meeting together urgently.

There was no further meeting of the Council until 31st May when a Special Meeting was called for general business, but Council decided to confine itself solely to the subject of the legality or otherwise of Mr. Charles Boon's election as Councillor of the Municipality. Cllr Boon was not present. Cllr G.R. Budge objected to it on the ground that the notice calling for nominations had made Monday the nomination day and that in consequence persons were deprived of a day as nomination papers had to be in before 4 o'clock the day before the day of nomination and that day falling on a Sunday, he contended that the election was therefore illegal.

Veteran public representative Cllr Budge, a stickler for correct procedures, then stated he would send the Town Clerk a written notice to be inserted in the notice convening the next meeting to the effect that he would move that Counsel's opinion be taken upon the aforesaid election. This was agreed to by Council.

At the next regular fortnightly meeting held on 7th June, Councillor Budge was beginning to introduce his motion regarding Cllr Boon's election when the Chairman, Cllr Runciman, intervened and stated that Cllr Boon had promised to resign. Cllr Budge then withdrew his motion.

One wonders whether this apparently challengeable situation reflected badly on the Town Clerk as returning officer and he took the honourable course, for we find the following entry squeezed into the minutes immediately after above entry: "The Town Clerk asked permission to

resign on 24th July next - granted".

Cllr Boon was as good as his word and tendered his resignation, for we find that on 4th July he was re-elected to Council to complete the late A.N. Black's term of office to August 1890 - beating Simon Johannes van Blerk for the seat. The next day, the 5th, was the regular fortnightly meeting of Council and Cllr Boon was formally introduced and congratulated on his election.

This episode apparently resulting in Mr. Watson's resignation as Town Clerk had a rather amusing sequel for we find in the minutes of the last meeting of the Mayoral year, just before the elections were due to be held - incidentally the first meeting attended by the new Town Clerk Mr. Gillard on 2nd August, 1889, the following notice of motion in the name of Cllr Fred Hugo: "that at the next meeting of Council he would move that should the late Town Clerk be elected as a Councillor at the forthcoming election, that legal opinion be taken as to the legality of his election" - no doubt rumours were rife!

At the first fortnightly meeting of the new Council on 16th August following the elections, where the Rev. Ellis Williams was elected as Chairman, we find the following minute: "The notice of motion regarding legal opinion to be taken if the late Town Clerk was elected Councillor was void as Mr. Watson declined to stand for a member."

Had Cllr Fred Hugo's move frightened Mr. Watson off ?

THE ENVIRONMENT (INCLUDING SOME THORNY PROBLEMS)

It is surely very satisfying to reflect that today there is a growing awareness by the general public and happily by the Central Government itself, as to how valuable an asset we have in our environment, so much so that on all three levels of Government there are presently portfolios which deal specifically with the Environment. (Simon's Town is, however, one of the few Local Authorities that has a specific Council portfolio for "Environment").

But it is even more heartening to learn how conscious of the environment our earliest Councillors were. As early as the adjourned part of the first monthly meeting of our Council on 2nd April, 1883, Cllr James E. Storrier placed an item on the agenda that "the Council plant trees on municipal waste lands before the winter".

Today Council and conservationists are much perturbed by the growing prevalence of alien or exotic plant invaders such as the acacias, Port Jackson, Rooikrans, Longifolia, Black Wattle, the two Hakeas, Pines, Myrtle etc. Now when one wanders through our town, one is probably unaware that a hundred years ago these pests were largely unknown, although the then Council had to face plant invaders of a different sort which are not in evidence at all today, but which exercised the minds, efforts and finance of the earlier Councillors to a great degree. These were South African plant pests, namely the Prickly Pear and the Kafir Thorn.

Reference to these invaders, "the source of much evil" abound in the earlier Council minutes. Areas of particularly bad infestation of prickly pears and kafir thorn, were the banks of the Brook, Black

Town (where the present Municipal offices stand), on the foreshore at Steenbras Bay (below the present Stem Pastorie and Hugo Bierman Building) and on the hillside below the Union Tavern.

It took a lot of money and some really determined assaults to eradicate these pests. Prickly pears and Kafir Thorns were very tenacious of life. After cutting, by hired prisoners from the Gaol, provided by the Resident Magistrate, prickly pears had to be buried deep in trenches and the Kafir Thorn stacked and burnt when dried.

After studying the Council minutes and the Council's Cash Books, one is impressed by the amount of money (of which the Council was, as indeed it is today, always very short and which was husbanded very carefully) was spent on tree planting, subsequent watering, fencing and care. It is, however, to be regretted that in the era in which our early Councillors operated that the choice of quick growing trees for shelter and beautification should have fallen on the exotic blue-gum and fir trees; although we admire their motives.

It is ironic that some of those blue-gum trees planted, watered and protected a hundred years ago, that grew, flourished and reached maturity, today, nearing the end of their span on earth, should blow over, topple or shed huge branches bringing down electric wires, walls and buildings and do damage far in excess, comparatively speaking, than the original expenditure on them; but let us be quite clear, the Council's aim was beautification, shade and greenery, as economically and as quickly as possible.

Today the environmental conservationists' aim is directed at the eradication of the blue-gums and the firs and their replacement by more suitable indigenous species; but with broadly the same aims in view as those entertained by our early Councillors. It is important to note that in the very FIRST year recorded in the Council's Cash Book there are 38 entries relating to purchase, cartage, planting, watering and protecting of trees and five relating to the eradication of prickly pears, and a considerably outlay on these projects.

To their considerable credit our earliest Councillors were truly environment conscious.

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THE WATER QUESTION

Simon's Town has for the past few years experienced dry winters..... our storage dams being at their lowest December level for 10 years.... Council has....resolved to impose partial water restrictions.....no sprinklers may be used....hoses may not be used for car or boat washingContravention of the restriction....may lead to a fine....not exceeding R200.

Extracts from a letter addressed by The Town Clerk to All Water Consumers dated 31st December,1982.

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE. BUT.....

Before the establishment of the Municipality the supply of water was the responsibility of the Water Company latterly supervised by a Water Committee comprising all the members (with the exception of one) of the first two councils. The system comprised a Naval Water Tank, the Harbour Board's Water Tank, several conservancy tanks, springs and a fairly extensive network of pipes serving the central and eastern section of the town but not the western. The local inhabitants were required to pay for a "union" which linked their dwelling to the Water Company's distribution pipes.

Upon assuming the Water Company's responsibilities (the Water Company would now become redundant) the infant Municipality would soon be faced with problems several of which were to become very familiar during the years that followed.

The second meeting of the first council were called upon to consider a copy of a letter from the then C-in-C Rear Admiral Nowell Salmon to the Governor requesting additional water from the springs on Colonial Government Land (now Municipal) near the North Battery. The Council requested the Governor to postpone a decision pending further investigation.

The quality of Simon's Town water found its way into the minutes of Council Meeting on 8th June 1883. In the Town Clerk's words:

"A copy of a report upon analysis of water taken from various sources within the Municipality was kindly submitted to the Council for its information through the favour of the Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief at the request of the Chairman through one of the Councillors, upon which a good deal of desultory conversation took place, but nothing definite having been arrived at, it was suggested that a special meeting be convened for the purpose of ventilation of the whole water question".

Nothing much happened until the October when Counsel's opinion (costing £6.6/-) was sought concerning the respective rights of the Town and the Royal Navy. The same question was put to Government in February 1884 following the promulgation of Simon's Town Bye-Laws in the previous month - with the exception of those relating to water! Government's continuing prevarication coupled with the news that revised Water Regulations had again been referred to the Rear Admiral for consideration caused Councillor Budge to remark at the Council Meeting of 19th March 1884 "...it must be a rather puerile Government when it has to refer such matters to the Naval Authorities as if they are not competent to form an opinion of their own." Finally at the Council Meeting of 18th June 1884 the Town Clerk was able to report the receipt of a letter from the Colonial Government advising that the Water Regulations had been gazetted on 10th June.

There remained the seemingly straight forward task of negotiating the take-over of the "late" Water Company. But..... At a meeting on 21st June 1884 Council adopted a firm line as the minutes reflect. The following resolution was carried with Cllr Budge dissenting.

"A goodly number of the Water Committee being present, it was resolved to take over the water-pipes as at 1st July 1884 and pay the balance of the Capital still due, together with interest at 6% p.a. due to 30th June, and the amounts received for unions to be repaid by the Municipality to the Water Committee to be repaid by them to those that have paid."

It was further resolved to send a letter to the Secretary of the Water Company requesting a reply by "Wednesday 25th inst!" A request from the Secretary proposing a postponement of the take-over to 1st August was approved.

Meanwhile Rear Admiral Salmon was back with his request for more water but after several inconclusive discussions, Council found itself unable to agree as no arrangements had yet been made to draw any surplus water which might be available from the Harbour Board's Tank. The Admiral would therefore have to await the finalisation of new arrangements.

Plans to extend the water supply to the western end of the town were drawn up by a Mr. Oliver who received a payment of £2.2/- for his work. But the agonising over the take-over of the Water Company's affairs continued. The Treasurer of the Company reported at a special meeting of the Council on 22nd December 1884 that the amount still accruing to the Company was £191.17.7d but there was interest due on 45 unions at £3. each which came to £36.7.1d - a sum that had not been considered by the Council. Cllrs P.J. Hugo and Runciman proposed paying the Water Company the difference between the two amounts, viz. £155.10.6d. but Cllrs Twogood and Black did not agree and proposed an amendment to pay the Company the Capital and interest in the sum of £20.10.6d. and to repay £135 for the 45 unions extended over a period of 6 years at 10/- per year or the present holders could pay 20/- instead of 30/- per year (as provided in Rule 3 of the Water Regulations) to the end of the said period. The amendment was tied, 3 votes to 3, whereupon the Chairman exercised his casting vote for such amendment.

The "final offer" was rejected by the Water Company and Council was informed at its meeting on 10th January 1885 that their resolution of 22nd December 1884 "could not be complied with". A further letter from the Water Company tabled at Council's meeting of 6th February 1885 was not permitted even to be read and a third letter which arrived in time for the Council Meeting of 6th March suffered a rather similar fate - the Chairman ruled that it should not be discussed.

Some mysterious behaviour on the part of the Council members so deeply involved in solving "the water question" then emerged. For a special meeting called to discuss the subject at 10 a.m. on 13th March, 1885, only the Chairman Cllr Budge appeared. After waiting until 12 noon by which time no other Councillor had appeared he declared the meeting abandoned. For a similar meeting called for 13th May 1885 the same thing happened!

Perhaps there was some method in this apparent madness after all. In June the Harbour Board agreed that the Council could install facilities to draw off the surplus water from their tank and in August the Water Company finally gave in and indicated their willingness to cede to the Council all their rights to main water pipes leading from the Wesleyan Chapel southwards to the Brickfields (now the site of the Simon's Town Country Club) for £165. payable by 31st August, 1888 as well as arrears of water rates of £53.5/- The offer was accepted.

So the Council now had full control of the collection and distribution of water to all civilian establishments and households in the town. and the way ahead probably seemed smooth. But.....it had taken some 2 1/2 years since the draft Water Regulations were first promulgated in February 1883 for the Council to get to this position. In the years that followed it was a gestation period rarely bettered insofar as the "Water Question" was concerned!

THE MAYORS

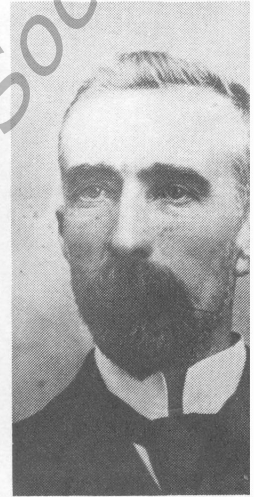
Ideally had space permitted it would have been only appropriate to include a photograph and a short biography of each one but this is simply not possible. The next best thing we believe is to pay tribute to the work of five outstanding Mayors whose photographs appear below and who between them covered almost the whole of the first hundred years of the Simon's Town Municipality's activities.



George Ryall Budge
1820 - 1902



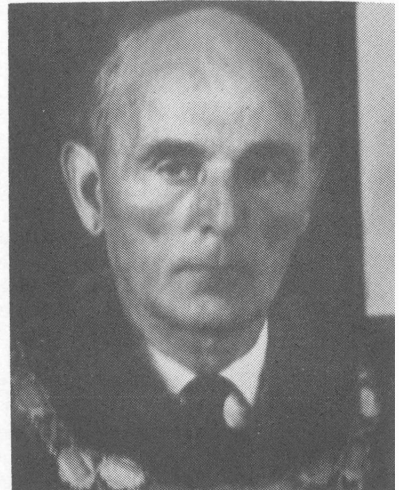
Fredereick Hermanus
Scheundorff Hugo
1841 - 1902



William Runcima
1858 - 1936



Lewis Charles Gay
1899 - 1967



Llewellyn James David Gay
1895 - 1979

GEORGE RYALL BUDGE (1820-1902)

Simon's Town's first Mayor seems to have been a much loved and respected man. On 16th December, 1899, by which time he had practically retired from public life, the Simon's Town and District Chronicle paid a glowing tribute to "our squire" and to the long service he had given to the town in his retiring, but "honest and straightforward way" and it is fitting he should be remembered in our centenary year.

Born in 1820 in Knysna, he was the eldest son of Hannah and Sampson Budge, a shipwright who hailed from Cornwall. By 1823 the family had moved to Simon's Town where George Ryall was educated at the government school. He married Ann Erith at the age of 23, when his occupation was given as carpenter, though he is said at a later date to have carried on a general store selling groceries and drapery. In 1869 Messrs Budge and Black's tender for landing and shipping coals, naval and victualling stores was accepted by the Admiralty and in 1872 he and Alexander Black formed a joint Boating Establishment with E.G. Bowern, having a combined fleet of twenty cargo boats and two dinghies, which sounds a profitable venture. After the death of his first wife in 1874, he married Emma Louw. There were 13 children of the two marriages, not all of them surviving infancy. One daughter, Gertrude Florence, later married William Runciman's younger brother, George.

Budge's name appears frequently in records of Simon's Town affairs over the years. From 1871 to 1896 he was a Churchwarden of St. Frances Anglican Church and was also a Justice of the Peace. In 1876 he was one of the six gentlemen elected to assist the Resident Magistrate in matters relating to the town, his ward being No.6. In 1882 he was elected as one of the first Divisional Councillors for Simon's Town, sharing Ward 1 (the west end) with F.H.S. Hugo and J.E. Storrier. Also in 1882 he was appointed as one of the short-lived Board of Management, which fell away when Simon's Town was declared a Municipality in 1883. 6 Councillors were elected, including Budge, who was in turn elected Chairman (later to be termed Mayor). He was re-elected in 1884-1885 and again 1886-1887. He is credited with being responsible for the establishment of a good drainage system for the town, and for the planting of hundreds of trees, many at his own expense. He also kept accurate rainfall records for many years.

Although he owned Rocklands Farm from 1867 - 1875, he seems to have lived in the Mount Pleasant area. On a street map of 1897 his property is shown to have occupied an entire block, bounded by what were soon to be named Arsenal and Wesley roads and Budge's Lane. A photograph of the time reveals a large flat-roofed house, several outbuildings and a big garden with numerous trees. It was said to be one of the oldest and most commodious houses in the town, but was demolished in the 1960's and the ground now belongs to the S.A. Navy. It was here that he died on 1st September, 1902, at the age of 82.

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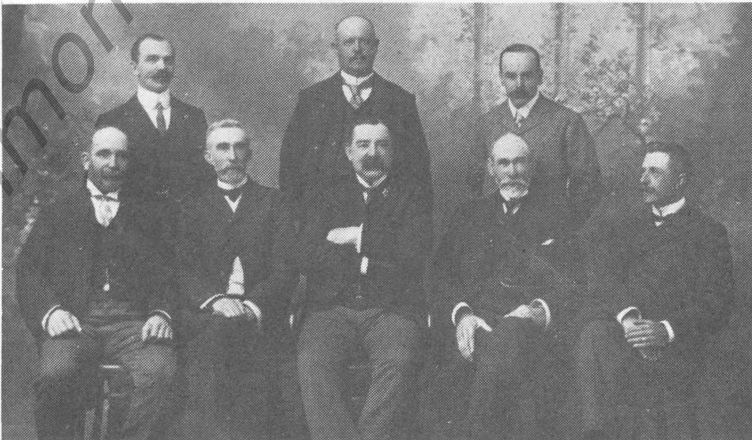
FREDERICK HERMANUS SCHEUN'DORFF HUGO (1841-1902)

"Frikkie" as he was affectionately called was born in Simon's Town the son of Pieter Francois Hugo and Anna Francina Gertruida Hablutzel. He married Charlotte Rebecca Grout (1851-1934) and they had three sons. He grew up in Simon's Town and knew every stone in the place and everybody from the youngest to the oldest. Whilst his opinion often differed on many questions he had always a sincere respect and cheery greeting for all; whether they agreed with him or not. Although he was a rough diamond those who had the privilege to know him intimately, fully realised his worth.

For many years he was associated with public work. To the end of his life he took a keen interest in the affairs of the Dutch Reformed Church especially in the Sunday school. As Vice-Consul he represented France and Denmark. He owned a big bakery and was provisioner to the British Fleet. He was Mayor of the Town for six terms between 1885 and 1902. 1885-86 1890-91 1891-92 1898-99 and he was elected on 19th December 1901 on the resignation of William Runciman and resigned on 5th June 1902 and died in Simon's Town at his residence on Tuesday 2nd September 1902 after suffering for some time from the effects of a paralytic seizure. However throughout his illness he strove manfully to continue to carry out his public duties and after considerable pressure had been brought to bear on him, that he considered a complete change would do him good and he was about to embark on a sea voyage when the end came.

One of his sons was still at school when his father died. At Mr. Hugo's funeral there were three M.P.'s Messrs. Runciman, J.C. Molteno and Graaff. The Consular body was represented by M. Raffray (Consul-General for France) Julius Jeppe (Consul-General for Denmark) and the Consuls for Netherlands and Norway. In addition to members of the Divisional Council, Simon's Town Municipality and Masonic Lodge, the funeral procession was joined by children of the Dutch Reformed Church Sunday School. All businesses were closed as a mark of respect. There was a long string of coaches and Cape carts and many people even walked the trying distance of a hot Thursday afternoon to attend his interment at the family vault.

In one week the Town had lost two of its hard-working and faithful Town Councillors and former Mayors as you will recall that Mr. G.R. Budge had died on 1st September, 1902.



THE
COUNCIL
1905

WILLIAM RUNCIMAN 1858 - 1936

Readers of the Bulletin will recall a very informative Biographical Note on William Runciman written by his great grandson D.W. Runciman which appeared in Vol XII No. 1 in January, 1982 and which described his distinguished career in the course of which he served many terms of office as Mayor i.e. 1888-1889, 1893-1898, 1899-1901, 1902-1904 and 1909-1925. Whilst it is not proposed to re-present this Note in this edition readers will doubtless be interested in a little known incident in which he was involved from which it seems that in addition to being Simon's Town's longest serving Mayor he must surely hold the record for serving the shortest period as Mayor - something well under sixty seconds!

"Mr. Watson in recording the Minutes of the first meeting of the new mayoral year held on 5th August, 1887, in his inimitable fashion describes the scene:

It was proposed that Cllr James E. Storrier take the Chair pro tem for the election. Councillor Runciman was proposed by Cllr A.N. Black. Cllr A.N. Black was proposed by Cllr G.R. Budge and seconded by Cllr Runciman. Cllr Runciman rose and begged the Councillors to be allowed to decline the honour, but his proposer was inexorable. The ballot then proceeded with Cllr Runciman being declared elected. Thereupon Cllr Runciman rose again and thanked the Councillors for the great honour accorded him and then tendered his resignation as he had no time to devote to such an important office. Cllr Black, still being in the field, was thereupon elected as Simon's Town's third Mayor."



Councillor A.N. Black

THE GAY BROTHERS

In 1947 Field-Marshal Smuts remarked that Simon's Town had been a "Gay" town for many years. He was referring of course to the two brothers, Louis and Llewellyn, who both gave outstanding service to the town, each in turn being made a Freeman of Simon's Town.

Their father, Joseph Gay, was born in Pembrokeshire, Wales, in 1853. He served in the Royal Navy for 25 years and was sent to South Africa as a W/O Shipwright Chief Carpenter to assist in the work on the Patent Slipway in Simon's Town. Here he married Janet Thomson, and they had two sons and a daughter, the latter later settling in U.K. The family lived in a cottage near Steenbras Bay until the area was taken over for the Dockyard when they moved to one of the double-storey houses that Joseph had built in the Main Road in Simon's Town a building that still stands. During the First World War the family moved to a house in Seaforth on what is now Gay Road and Joseph Gay continued to work in the Dockyard until his retirement sometime after the end of the War. He is remembered for the model of the flagship HMS ST GEORGE which he helped to build for the celebrations of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, which was used again for King George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935 and is still in existence.

L.C. GAY 1899 - 1967

Lewis Charles Gay was the older son, born in Simon's Town on 14th October 1889. He started his schooling here and continued in Pembroke Wales, when his father returned to England to be paid off from the Royal Navy. He entered the Admiralty service as an apprentice and on the family's return to Simon's Town in 1906 he went into the Dockyard as a shipwright, eventually becoming Chief Draughtsman of the Constructor's office. He married twice, first to Jane Lander of Cape Town in 1915. There were two daughters of this marriage, Gwynneth (now Songhurst) and Beryl (now Lowings). His first wife died in 1930 and in 1932 he married Winifred Parry.

One of his earliest ventures in public service was his formation of the 1st Simon's Town Troop of Boy Scouts in 1907, which was only the third troop to be formed in Southern Africa. Meetings were held in a builders shed near Seaforth Beach belonging to his father. In 1932 he took over Gay's Holiday Camp which had been started by his father and developed it into a small complex of holiday cabins which served the needs of hundreds of visitors to Simon's Town over the next 50 years. The road below the camp was named Gay Road after his father.

He was a member of the Simon's Town Municipal Council for 35 years and was elected Mayor from 1927-1932 and again from 1934-1950. He took an active part in Municipal affairs and was particularly concerned about the provision of an adequate water-supply for the town. The Lewis Gay conservation dam, completed in 1952, is named after him. He also saw the need for extended employment for the local people, and just before World War II persuaded Marine Products to build a factory in Dido Valley, which was then a vacant piece of waste land. In his capacity as Mayor he greeted King George VI and his family during their visit to Simon's Town in 1947 and often entertained other visiting dignitaries. He was Life Vice-President of the Cape Provincial Municipal Association of South Africa and in 1954 he was made the first Freeman of Simon's Town in recognition of his services.

Meantime he had entered the political field, where he was also very successful. In 1910 he was Branch Secretary of the S.A. Party in Simon's Town. Later he served on the Cape Peninsula Council of the United Party and became the M.P. for the South Peninsula Constituency in 1949. His campaign slogan "Be Gay, Think Gay, Talk Gay" was memorable even then. It is fascinating to speculate what slogan he would have used for an election campaign today! While in Parliament he was Chairman of the United Party Defence Group and the Opposition Chief Spokesman on Defence during the years of the Simon's Town Agreement and the Handover to the S.A. Navy. During World War II he had acted as Liaison Officer between the Admiralty, the Royal Navy and the South African Government on harbour and ship repair matters. He also served on the Railways and Harbours Select Committee.

It was to his great credit that he always remained interested in local affairs in spite of his busy and distinguished political career towards the end of which he was made a "Front Bencher". Finally it is fitting to record that at the time of his death in 1967 at the age of 78 he was President of the Simon's Town Historical Society.

L.J.D. GAY 1895 - 1979

Llewellyn James David Gay, the younger son, was born in Simon's Town on 1st March, 1895. He was educated at the Simon's Town School and Rondebosch Boys High School.

His early manhood was overshadowed by World War I. He joined the Cape Garrison Artillery, which was on standby for the campaign in South-West Africa and in 1915 was allowed to volunteer for overseas service. He served in the S.A. (Heavy) Artillery in France and was a survivor of the terrible battle for Vimy Ridge. In later years he became an active member of the M.O.T.H's and in particular of the Snoekie Shellhole.

After demobilisation he returned to South Africa, and spent 10 years on various farms in the Karoo; he also ran a small trading-store in Richmond. In 1925 he married Winifred Page, a school-teacher, who had taught in Cookhouse and in East Griqualand. They had no children. During the depression years he returned to Simon's Town and entered the service of the Simon's Town Municipality in 1932 in the Works Department, where he became Superintendent, while his wife ran the Seaforth Beach Tearoom.

During World War II he was in command of the Civilian Protective Services and performed very useful work in organising Simon's Town's voluntary war services. He felt it was very important to keep contact with the many Royal Navy ships that called in at Simon's Town during the war and in the process made many lasting friendships with their personnel, who remembered him and his wife with affection. He became an indefatigable collector of old Simon's Town relics and was responsible for the establishment of the Warriors Room collection of militaria and for many of the acquisitions of the Simon's Town Museum. He was interested in any organisation that affected the town and was President of the False Bay Conservation Society, Honorary Fire-Warden of the Cape Peninsula Fire Protection Committee, an executive member of the Simon's Town Historical Society and a Trustee of the Simon's Town Museum. His vivid memories dated back to his childhood during the Boer War and he wrote a series of valuable and interesting reminiscences for the Simon's Town Historical Society Bulletin. He was also local correspondent for the "Cape Times" and an inveterate letter-writer.

Like his brother he took an active part in Municipal affairs and was a

Councillor for 16 years. He was elected Mayor from 1963-1966, 1968-1970 and once more in 1975-1976. Simon's Town recognised his long and devoted service by making him its second Freeman in 1976. In his latter years he became resident Warden of the Rotary Camp at Glencairn, which had been left to Rotary in 1942 by Mr. Haines as a holiday camp for children. He and his wife died there within a week of each other in January, 1979.

AND SO.....TO 2083

As the Simon's Town Municipal Council enters the second hundred years of its formal existence it must be a matter of concern to many how much of its work goes unremarked by those it is striving to serve. Such activities as the building of roads, the laying of water and sewerage pipes, the collection of refuse and so on may possibly excite the temper of the local resident but not necessarily his or her imagination. Be that as it may nowadays we turn on a tap and water comes out, we can walk into a dark room and switch on a light, drive home on well lit and tarred roads - a very far cry from the lot of the early residents of Simon's Town who had to contend with primitive sanitation, potholed, dusty and muddy roads, carry their water home in a bucket from the village pump, light their way to bed with a candle or smoky oil lamp. The difficulties they had to endure were seemingly never ending.

To criticize is easy: to achieve is something very different. In spite of all the delays, the setbacks and the frustrations of the past 100 years it is surely fitting to pause if only briefly to pay tribute to the wonderful service of a long procession of councillors and municipal staff who have rarely received the recognition they deserve. As to the future it is important to emphasise one vital aspect which more often than not is overlooked. A Municipal Council is usually the level of government closest to the man-in-the-street (and as the preceding pages show) depending on how it conducts its affairs and how effectively it interacts with those it serves can mean success or failure for the community concerned.



Councillors
Howells
Whyte
and
Hugo

SIMON'S TOWN AND THE UNION-CASTLE LINE

Brian Leathem

There were very few occasions when a vessel of some sort of the Union Line, the Castle Line or - after 1900 - the Union-Castle Line was not to be seen in Table Bay or in the Cape Town Docks. This great Line of ships, which contributed so much towards the building up of South Africa and which operated the finest and most regular and reliable ocean mail service the world has ever known, did however have some connection with Simon's Town over the years and on a number of occasions the ships were to be seen anchored just off the dockyard.

When the contract for the carriage of mail between England and the Cape was drawn up and signed in 1857 by the Union Line and the British Admiralty - which apparently handled such matters in those days - one of the provisions was that mail (and presumably passengers too) could be unloaded in 'Symons Bay' when gale conditions made it difficult and dangerous to do so in Table Bay. However there seems to be no record of the naval port being used for this purpose although there is an account of a voyage in 1862 by a passenger in the 'Dane' who states that the Captain, whilst the ship was experiencing bad weather in the approaches to the Cape, intimated to the passengers that the ship would have to proceed to Simon's Town, but in the event this did not happen.

Great interest was raised in 1879 when the Union Line vessel 'Natal' brought Cetewayo, King of the Zulus, who had been captured in the Zulu War in Natal, to the Cape for imprisonment in the Castle in Cape Town. For various reasons it was decided to land him at Simon's Town and he came ashore there, watched by crowds of people and was taken by road to Cape Town. Incidentally, he brought three wives with him and insisted that they should all be with him when he retired for the night, so that an ordinary cabin was of no use and a kraal had to be erected on deck consisting of a wooden framework covered with tarpaulins.

In 1885 the Union mailship 'Moor' was requisitioned by the British Government (when war with Russia seemed to be in the offing) and went round to Simon's Town for conversion into an auxiliary cruiser. Under the command of Read Admiral Sir Walter Grubbe, she sailed up and down the East coast of Africa for several months.

During the Boer War an incident took place which caused great excitement. One of the newest mailships, the 9,692 ton 'Kildonan Castle' having been requisitioned as a troop transport whilst lying in Cape Town docks, was suddenly in December 1900 rushed round to Simon's Town and rumours got around that a plan had been discovered whereby a large number of Boer prisoners-of-war, who were in a camp near Simon's Town were to be set free by their supporters. The ship arrived at Simon's Town under the command of one of the best-known Union-Castle Captains Captain J.C. Robinson who on this occasion gathered his crew around and told them that it was essential that the prisoners, although enemies, were to be regarded as honourable foes and were to be treated with the utmost kindness and courtesy. The next day some 2,500 Boers went aboard and it was said that the ship was an absolute revelation to them - many had never seen a big ship and the public rooms and cabins of this, at that time, modern mailship, amazed them. They soon settled down, had baths which they all badly needed and received permission from the Captain, who indeed encouraged them, to hold services on deck twice a day, at which they sang psalms which echoed round the Bay. Capt. Robinson held regular church services

for his crew - he was a most religious man - and some of the prisoners even asked if they could attend these English services as well. The 'Kildonan Castle' was there for six weeks, always under the guns of HMS Doris and it was said that those aboard, Boer prisoners and English crew members, became one big family, all getting on extremely well with each other. Queen Victoria died during this period and the Boers sent a deputation to the Captain to express their sympathy and regrets.

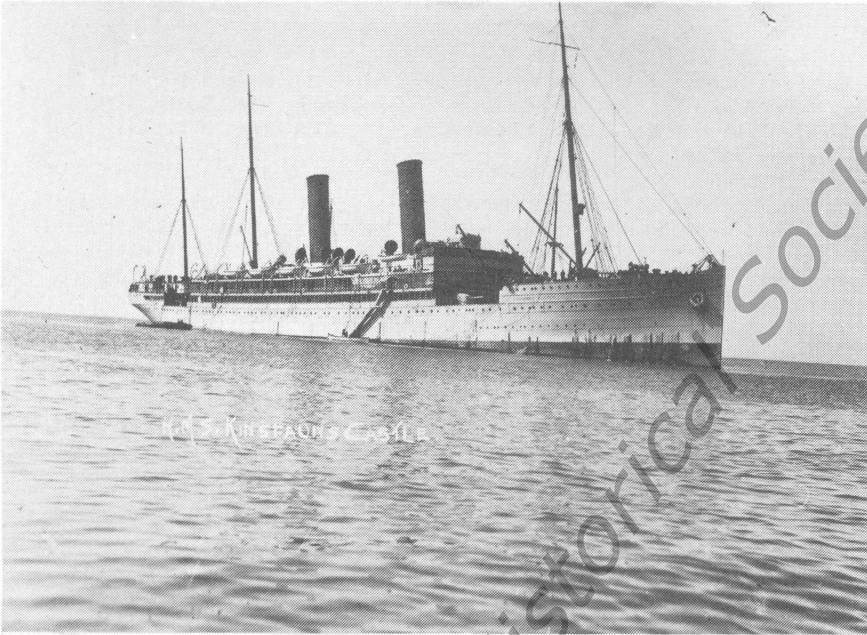
At the end of 1907 the Union-Castle Line announced that regular day-long cruises from Cape Town to Simon's Town were to be arranged during the summer season and the first of these excursion steamers was the Intermediate vessel 'Goorkha' which left Cape Town docks at 10 a.m. on the 7th December 1907 crowded out with 500 passengers. The cost of the trip was 12/6d which included the voyage round to Simon's Town, a first class luncheon and the rail fare back from Simon's Town to Cape Town. These trips were exceedingly popular and were held regularly for some years by such vessels as the 'Galeka' 'Galician' and 'Garth' and 'Grantully' Castles. In 1910 however the 'Grantully Castle' with 200 trippers aboard, duly sailed round to Simon's Town but unfortunately was caught in a violent south-easter raging in False Bay and was unable to disembark her passengers until the next day. Arrangements had to be made to feed and accommodate everybody overnight and the vessel was considerably delayed. As a result of this and also the fact that interest in the trips was not as great as formerly, the Union-Castle Co. decided to suspend them, so Simon's Town saw the lilac-hulled and red-funnelled ships no more. However, a Union-Castle vessel, mailship this time, the 'Balmoral Castle', did go to Simon's Town in late 1910 but she did not have a normal mailship funnel, but sported two yellow stacks. She had been taken over by the British Admiralty for one voyage to convey the new Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, the Duke of Connaught (brother to the late King Edward VII) and his party and during the royal functions which followed in Cape Town - opening of Parliament etc - the 'Balmoral Castle' lay off Simon's Town.

A number of ships were requisitioned at the beginning of the Great War in 1914 for conversion to Armed Merchant Cruisers and, being under the White Ensign, they were of course based at 'Simon's Town. These included the 'Kinfauns Castle' and the 'Armada Castle'. The former, it is interesting to note, was provided with a hydroplane at Simon's Town, which was a great novelty at the time and which was used in the search for the German cruiser 'Koningsberg' in East Africa.

When the 'Carnarvon Castle' was requisitioned at Cape Town a few days after the commencement of World War II in September 1939, she was sent round to Simon's Town for conversion to a fighting ship, an Armed Merchant cruiser. Her exploits in the battle with a German raider, using her 8.6 inch guns, are well known.

Over the years other Union-Castle ships were to be seen at Simon's Town on odd occasions, sent round to discharge or load special cargo, usually naval. But the red funnel, alas, will never be seen there again - the great Union-Castle ships sail no more.

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On the left of the photograph is Mr J.E.Mar-Gerrison who was then on the staff of Admiral Charlton at Admiralty House who went on to become the Master of Admiralty Tugs St. Dogmael and the Briton.

story page 26

The German mine on display at Admiralty House, Simon's Town March 1918, before being sent to Gen.Botha in Pretoria in May 1918.

COMEDY OF A MINE

BOER FARMER OPENS IT WITH A TIN-OPENER.

An amusing story of the adventures of a mine, which was found by a Boer farmer and his son on the shore near Elands Bay, South Africa, and which was opened with a tin opener, is told in an official report to the Admiralty.

When the mine was discovered the farmer and his son first unscrewed a large brass cap and some pulley wheels. They then rolled the receptacle into the sea, filled it up through the hole with salt water, and screwed back the brass cap. As Mr. Louw and his son lifted the receptacle into their cart a substance resembling brown tar began to trickle out (T.N.T. softened by the sun). They lighted the substance with a match, and the result so seriously frightened them that they left the cart in the vicinity and told the local policeman. When the Constable came with them at a later date the mechanism of the thing (as he termed it) did not excite his interest, so he rolled it into the bushes and covered it with branches and riet (reeds). It remained there until an officer from the flagship arrived to collect the parts.

From this officer's report (the official story proceeds) it is clear that Mr. Abraham Louw and his son Gert had (previously to becoming frightened) thoroughly, if not tactfully, dismantled the mine. The primer was apparently opened with a tin opener. Such portions of the horns of the mine as the officer eventually induced Mr. Louw and his friends to disgorge proved to have been cut off with a hammer and cold chisel. It also transpired that the flame from the burning T.N.T. rising some 200 ft frightened the inhabitants on the coast, so that the wiser ones took refuge in the hills, and others sought safety under their beds. Mr. Louw after some persuasion eventually confessed that he had mistaken the thing for a new kind of boiler used in the manufacture of wireless telegraphy.

1. The above from "The Daily Graphic", London Wednesday May 8, 1918. Kindly donated by Mrs. Mar-Gerrison, whose husband was at that time on the staff of Admiral Charlton. The mine was brought to Simon's Town and rested for some years in the garden at Admiralty House. It had been laid at sea by the raider 'Wolf'.
2. The incident took place in January 1918. It is also reported that Mr. Louw before the "fire" was the proud possessor of a red beard which he lost in the flames!

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LIFE AT THE RESIDENCY, SIMON'S TOWN IN, THE EIGHTEENHUNDREDS.

Submitted by Margaret Cairns.

The writer of the following letters was Anne Frances Josephine Tredgold (born Nicholson). She was born at Hondeklip Bay in 1864 and died at Hayle, Cornwall, in 1943. She was the first cousin of Mrs. Cairns mother.

Since conditions at Hondeklip were extremely rough & not suitable for a young child her parents John Granville Nicholson and his wife Ellen Shaw, about 1868 sent little Fanny, as she was known, down to Cape Town to live with Ellen's sister, Frances, wife of Frederick William Burrowes, magistrate of Simon's Town 1865 - 1876, who was then living at the Residency. The letters written to Mrs. Cairns sister and herself in 1938 and 1939 provide two vignettes of the Simon's Town of over a hundred years ago.

"22nd February 1939. It is so strange to think of you at Simon's Town and interested in my old haunts. I went there when I was four years old and left when fourteen, but it was a very different place in those days. It was a real 'Naval Station' and there was no South African Navy. Generally there was a flagship and one vessel stationed there and a few coming in for a while, also dockyard houses for the store-keeper, chief engineer, the staff commander, and the Royal Naval Hospital with the resident staff surgeon, assistant surgeon and the chaplain in the three houses in line. We lived at the Residency as uncle Frederick Burrowes was resident magistrate and civil commissioner.

The Residency lies between the smaller dockyard and the English church, the Main Road lay behind us below the jail. The Court and our house were at each end of the same stoep with a big sweeping flight of stone steps up to them. Our garden was in front of the house and down to our own beach; to the left was the battery and beyond that the Admiral's garden etc. As the officers who came out brought their wives but generally left any children in England I was, as a rule, the only child in our little circle and was often 'borrowed' for a visit. I spent many happy holidays in those six naval houses in my time and also, many grown-up holidays too as old friends often came back on promotion.

The house you mention, 'L'Esperance' opposite the Catholic church was also nearly always occupied by friends, old Captain Nightingale was one. His granddaughter, Mrs. Beatrice Brownley, must still be at the Cape. She wrote poems and was a friend of mine. Uncle left Simon's Town to become Collector of Customs for the whole Colony. NOTE: Captain Thomas Nightingale, former Harbour Master of Simon's Town died in Portsea, England, in December 1865, so Fanny herself could not have known him. However, probably he and Burrowes were acquainted even before the appointment of the latter to Simon's Town. "

"22nd August, 1938. I wonder if you ever heard of my refusing to dance with our later King (George V)? I was seventeen and a half and staying with friends in the Dockyard, Simon's Town - Captain and Mrs. Rowe. I was down there especially for a week's gaiety, regatta, etc. That was in 1881 when the two princes visited South Africa in the Bacchante. Both the Bacchante and the Inconstant gave a dance to officers as well to private folk. In those days Bishop Leonard (2) was at St. Mary's and there were very rigid rules about 'fast dances'. It was awful when one could dance only the two squares of the evening and had to sit out the rest and Ella (3) just gave up going. I was not yet 'Out' but was

allowed to go to these afternoon dances. Prince George came up to me and asked me for a waltz. I replied that I was not allowed to dance them. A girl had just been very rude to his brother, the Duke of Clarence, as when he asked her for a dance she refused 'as she hadn't been introduced' and I am afraid that Prince George just misunderstood what I said. I was sitting quite near the band. He bowed stiffly and walked away. You can imagine how sad and worried I was. Later on their tutor, a school friend of Captain Rowe's spoke to him about my refusal and Captain Rowe gave him the true facts. The Prince sent his apologies and asked permission to send me his crest which came the day that they sailed. This was the end of my week there. On my return I told Aunt (Mrs. Burrowes) that I was not going to Government House at all and she then told me that round or fast dancing was not banned by the church as I had thought but by the Bishop and although she herself refrained from it she left it entirely to my discretion. So when I was introduced I DID dance and then shivered each Lent when the priest reading the regulations came to 'those fast and improper dances so repugnant to Christian morals'. This was read slowly, word by word, with eyes fixed on Cecilia (4), Miss Henderson and me. It was awful. The crested envelopes are still in Ray's (5) possession."

References:

1. Bishop John Leonard, Roman Catholic Bishop of Cape Town.
2. Ella, her eldest sister, who kept a school at Rondebosch.
3. Cecilia Burrowes, niece of Frederick's.
4. Ralph Henry Tredgold, her only son.

Note: Although this article has already been published in STHS Bulletin Vol.IV No. 4 of July 1967, we felt that in view of the Museum's pending move to the Residency it would be appropriate to publish the article again.

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PRINCE PHILIP'S CONNECTION WITH SIMON'S TOWN

In the cemetery at Dido Valley, Glencairn, is a large flat tombstone which reads:

"Emily L. Roose died 9/8/1933. In loving and deeply grateful remembrance of 25 years devoted friendship and service from Prince and Princess Andrew of Greece and their children Margaretha, Theodora, Cecile, Sophie and Philip"

Miss Roose died in Simon's Town. The Royal family sent out a tombstone and someone from the British High Commission organised its delivery and erection on the grave.

Emily's sister Miriam was married to the father of Reg. Slater who for many years was employed in the West Dockyard. Emily's brother John Henry Roose arrived here from Portsmouth in 1903 to work in the Dockyard and married Edith Bruce. Their youngest son Herbert Henry still lives in Simon's Town. We are grateful to him for the above information.

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THE EARLY DAYS OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, KALK BAY.

R.R. Langham-Carter.

In my account of the beginnings of the Anglican community in Kalk Bay (vol XII.2., July 1982) I ended by reporting the arrival there in 1878 of the three ladies who would be the founders of the present church.

The facts about one of them are quite clear and those on the other two are still unfortunately, rather obscure. Miss Alice Pocklington was born on 10 August 1832. Her father was a Rector in Essex and Burke's Landed Gentry shows that the family was a long established one, with its main seat at Chelworth Hall in Suffolk. She probably taught in church schools in England in her younger days. She died in Ealing, Middlesex, on 30 June 1908.

Harriet and Charlotte Humphreys are said to have lived in Hampshire or in Bristol. They named a road on their Kalk Bay property Prenton Street. Prenton is a small town in Cheshire but I have been unable to trace them in any of these counties.

The movements of all three women in South Africa, at any rate, are well known. When Robert Gray the first bishop of Cape Town was in England in 1868 he recruited some ladies to start a sisterhood of church workers in his diocese, among them Harriet Humphreys and Alice Pocklington. He and his party sailed from Plymouth in the SAXON on 10 October 1868 and reached Table Bay on 11 November.

The ladies come to Kalk Bay

The eight members of the St. George's Sisterhood took up their abode in Plein Street in Cape Town and began their work. Harriet and Alice, however, soon fell ill and went to recuperate in Bishop Gray's cottage in Kalk Bay. They found the climate there suited them better than Cape Town's and there was plenty of church work waiting to be done, in particular among the coloured fishermen. Harriet bought their first land there in May 1870, this and their subsequent land purchases being detailed in my article in this Bulletin Vol. XI.3 of January 1981. Alice found that the mission school building was delapidated and the numbers had fallen to only 25 pupils. She took over charge from the aged teacher and soon raised the enrollments to 60 and later to no less than 97. She and Harriet erected a new school building in December 1871 and she was soon also operating an infant school, a Sunday school and also a night school for the children's parents.

Proposals to build a church

The village was growing fast and was no longer just a settlement of fishermen. Bishop Gray had a seaside cottage there and the Governor of the Cape and other distinguished folk often stayed in it. Wealthy Capetonians had begun to build further cottages. A large and handsome church was needed to supplement the small school chapel. The ladies obtained estimates of the cost, worked out what they themselves could afford and asked their relatives and friends in England to make up the balance.

Miss Pocklington returned overseas to collect further funds and to discuss matters with the selected architect. Accompanied this time by Charlotte Humphreys and by 'Master Dalebrook' (as the passenger list in the Cape Archives calls him), she left Southampton in the SAXON on 11 December 1872 and reached Cape Town on 16 January 1873. When Harriet

Humphreys built her home in Kalk Bay she named it Dalebrook House and it seems likely that the Dalebrooks were relatives or friends who had made a donation for the church or for the hospital which she planned to establish in her home. Hitherto the village had been served by visiting clergy from Cape Town or Simon's Town. The ladies wanted to maintain a resident priest. They therefore set aside a sum to form an endowment to pay his salary and after Bishop Gray's death in September 1872 Charlotte was able to buy his cottage in the following May to serve as a parsonage.

The erection of the church.

The London architect Henry Woodyear had been asked to design the church and when his plans and working drawings had been received and sufficient cash was in hand tenders were called for and the contract was awarded to John Gaisford of Westerford in Newlands. Gray's son-in-law Edward Glover, who had often stayed in Bishop's Cottage and conducted services in the old chapel, laid the foundation stone at 3.3p.m. on Saturday 23 August 1873 in the presence of Edward Judge the rector of Simon's Town (whose parish included Kalk Bay) and such others who were willing to brave a rather wet and cold winter day.

Glover soon left for England where he reported progress to Woodyear. They probably discussed the most suitable furnishings for the church, some of which are known to have been designed by the architect and others to have been purchased by Glover. Most of them are still in Holy Trinity and help to make it the charming Victorian period piece that it is. They are described in detail in an article of mine in 'Antiques in South Africa' no.8, Winter 1981 and the church's architecture in my article in 'The Architect and Builder' of May 1981 and need not be described again here.

The consecration

The church was probably completed in about November 1873 and services would have been held in it whenever a visiting priest was available. There was, however, no bishop to consecrate it until Gray's successor William West Jones arrived at the Cape on 31 August 1874. One of his earliest engagements was to drive down to Kalk Bay in a Cape cart with his sister and two clergy on Tuesday 29 September. The congregation were already in the building and the beach in front of it was covered with their carriages and carts. The bishop consecrated the church to the Holy Trinity and then consecrated the churchyard. After a lunch hosted by the three ladies he visited the school where he talked with 120 students of the day and night schools who were present. Judge then drove him off to spend the night at the rectory in Simon's Town.

The Nicholls' tragedy.

A fitting which arrived only after the consecration was the marble font, designed by Woodyear, which still graces the church. The font commemorates a sad event. George John Nicholls the manager of the Colonial Bank in Cape Town and a resident of Rondebosch had rented a cottage called The Homestead at St. James. He and his three daughters went down to Danger Beach on 7 January 1874 and the girls went for a swim. They were, however, carried out to sea by the backwash of the waves. When their father (who was a non-swimmer) saw they were in difficulties he ran to some fishermen and promised them large sums to rescue his daughters. They had to fetch a boat and by the time they reached the girls two had been drowned. Nicholls nevertheless rewarded them handsomely. The font was presented by the bereaved father and his

brothers Charles, William and Henry.

The first resident minister

At long last on 24 September 1877, Holy Trinity received its first fulltime clergyman in the person of James Baker (1821-1902). When Kalk Bay was constituted as an independant parish he became its first rector and continued as such until 1896. Baker had practised medicine before he was ordained and, as there was then no doctor nearer than Simon's Town, six miles away along a very bad road, he rendered valuable services to the sick of his parish whom he treated entirely free of charge. Baker was not however to enjoy the support of the foundresses for long. As all three of them continued to be in poor health, they had to sell all their properties and they returned to England in December 1877. Their sojourn had been greatly appreciated and when Baker extolled their achievements in the service in September of that year which celebrated the third anniversary of the church's consecration the magazine 'Church News' reported that "many a moist eye among the listeners showed better than words how thorough and loving their work has been." They left a well established community behind them. I hope to relate the subsequent history of the parish in a later article.

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PASSING OF AN OLD TIME SIGNAL - THE 9 p.m. GUN AT SIMON'S TOWN

A century-old association is to be broken in Simon's Town by the abolition of the 9 o'clock gun. For nearly 100 years it has been the practice, every night during the Commander-in-Chief's presence in port, for the guard ship of the day to fire a gun at 9 p.m. This has grown to be accepted as a standard time signal for regulating the time of the district.

When the gun signal was first introduced, in the days when the Africa Squadron consisted of three-deckers, it was fired at 8 p.m. and warned all and sundry that all communication with the shore was suspended until sunrise the following morning.

About 40 years ago the gun was the official signal for closing all the public houses in Simon's Town.

As its echoes rumbled around the hills, the bluejackets hurriedly swallowed their last bottle and raced for the Town Pier, where duty boats were waiting to take them aboard. Any bar found open after the gun had fired was put out of bounds. Later still, during the Great War, the 9 o'clock gun was the signal for "Lights out" in all the streets, and after it was fired nobody was allowed out of doors unless they held a permit issued by the magistrate.

Linked with various chapters of the history of the Union's naval port, the 9 o'clock gun has been abolished as a result of the introduction of more modern and efficient means of broadcasting a time signal through the fleet. Among the older residents of the town, however, the breaking of this link with the old days is keenly regretted.

From "The Cape Times" 10 January, 1934.

NEW LIGHTHOUSE AT CAPE POINT - FOUNDATION STONE LAYING

Cape Point I suppose has never before witnessed such a gathering as that which assembled there on Saturday, by invitation of the South African Railways and Harbours Administration, to take part in the ceremony of laying the foundation memorial stone by Sir Thomas Price KCMG of the new Cape Point lighthouse.

The weather conditions were perfect for such a long drive - the majority of the officials and guests motoring all the way from Cape Town - and although the occupants of the vehicles, whether motor cars or the more humble but not to be despised Cape carts, had to endure considerable jolting, travelling along the veldt, yet the trip was one of real enjoyment and proved a pleasurable experience which few would forgo. Mr. G.J. Boyes, Magistrate and Port Officer, made all the arrangements for transport of the guests and with a view of conveying those who came by motor car from Cape Town, he had sent on three Cape carts drawn by four horses each to the convict station at Smitswinkel.

Simon's Town guests, with the exception of Mr. W. Runciman, MLA and Miss Runciman, who went on horseback, left Simon's Town about 8.50 in two Cape carts and were enabled to enjoy the beauties of the coastline as unfolded by the new road to Smitswinkel. This drive, occupying one hour, was delightful in the early morning and the occupants had nothing but praise for those through whose influence the road was commenced and also for those who have cut the road out of the solid mountain.

When nearing the foot of the ascent to the convict station there opened out a splendid view of the distant Cape Point and lighthouse with the sun shining brightly on the Point showing up every detail. Just here the first motor car raced past, followed shortly by four others containing all the Cape Town party. On the top of the hill where the convict station stands, a short halt was made to transfer the occupants of the cars to the Cape carts. After some discussion, however, it was decided that all the cars would go as far as they could and if they could not manage to reach the Point the carts could come along and pick up the passengers.

CARTSY. CARS.

The road for some distance after leaving the convict station was very good and naturally the cars soon covered the ground and were out of sight. But by and by there were evidences that some of the cars were making hard work of it. On account of the sandy track they had to make a road of their own, and the first car was overtaken near Smith's farm, the owner, Mr. Cooper wisely deciding, with Mr. Salmon, Assistant General Manager, S.A. Railways and Harbours, to leave his car in safety and go by cart. Other cars could be seen in the distance scouting and the two empty carts were sent in their direction in case of need, but eventually all four cars were seen together a mile ahead on the hard road on the last lap to the Point. When nearing the objective a very bad bit of road was encountered by the cars and as this was on the mountain side, no deviation could be made, and they had to go through deep sandy ruts. To overcome some of the worst places the drivers broke off bushes and placed them under the wheels to get a grip, but before they could all get through the two foremost carts overtook them and had to wait while the men gave a helping push to get them through. The two Administration cars made splendid work of it and easily surmounted every obstacle and raced up the steep incline right up to the Point. These two cars had two extra wheels clamped on the rear wheels so each of these two cars had six wheels.

After leaving Smitswinkel the flagship Hyacinth was observed coming out from Simon's Bay on her way to Walfisch Bay and her progress was watched with considerable interest until Paulsberg mountain hid her from sight. When nearing the Point however, the flagship again appeared to view, having rounded the Point and was then passing the noted Bellows Rock.

A PERILOUS DESCENT

After all the guests had reached the summit of the Point at about one o'clock, the party proceeded down to the site of the new lighthouse, which was reached by means of a narrow path, then by a rope-guarded steep descent, then by ladders down a precipice, from which one false step would send a person dashing to the bottom hundreds of feet below. After the ladders came a narrow path again with a rope secured to the rocks as a handrail and the nervous ones required something of this kind to give them confidence in negotiating this dangerous path.

Arrived at the site, which was bedecked with flags, Sir Thomas Price, KCMG was handed a silver trowel, with which he laid the tablet of the foundation-stone of the new lighthouse, which is well under construction. In a few words Sir Thomas referred to the causes which led to the erection of a new lighthouse, and he also referred to the many obstacles which had to be overcome before the work was started. The new lighthouse which is to be an up-to-date one, will be a dioptric flashlight of 5000,000 candle power, and will be 500 feet below and about half a mile beyond the existing lighthouse, which is 800 feet above sea level. The range of which the light of the new lighthouse can be seen is estimated at 24 miles, and the completed structure will cost £8000. Of course, the principal reason why a new lighthouse is being constructed is that the existing light is so high that in many cases ships cannot see it on account of a fog on a lower level.

MR. COOPER'S WORK

In the course of his remarks Sit Thomas Price stated that the present Admiral's father was instrumental in getting the present lighthouse installed 60 years ago and arrangements had been made that when this lighthouse is completed the first ship to be signalled from it will be one of His Majesty's ships. The speaker went on to pay a tribute of praise to the members of the lighthouse Commission, who in 1906 investigated the matter of the lighting of our coasts with the result that a light is being placed at this point and one at Slangkop.

Sit Thomas thought that the name of Mr. Cooper, lighthouse Engineer, ought to be commemorated in connection with this work, for he preached the gospel of work, and not only preached but practiced it, with the result that those under him were always willing to work and looked up to him as an example as well as their superior officer and friend. Mr. Cooper was a distinct asset of the Union, and he hoped that his sterling worth would be recognised and his name commemorated by the general manager in connection with the work. The Lighthouse Commission thought a scheme for this lighthouse impracticable, but Mr. Cooper thought otherwise and as a feat of lighthouse building this work has not been surpassed anywhere and it stands out as one of the great lighthouse constructions of the world.

The speaker went on to say that the lighthouse is to cost £8000 and when he told them that £5000 of this was being spent overseas for fittings, lights, etc., they would see that its local cost would only be £3000 and how Mr. Cooper could do the work for the money he could not understand.



ON THE ROAD TO CAPE POINT !

Sir Thomas having placed the tablet in position declared the stone well and truly laid. Mr. Cooper in thanking Sir Thomas for his kind remarks stated that the reason why the work was costing so little was the fact that he received assistance from everyone. His foreman of works was the lighthouse keeper and he himself did the rigger work, and a great many things he borrowed from here and there for the work which he forgot to return. Mr. Runciman, the member for Simon's Town and Mr. Boyes, the Magistrate and Port Officer, had rendered him very great assistance in his preliminary investigations and since, and he thanked those gentlemen very heartily. This brought the ceremony to a close and the guests retraced their steps very gingerly until they reached the top, where a magnificent view was obtained of the existing lighthouse, rising 800 feet up the sheer cliff, and Cape of Good Hope and Cape Maclear on the left.

A capital lunch was laid in the shed where the rocket apparatus and wagon are stored, and full justice was done to the good things provided after being subjected to the keen bracing air for so many hours. During this repast Sir Thomas Price made another little speech, and was followed by Mr. McEwan, Mr. Searle, Mr. Runciman, Mr. Boyes and Mr. L. Mansergh,

Provincial Secretary.

Among those present were Sir Thomas Price, KCMG, Sir Thomas Hyslop, Mr. T.S. McEwan, Mr. H. Salmon (Assistant General Manager S.A.R.), Mr. L Mansergh, Mr. W. Runciman, MLA, Mr. G.J. Boyes (Magistrate and Port Officer), Mr. F. Findlay, Mr. T.M. Berrange (Secretary to the Railway Board), Mr. Cooper (Lighthouse Engineer), Mr. W. Cullinan, R.N. (Secretary to the C-in-C) and Mrs. Cullinan, Engineer-Captain and Mrs. Kingsnorth (H.M. Dockyard), Lady Hyslop, Mrs. Findlay, sen., Mrs. F. Findlay, Mrs. G.J. Boyes, Mrs. W.W. Hoy (wife of the General Manager of S.A.R. & H), Mrs. T.M. Berrange, Miss Salmon and Miss Runciman.

THE RETURN

After visiting the present lighthouse and inscribing their names in the visitors' book, the party turned their back on Cape Point and started for home. Admiral King-Hall had very kindly telephoned to the Point inviting the party to stop at Admiralty House to tea, but in accepting members did not bargain for stoppages en route, and when Simon's Town was reached by the last of the party it was nearly 7 p.m. and long past tea-time. On the homeward journey the Cape carts certainly had the best of the bargain, as a couple of the cars gave trouble and necessitated the others stopping every now and again either to keep the rear cars in view or to render assistance, which was done on several occasions.

Considering the kind of country the cars had to travel over it was a marvel that they all did so well; but the front car, belonging to the Administration, evoked admiration by the manner in which it covered the ground, steering clear of the rocks and bumping and jumping over grassy portions of the veld, now swallowed up by bushes and appearing again a long distance ahead.

The ladies in the Cape carts had a bit of shaking, and were thrown against each other or against the sides of the cart as the wheels negotiated this rock and that stump, but it was all taken in good part as a portion of the day's enjoyment; but nevertheless they had the satisfaction of reaching Smitswinkel first, although the cars left the Point with a flourish, their occupants waving "good-byes" to their seemingly less fortunate friends.

A curio was picked up on the beach by one of the drivers, in the shape of an unfledged little sea-bird in a large weather-beaten limpet shell, looking for all the world like a nest. The bird was brought along by one of the cars, but it is hardly possible for it to survive.

(As reported by the Simon's Town Correspondent for The Cape Argus, on Monday, 27th April, 1914.)

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THE CLARENCE HOTEL, SIMON'S TOWN

H.C. Willis

The Clarence Hotel was the name of the British Hotel for the period of about fifteen years when it was under the proprietorship of Mr. John Joslin Clarence. The story of Mr. Clarence is a bit confusing. His name crops up here and there with little to connect the incidents. He was just one of the worthy, and sometimes not so worthy, gentlemen who kept one of the numerous hotels and taverns in Simon's Town. It must be said however that Clarence's Hotel was the biggest hotel in the place and had an excellent reputation.

In the Cape Town Gazette of 9th June, 1821, John Clarence advertised that he had opened 'The Crown and Anchor Tavern' and "Begg to inform his Friends, and the Public in general, that every attention will be paid to the Comforts of such as may favour him with their Custom; and hopes, by assiduity, to merit a share of the Public Favor". He had leased the property from Louis Hove for Rds. 150 per month and purchased it outright on 1st November, 1823, for 30,000 guilders.

In December 1822 Clarence incurred the displeasure of the Pachters of the Wine and Spirit Licence of the Simon's Town area and for some reason they refused to supply him with spirits. He appealed for help to the Resident, Captain Henry Somerset, stating 'I cannot now procure a drop of Spirits in this place. I have been twice taken sick and pain in my Bowels, last evening particularly I sent 25 Rixdollars and requested the Pachter to sell me a gallon for my own use being ill but he would not... I sent twice to the British Hotel but could not procure any, Mr. Oddy saying he dare not sell it to me. I suffered greatly and would have been glad of a little warm Brandy and Water.' The Pachter must with some reason have suspected that a gallon of brandy was rather more than one man could need purely for medicinal purposes.

The Resident took a more sympathetic view of the matter and, in referring the matter to the Colonial Secretary, said "Mr. Clarence is a hardworking deserving man. He has been at considerable expense in furnishing his house and it has the character of being an excellent hotel but he is losing his custom being able to furnish no other wines than foreign wines and foreign beer." He requested that Mr. Clarence be given permission to obtain Cape Wines and French Brandy from the General Pachter in Cape Town.

Clarence eventually sold the 'Crown and Anchor' property in August 1832, and it later became known as "The Masonic Hotel". It is now occupied by a bank, right opposite the entrance to the Post Office. Clarence, however, must have become the proprietor of the British Hotel much earlier. Giving evidence in a court case in October 1826, a Mr. Richard Howell deposed that he was on the stoep of Mr. Clarence, keeper of the British Hotel in company with Captain Coleman of the ship 'Ratcliffe' and Mr. Clarence.

On the other hand, in September 1824 Mr. Oddy published an advertisement in the 'The South African Chronicle and Mercantile Advertiser' indignantly denying a report in the previous issue of the newspaper of 'the falling in of that fine building, The British Hotel, kept by Mr. Oddy.

It appears from these two items that Mr. Clarence must have become proprietor of The British Hotel between September 1824 and October 1826. In 'The South African Directory Advertiser' for 1831, there is the following advertisement:-

CLARENCE HOTEL, SIMON'S TOWN

John Clarence

most respectfully returns his sincere thanks to the Officers of the Navy, Merchants of the Town, and the Public, for the liberal patronage he has experienced during the last ten years and begs leave to inform them that his old established house, The British Hotel, will in future be called "CLARENCE HOTEL", and to prevent mistakes, all Letters, Parcels, etc. for him, or entrusted to his charge, should be directed as above.
December 15, 1830.

Eleven years later the following notice was published in the Government Gazette:-

NOTICE

The undersigned begs leave to acquaint the Public in general, that the House hitherto known by the name of Clarence's Hotel, at Simon's Town, will in future be conducted by himself, under the name of "THE BRITISH HOTEL".

H. GREEN.

The House and Erf, which became the British Hotel, had been bought by John Osmond on 6th October 1817, for 65,000 guilders at the Public Sale of the Insolvent Estate of Gerhardus Hurter. Osmond let the house and premises belonging to it to Mr. Joseph Langley for the space of three years certain at the rate of 220 Rix-dollars per month from 1st April 1818. Presumably he also leased the property to Messrs. Oddy and Clarence; the latter would hardly have dared to change the name as he did if he had been employed by Osmond to run the hotel.

The position scarcely changed when John Osmond sold the property to Hugh Green on 15th September 1841 for Two thousand four hundred pounds sterling. Of this sum four hundred pounds was to be paid off at the rate of one hundred pounds per annum for four years, starting on 1st January 1843, the remaining Two thousand pounds was to remain on mortgage. When John Osmond's will was proved in July 1847, £1,500 was still outstanding on the mortgage. Hugh Green died in 1855 and thereafter the property passed through many hands. It was practically rebuilt in 1898 and has recently been converted into flats.

The earliest mention so far found is in a letter from the Resident J.H. Brand, to the Colonial Secretary, dated 5th September 1819, in which he states that he has been obliged to remove the Rev. Erskine and family to the British Hotel owing to the dangerous state of the Parsonage House.

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THE STORM OF FRIDAY 13TH MARCH, 1857.

On Saturday intelligence was received in Cape Town that Simon's Town was flooded, and we regret to hear that it was too true.

A water-spout burst in the vicinity of Simon's Town causing great destruction to property and even danger to life.

The following particulars have been supplied by a gentleman who arrived on Saturday morning, per mail-cart, from Simon's Bay: Yesterday afternoon the weather which on the previous day had been thick and cloudy, portended a coming storm.

Vivid flashes of lightning, accompanied by startling claps of thunder, continued during the evening: and about 11 o'clock, a strong gale of wind and rain blew into False Bay, from the south-east.

The oldest inhabitants of Kalk Bay assure us that within their recollection no storm of equal violence has ever visited them.

The rain ran down in torrents from the hills, carrying with it immense quantities of sand; and at present the cove occupied as a fishery at Kalk Bay is one immense sandplain.

The roads are also cut up very much; and it was with great difficulty the mail cart, and travelling riders, obtained a passage. For some hours, in fact, the roads were blocked up.

At Simon's Bay it is supposed a water-spout burst over the mountain at the back of the town; and in a short time, the inhabitants of the dwelling houses situate on the face of the hills were made aware of the danger which threatened them above and around.

Almost the whole of the houses were flooded. Families were startled out of their sleep to find their rooms inundated, and their dwellings surrounded by roaring torrents, which carried away everything obstructing their course.

From the Wesleyan Chapel on the face of the hill to the houses, butters and trenches were formed which surpass in their depth and extent anything which human skill could execute in the course of a week.

The residence of the Rev Canon Judge was over-flooded, the inmates greatly inconvenienced and most of the furniture damaged.

When our informant left, The Rev Canon was busily engaged along with some assistants, in bringing forth so much of the furniture as could with facility be removed. The premises of Mr. Lancaster, naval contractor, also received much damage and his kraal and poultry-yard partly demolished. Mr. Vincent's residence (the property of Mr. A. Rennie) was also injured; and Messrs Martin, Huskison, Boweru, Morden and others were each more or less sufferers.

The various thoroughfares of the town were completely overlaid with gravel and stones, carried by the rain from the mountain side. Yesterday we received the following from our own correspondent.

"Our little town is in a sad state. It was visited on Friday as you were informed on Saturday, with a fearful storm of wind and rain accompanied with lightning and thunder. The storm was at its heights at half-past 11. The wind was blowing from the south east- and the storm that did all the damage came on instantaneously.

It is impossible for me to convey to you anything like the correct idea of the occurrence for nothing like it ever occurred here before. I cannot therefore compare it with anything I have ever seen. It was like a thousand of heavy streams rolled into one and poured down upon us. The water came down, not like rain, but as if the clouds had emptied themselves entirely, and thrown the whole weight of water upon this town at once.

The road over the mountains (the Red Hill road) is now impassable deep ruts and large stones rendering passage for wagons impossible. It is to be hoped the Divisional Council will turn their attention to this road, as soon as the Bill is passed vesting the Simon's Town toll in them. In the meantime, the farmers will again have to turn to and render the road as passable as they can, as they always have done, notwithstanding a toll stares them in the face on their entering the town."

(From The Cape Argus of 125 years ago Wednesday 18th March, 1857.
Kindly donated by Mr. G.J. Wilson).

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THE STREETS OF SIMON'S TOWN

The streets throughout the town are in a very shameful state, and it can excite no wonder that the inhabitants should have agitated the question of tolls in the Divisional Council and elsewhere. Those of the agriculturists in the neighbourhood who send produce into the town, are compelled to pay toll, whilst no road is afforded them. Their money has passed for years into the hands of the Road Board. The Road Board does nothing for these men, nor for Simon's Town. The Simon's Town inhabitants are compelled to pay if they ride across their beaches, whilst they get no return. The Road Board has no claim whatever in support of the right of collecting a toll in Simon's Town.

(The 'Cape Monitor' 2nd July 1856 page 4)

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