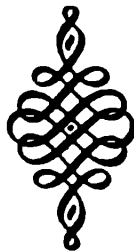


**SIMON'S TOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

BULLETIN



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FLAG OFFICERS OF THE CAPE

VERNON WHITE

PART XXV	VICE-ADMIRAL SIR DYMOCK WATSON	1958-1960
	VICE-ADMIRAL SIR NICHOLAS COPEMAN	1960-1963
	VICE-ADMIRAL SIR FITZROY TALBOT	1963-1965
	VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JOHN GRAY	1965-1967

After Vice-Admiral Sir Geoffrey Robson, the C-in-C South Atlantic and South America was VICE-ADMIRAL SIR DYMOCK WATSON who flew his flag in HMS AFRIKANDER from 1958-1960. His Flag Captain and Chief of Staff was Captain R.C. Wainwright R.N.

Robert Dymock Watson, the eldest son of Robert Watson FRIBA, an architect of Farnham, Surrey, was born on 5 April 1904 a year which marked the beginning of a new era for the Royal Navy. Admiral Sir John Fraser became First Sea Lord and began to modernise the training and operational methods of the Navy. It was Fisher who also saw the need to concentrate more battleships of the Royal Navy in home waters, a fortuitous move given that within a decade Britain would be at war with Germany. In 1904 the Russo-Japanese war began and an unfortunate affair in the North Sea which became known as the "Dogger Bank" incident resulted in Britain threatening to go to war with Russia. Units of the Russian Baltic Fleet en route to the Far East mistakenly identified a number of Hull fishing trawlers as Japanese torpedo boats and opened fire on them, sinking one trawler and killing two fishermen.

Educated at the Royal Naval College Osborne and at Royal Naval College Dartmouth, Dymock Watson began his post training career with the Royal Navy in peace time. In 1939 he married Margaret Lois Gillespy, the daughter of the Rev. F.R. Gillespy. A son and three daughters were born of the marriage.

Watson served throughout the second world war and was a Captain RN in 1944 when he was appointed Assistant Director of Planning, on the Joint Planning Staff of the Ministry of Defence until 1946. He then returned to sea service in 1947 and until 1948 was Captain (D) of the 1st Destroyer Flotilla in the Mediterranean, being made a Companion of the Order of the British Empire in 1948. During 1949 Captain Watson attended the Imperial Defence College, and then became Director of Planning at the Admiralty from 1950-1952.

The Soviet Union were at this time embarking on a major programme of submarine construction and the Admiralty decided to improve the Royal Navy's anti-submarine capability. Twenty-three "R" to "W" wartime destroyers were rebuilt as ASW (Anti-submarine warfare) Frigates from 1949 onwards and were known as Type 15. A further ten destroyers underwent limited conversion to become Type 16.

In the 1950 Naval Estimates provision was made for a new Type 12 ASW Frigate of the Whitby Class, although HMS WHITBY was not laid down until 1952. Meanwhile the Korean war started in 1950 when North Korean forces crossed the 38th Parallel into South Korea,

and lasted until 1953. The war involved United Nations forces from 15 nations commanded by U.S. General Douglas MacArthur. A Commonwealth Naval Task Force was constituted comprising the aircraft carriers HMS TRIUMPH, OCEAN, THESUS and the Canadian aircraft carrier HMS WARRIOR, an aircraft repair ship HMS UNICORN, the cruisers HMS BELFAST, JAMAICA and KENYA, together with seven British, one Australian and two Canadian destroyers, eight British, one Australian and two New Zealand frigates and the hospital ship MAINE. In 1953 Captain Watson was appointed to command the aircraft carrier HMS ILLUSTRIOUS. In June that year following her coronation Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II reviewed 197 ships of the Royal Navy at Spithead. Included in the review was HMS VANGUARD the only battleship and seven aircraft carriers while 300 Fleet Air Arm aircraft flew overhead.

There were also twenty-eight destroyers, including four of the new Daring class, thirty-eight frigates, twenty-eight submarines and thirty-one minesweepers. HMS SUPERB acted as Royal Yacht for the review.

In the following year Captain Watson was promoted to Rear Admiral and became Flag Officer Flotillas in the Mediterranean from 1954 to 1955 and was appointed Fourth Sea Lord and a Commissioner of the Admiralty. In 1956 Rear Admiral Watson CBE was a Companion of the Order of the Bath and promoted to Vice-Admiral in 1957. From 1958-60 he was C-in-C South Atlantic and South America, being advanced to a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in 1959.

In 1961 Admiral Sir Dymock Watson retired from the Royal Navy and went to live in Powys. Sadly Lady Margaret Watson died in 1968, three years after her husband had been appointed Deputy Lieutenant of the county of Brecknock. In 1974 he became Deputy Lieutenant of Powys.

In 1977 Sir Dymock Watson married Elizabeth Petronella Chichester, the widow of Amyas Chichester MC. Sir Dymock Watson died on 3 February 1988 aged 84 years.

When VICE-ADMIRAL SIR NICHOLAS COPEMAN KCB CBE DSC RN became C-in-C South Atlantic and South America in 1960 so began Britain's policy of decolonisation and the problems that followed. From 1960-63 the period of Admiral Copeman's tenure as C-in-C while flying his flag in HMS AFRIKANDER, Cyprus, Nigeria, Kuwait, Jamaica, Trinidad, Tobago, Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya all gained their independence. Whilst these new states were all becoming members of the Commonwealth Club, on 17 May 1961 the South African Prime Minister Dr H.F. Verwoed announced in London that on 31 May the Union of South Africa would leave the Commonwealth and become an independent Republic. In December 1962 British troops had to be sent from Singapore to quell rebellions in Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. In 1964 Nyasaland became independent as Malawi, whilst Southern Rhodesia sought independence in 1964 and made a unilateral declaration of independence in the following year. From a naval point of view Malta also became independent in 1964.

Nicholas Alfred Copeman was born on 28 February 1906 and was the son of Dr A.H. Copeman, Deputy Lieutenant of the City of London.

In the same year on the 10 February HMS DREADNOUGHT was launched, having been completed in a year and a day. Armed with ten 12-inch guns and with an operational speed two or more knots faster than other capital ships in the world she outclassed all her rivals. The DREADNOUGHT was scrapped in 1923. The launching of this sensational ship, in those days, caused the already envious German Kaiser more unhappiness which resulted in King Edward VII meeting the Kaiser at Cronberg in August 1906 in an attempt to improve Anglo-German relations. December that year saw the passing of a Parliamentary Bill which was to be of considerable significance to the British Shipping Industry. It was the British Merchant Shipping Act which not only improved the living conditions of seamen serving in British ships but which restricted the employment of foreign seamen in British registered vessels.

Nicholas Copeman was educated at the Royal Naval College Osborne and at the Royal Naval College Dartmouth and was a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy when he decided to specialise in Torpedoes in 1932. A year later he married Violet Lillian King and two sons were born of the marriage. From 1939-45 Copeman served in HMS SOUTHAMPTON, WARSPITE and ROYALIST being awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1940 and promoted to Commander in 1942. Latterly he was with the Admiralty in Bath.

In April 1940 HMS SOUTHAMPTON took part in the action against the German battleships HIPPER and GNEISENAU during the German invasion of Norway and was part of the covering force from the Home Fleet during the allied attack on Narvik in May 1940. In 1942 the SOUTHAMPTON was with Force H in the Mediterranean during Operation Torch, when allied forces landed at Algiers and Oran. It was during that action that HMS SOUTHAMPTON was attacked unsuccessfully by the French submarine FRESNEL which then escaped to the French Naval Base in Toulon.

HMS WARSPITE saw considerable action in the Mediterranean during 1940-41, in the Far East in 1942, and at Salerno in 1942. In 1944 she was part of the covering force during the Normandy landings. HMS ROYALIST formed part of the covering force in the strike against the German battleship TIRPITZ in Altenfjord in 1944 and in the Normandy landings. In May 1945 she was with Task Force 61 in the Malacca Straits with the Far Eastern Fleet.

From 1946-47 Commander Copeman served in the aircraft carrier HMS VICTORIOUS, being promoted to Captain RN in 1947. He was then appointed to the Admiralty in London in 1948, before becoming Captain Minesweeping Mediterranean in 1950, in command of the 2nd Minesweeping Flotilla. In 1952 he became a member of the Admiralty Interview Board, moving in 1953 to take command of HMS VERNON, the Royal Navy's torpedo school in Portsmouth. From 1955-56 he commanded the 4th Destroyer Squadron being promoted to Rear Admiral in 1956. As a Rear Admiral he became Vice Controller of the Navy, based with the Admiralty in Bath from 1956-58, when he was appointed a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and 4th Sea Lord. In 1959 he became a Companion of the Order of the Bath and was promoted to Vice-Admiral in 1960. From 1960-63 Vice-Admiral Copeman was C-in-C South Atlantic and South Africa flying his flag in HMS AFRIKANDER. His Flag Captain and

Chief of Staff was Captain P.B. Marriot RN. In 1961 Vice-Admiral Copeman was created a Knight Commander of the British Empire. On 31 May that year South Africa left the Commonwealth to become an independent Republic, but the Royal Navy continued to have use of the facilities of the Simon's Town Naval Base.

In 1963 Vice-Admiral Sir Nicholas Copeman KBE CB DSC RN was placed on the retired list of the Royal Navy and became Director of Civil Defence for the North West Region (Manchester) from 1963-66. Admiral Copeman was then appointed Commandant of the Civil Defence Staff College from 1966-68, when he became Director of Administration, the Civil Service Department, Sunningdale Park in 1969 in which year he retired. He died at his home in Ascot, Berkshire on 21 November 1969.

In 1963 Sir Nicholas Copeman was succeeded as C-in-C South Atlantic and South America by VICE-ADMIRAL A.A. FITZROY TALBOT CB DSO RN. In that year the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence came into being, when the Admiralty, the War Office and Air Ministry ceased to exist as independent bodies. On 31 March 1964 the Board of Admiralty which had amalgamated with the Navy Board in 1832, met for the last time and surrendered its patent after hauling down its flag. Members of the Board of Admiralty were no longer Lords Commissioners but became members of the Admiralty Board of the Defence Council, whilst Her Majesty the Queen resumed the office of Lord Admiral in her own right.

Arthur Allison Fitzroy Talbot, born on 22 October 1909 was the son of Captain Henry Fitzroy Talbot RN and his wife Susan Blair Athol Allison. His grandfather was Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil Ponsonby Talbot (1884-1970) who was Director of Dockyards at the Admiralty from 1937-1946. Educated at the Royal Naval College Dartmouth he was in command of the 10th Anti-submarine Striking Force in the North Sea during 1939. In 1940 Fitzroy Talbot married Joyce Gertrude Linley and there were two daughters born of the marriage. From 1940-41 Fitzroy Talbot commanded the 3rd MGB Flotilla in the Channel and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order in 1940. In 1942 he commanded HMS WHITSHED, a "modified W" destroyer on the East Coast when he was awarded a bar to his DSO. From 1943-44 Talbot commanded the Troubridge Class destroyer HMS TEAZER in the Mediterranean, being promoted to Commander in 1945. He was then appointed Chief Staff Officer to the Commodore Western Isles from 1945-46 and from 1947-48 Staff Officer Operations to the C-in-C British Pacific Fleet and Far East Station.

In 1949 he commanded HMS ALERT and was promoted to Captain RN in 1950. Captain Fitzroy Talbot was then appointed Naval Attache in Moscow and Helsinki from 1951-53, before attending the Imperial Defence College in 1954. He then returned to sea service and became Captain (D) of the 3rd Destroyer Squadron from 1955-57. From 1957-59 he was Commodore in charge of the Royal Naval Barracks, Portsmouth, being promoted to Rear Admiral in 1960.

Rear Admiral Talbot served as Flag Officer Arabian Seas and Persian Gulf from 1960-61 and then as Flag Officer Middle East until 1962. In 1961 he was made a Companion of the Order of the

Bath and promoted to Vice-Admiral in 1962. From 1963-65 he was C-in-C South Atlantic and South America, flying his flag in HMS AFRIKANDER. The Flag Captain and Chief of Staff was Captain P. Bayne RN. Admiral Talbot was created a Knight Commander of the British Empire in 1964.

During the years of Vice-Admiral Sir Fitzroy Talbot's tenure of office as C-in-C South Atlantic and South America between 1963-65 there were major operational and political changes which not only affected the Royal Navy in general but the South Atlantic and South America station in particular.

The U.K. Minister of Defence Duncan Sandys published a Defence Paper in 1957 stating that the role of naval forces in a future total war was uncertain and that greater reliance was to be placed on nuclear weapons. In 1963 the Royal Navy's first nuclear submarine HMS DREADNOUGHT was commissioned. The political scene in East and Central Africa also changed in that year with the end of British Colonial rule in Uganda, Tanganyika, Kenya and Northern Rhodesia. The two former colonies gained their independence in 1962 while Kenya became an independent republic within the Commonwealth in 1963, with Northern Rhodesia becoming the independent republic of Zambia in 1964.

The Indian Ocean and Far East Fleet in 1965 comprised two aircraft carriers, the commando ship HMS CENTAUR with two Royal Marine Commandos, two guided Missile Destroyers and ten Frigates. One Frigate was stationed in the South Atlantic. This deployment of Royal Naval ships reflected the 1957 "East of Suez" policy, which was finally abandoned in 1968 in favour of supporting NATO - the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In 1964 Royal Marine Commandos from HS CENTAUR were landed near Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika) to suppress a rebellion and army mutiny.

On his return to England Vice-Admiral Sir Fitzroy Talbot KBE CB DSO RN was appointed C-in-C Plymouth from 1965-67 when he was then placed on the retired list of the Royal Navy. In 1973 he became Deputy Lieutenant of Somerset, but sadly his wife Lady Joyce died in 1981. The Admiral later married Lady Elizabeth Durlacher.

The Royal Navy's last Commander-in-Chief in the Cape of Good Hope after 172 years was VICE-ADMIRAL SIR JOHN GRAY who flew his flag in HMS AFRIKANDER from 1965 to 1967. He succeeded Vice-Admiral Sir Fitzroy Talbot, and Gray's Flag Captain and Chief of Staff was Captain D.K.L. Learmount RN.

JOHN MICHAEL DUDGEON GRAY (known to his family as "Bonda" but to his colleagues in the Royal Navy as "Jock", was born in Dublin on 13 June 1913. It was the year in which the Ulster Defence Force was formed to resist home rule, and the year in which Winston Churchill, then First Sea Lord, proposed an Anglo-German "naval holiday" in an endeavour to reduce expenditure on naval armaments. The 1913-1914 Naval Estimates represented a quarter of the United Kingdom's budget at that time, and the Admiralty were finding it difficult to match their requirements and finances.

John Gray entered the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth in 1926 and joined his first ship the 33,950 ton battleship HMS NELSON in 1931. Built in June 1927 she had a main armament of nine 16 inch guns in triple turrets, and could steam at 23.5 knots. Her wartime complement was 1650 officers and men. From 1932-1933 Gray served as a Midshipman in the cruiser HMS ENTERPRISE on the East Indies station, then as a Sub-Lieutenant in HMS DEVONSHIRE from 1934-1937 during the Abyssinian crisis of October 1935 and later during the Spanish Civil War which lasted from July 1936 until 1939, when major units of the Royal Navy were involved in protecting British merchant ships entering and leaving Spanish ports, rescuing crews of ships sunk off the Spanish coast and patrolling the sea lanes leading to the Straits of Gibraltar. The R.N. Ships involved were the battleships HMS RESOLUTION and HMS ROYAL OAK, the battle cruiser HMS HOOD, other cruisers including HMS DEVONSHIRE and destroyers.

In 1937 Gray served for a year as First Lieutenant in the modified V & W class destroyer HMS WOLVERINE, on the Irish Patrol before joining HMS EXCELLENT, the navy's gunnery establishment in Portsmouth in 1938, where he qualified as a gunnery specialist. While still at HMS EXCELLENT Jock Gray married Margaret Helen Purvis in May 1939. They had a son and a daughter. After qualifying as a gunnery specialist Gray served in the light aircraft carrier HMS HERMES in the East Indies until early 1942 and was then appointed gunnery officer in the cruiser HMS SPARTAN.

Built by Vickers Armstrong in Barrow, the SPARTAN was commissioned in 1943 for service with the Home Fleet, but then went out to the Mediterranean to join the 15th Cruiser Squadron commanded by Rear Admiral J.M. Mansfield. HMS HERMES, Gray's previous ship was sunk by Japanese dive bombers on 9 April 1942, seventy miles south of Trincomalee, Ceylon, whilst HMS SPARTAN was hit by a German Hs.293 glider bomb on 29 January 1944 off the Anzio beach head with the loss of 65 lives. After being hit she was towed into Naples harbour where she capsized inshore.

Having survived the sinking of HMS SPARTAN, Gray, a gunnery officer, came ashore and was appointed Bombardment Liaison Officer with the United States VI Army Corps in Italy on the Anzio beach head, and then with the French Army in a similar capacity in the South of France. Returning to sea later in 1944 Gray served in the cruiser HMS ORION, a sister ship of HMS AJAX and HMS ACHILLES, and was present during the liberation of Athens on the 14 October. He was appointed to the staff of the Commander-in-Chief Mediterranean, and was mentioned in despatches.

In 1945 Gray returned to HMS EXCELLENT and took part in the V.E. Parade in London on 8 May. He was subsequently appointed gunnery officer in the battleship HMS DUKE OF YORK, formerly HMS ANSON. Promoted to Commander in 1947 Gray was then appointed a naval adviser to the U.K. Mission in Japan, based on Tokyo. When the Korean War started in June 1950 ships of the Royal Navy were placed at the disposal of the United States Naval Commander Vice-Admiral Joy USN, when Commander Gray joined his staff as the R.N. Liaison Officer. In 1950 Gray was awarded the Order of the

British Empire when Admiral Brind, the British C-in-C Far East paid tribute to the work done by Gray as the R.N. Liaison Officer with the American Navy.

Returning to England in 1951 Gray passed through Tokyo where he met U.S. Admiral Arleigh Burke, a member of the 1951 Korean Armistice Commission who flew his flag off Korea. Burke, a firm friend of Gray presented him with a gift of a silver cigarette box engraved "To Jock and Peggy who did so much for two navies". Back in England Gray was appointed the Executive Officer of the cruiser HMS SWIFTSURE in the Home Fleet, when she was guard ship for H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh at the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952. Promoted to Captain R.N. that year, Gray was appointed Deputy Director of Naval Ordnance with the Admiralty in Bath before taking command of HMS LYNX in 1956 as Captain (F) of the Frigate Squadron on the South Atlantic Station.

After two years in LYNX Gray returned to the Admiralty in London as Director of the Gunnery Division where he remained until December 1960, when he was given command of the aircraft carrier HMS VICTORIOUS. In June 1961 the British Protectorate of Kuwait became an independent territory but on 1 July the Emir asked for British troops and RAF fighter aircraft to be stationed in the Emirate as a counter measure against the threat of invasion by Iraq under General Kassem. HMS VICTORIOUS was then moved to the Persian Gulf, where with her modern type 984 radar she took charge of the air defence of Kuwait, providing air control for the RAF Hunter aircraft flying in and out of Kuwait, while VICTORIOUS' own aircraft flew anti-submarine and airborne early warning patrols.

Promoted to Rear Admiral in 1962 Gray left VICTORIOUS to return to the Admiralty in London where he remained until 1964 when he became Director General of Naval Training at the Ministry of Defence. In that year Gray was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath. Promoted to Vice-Admiral in 1965 he was appointed C-in-C South Atlantic and South America, and was created a Knight Commander of the British Empire in 1967. On 11 April 1967 Vice-Admiral Sir John Gray KBE CB OBE lowered his flag as Commander-in-Chief for the last time.

The South Atlantic and South America station was then closed and its responsibilities directed between the Home and Far East stations. In November 1971 the Home Fleet and Far East Fleet were amalgamated under the command of the C-in-C Fleet.

Sir John and Lady Margaret Gray returned from the Cape to live in London where in his retirement Sir John became Secretary to the Victoria League, and subsequently of the Oriental Ceramic Society. Lady Margaret died in 1994 and Sir John died three years later in 1997 at the age of eighty-four.

Anne Tammadge was six years of age when she arrived here in June 1941 on the GLOUCESTER CASTLE with her parents Griffiths and Gertrude Tammadge. Her father was a Coppersmith in the Dockyard and was a Home Agreement man. They first lived at 5 Marine Flats, Beach Road, Fish Hoek before moving into Hamoaze Court on Runciman Drive, Simon's Town, the blocks of flats which had been erected at the beginning of the war specially to accommodate the Home Agreement families.

Anne first attended Fish Hoek Primary School, then St Josephs Convent in Simon's Town (now Topsail House) before going on to Star of the Sea at St James. Her father was the Secretary of the Home Agreement Men's Association and was also a Freemason. Their neighbours in Hamoaze Court were the Nivens, Urquharts, Buckhams, Coreys, Crowthers, Lynns, Symons, Hockadays, Browns, Sloanes, Sparkes, Woolletts, Coves and Popes.

Anne writes " whilst we lived in Fish Hoek (till March 1946) I remember being taken up to Cape Town in the evenings sometimes to go to the cinema or theatre. My father had an elderly Oldsmobile and my parents and several friends used to go out dancing a lot at the "Blue Moon" at Lakeside or the "Rotunda" at Camps Bay. If I was taken to the cinema we used to stop at Coghills Hotel in Main Road, Wynberg on the way to Cape Town and at the "Spotted Dog" roadhouse at Retreat on the way home for a toasted turkey sandwich. There was always a musical or pantomime on at the Alhambra Theatre in Cape Town for about 6 weeks at the start of each year and I was taken to see it as a birthday treat in early February. We used to go to the Delmonica for a meal (charcoal grills) and then across to the Alhambra. Both these places fascinated me as the insides of both were like castle courtyards with twinkling stars in the night-sky above (the ceilings) and wisps of cloud drifting across them! The Delmonica had a lovely blue floor - marled rubbery tiles - and I believe the place was wrecked more than once when the British and American fleets were in Cape Town together!

The convoy we were in for the first 4 days when we sailed from Glasgow in 1941 contained more than 10 ships and the GLOUCESTER CASTLE was the only passenger ship. It was an old ship, alive with cockroaches, packed solid with a regiment of soldiers bound for India and a small number of women and children bound for South Africa. Its top speed was 8 knots. The convoy was dive-bombed before it left the Clyde and our ship was moved up from the back of the convoy to near the front. We must have gone north as it became very cold with snow on the decks and icicles on the rails and for the first 3 nights we had to stay fully clothed, the last night of which we were up on deck most of the night wrapped in blankets. We broke away from the convoy and the "tail-ender" was sunk (a red glow just over the horizon) but we never knew if there had been survivors. We had already picked up some survivors from another ship. It took a month to reach Ascension Island where we refuelled etc. Our next stop was St Helena and between that island and Walvis Bay we had to stay on deck one night whilst a white hospital ship with a huge red cross

painted from top to bottom on both sides and a blaze of lights like a Christmas tree, crossed our path on a mirror-calm ocean. Looking back now it was like a collective holding of breath until she disappeared over the horizon, as we would have been sitting ducks if there had been any U-boats about! A mess was made of refuelling and we had to return to Walvis Bay to take on enough to get us to Cape Town. The authorities "lost" us for nearly a week because of it and were relieved to find that we had not been sunk as had been feared. The crew mutinied and half were left in gaol at Walvis Bay! The GLOUCESTER CASTLE was sunk in the Atlantic doing the same trip a year later in Convoy WS20 and then Graham Sparkes was a survivor (but the family were interned by the Japanese till the end of the war - Editor).

I remember the meat in South Africa always being tough. I remember it very well because I kept getting my elbows whacked with a cane by my father for sticking my elbows out whilst trying to cut the said meat!! It was euphemistically called "lamb" but was really goat and needed to be pot-roasted to make it tender enough to eat. Fish on the other hand was plentiful and delicious as was all the fruit. It is incredible now that we took crayfish for granted and went down to the quay (the town pier) to the fishermen and chose the one we wanted and now one needs to be almost a millionaire to be able to afford it.

I remember when the King and Queen and the 2 Princesses visited Simon's Town in 1947 and all the schoolchildren had to sing a song of welcome to them. Apart from Royalty the thing I remember was the realisation at the time that Dr Malan's wife had colour in her family. That might have been forgotten had ensuing apartheid not been so brutal.

The baboons, of course, were part of life at the flats on Runciman Drive, their antics being a constant source of interest. There was a large old male at one time who had been in a fight (possibly for supremacy) and lost it seemed, as he was always on the periphery of the group. He took to sitting on the wall of the landing on the stairs that went down to the rear of the flats and you had to pass him whilst he was there. On several occasions my mother sent me up to the washing lines at the back of the flats to bring in the washing so the baboons did not get any ideas of running off with any of it. I had to pass within inches of this large evil-looking primate who never took his eyes off me. My mother used to push me out onto the landing with the words "Don't drop anything" ringing in my ears and retreat indoors quickly!!

When Pam Buckham and Pat Pope arrived in South Africa they joined the Dockyard Church choir. They became part of my life together with Sheila Brown and have remained so for over 50 years. If I remember correctly the choir pay eventually increased from 1d a week to 3d per week - 1d for attending choir practice on a Friday evening and 2d for attending on a Sunday morning. Also, until Padre Evans left, a member of the choir who was leaving was allowed to choose a hymn to be sung on the last Sunday that they were attending Church.

There are so many memories - Saturday nights at the "Bug Hatch" (the Criterion Bioscope as it was then called); the fires on the mountain in 1947 or 1949; the bike rides to Cape Point or round the mountain and down Red Hill; the climbs round the quarry and so on. The sun, the sea, the beaches, the mountains AND THE WIND - never forgotten."

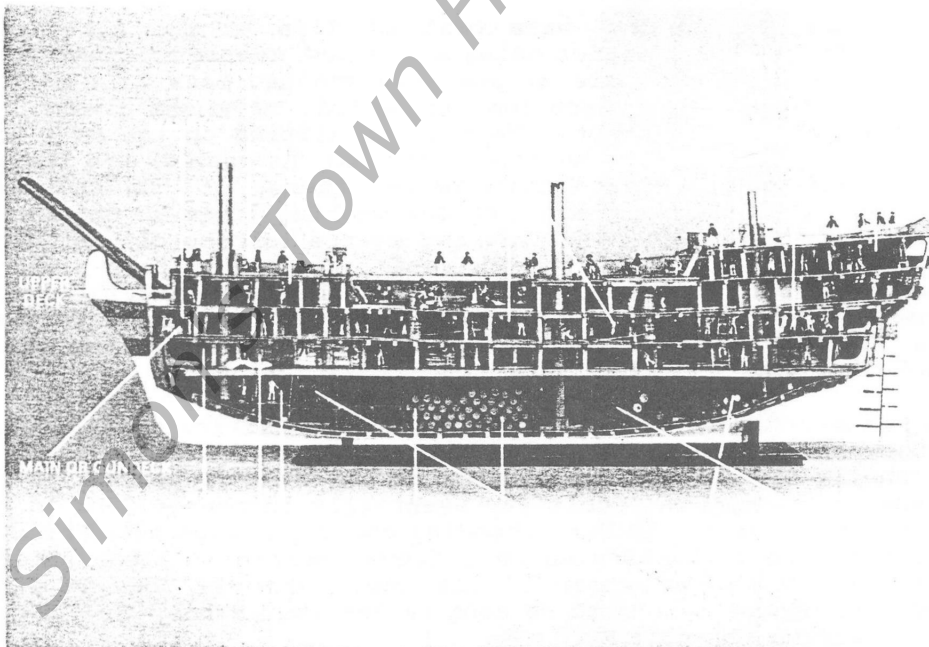
Anne left here in 1950 when she was 15. As she says she has kept up her friendships these past 50 years and we wish to thank Pam Buckham for asking Anne to record her thoughts for the Museum's archives.

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EBRAHIM BAPOO - INDIAN TRADER

1900-1918 A very much respected Indian trader called Ibrahim Bapoo started off as a hawker of fruit, travelling to Simon's Town from somewhere "up the line". He carried his fruit round the town in two baskets, suspended from a shoulder yoke. He must have found the trade profitable as he leased from the Estate of the late A.N. Black the shop next to the Phoenix Hall (now occupied by the Welcome Fruit Store Lot 8 of Lots 0 & No.2 consolidated). Bapoo occupied the shop until September 1918 when the property was sold to Gootman and Gordon.
(Information supplied by L.J.D. Gay 3.12.1974)

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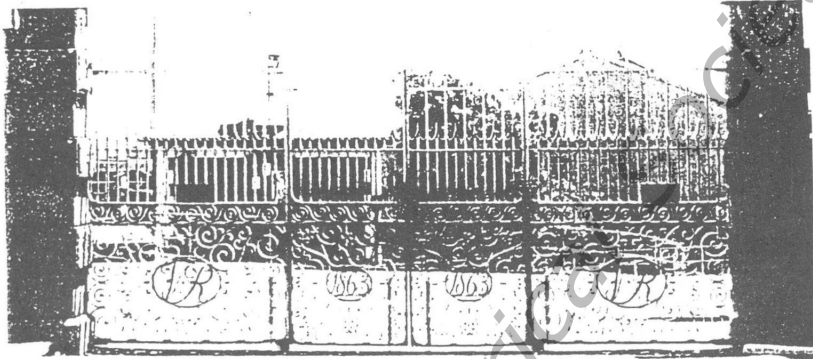


Half-model of HMS ILLUSTRIOUS, built at Bucklers Hard Hampshire in 1789

THE DOCKYARD GATES

A.E. READ

The East Dockyard 's original gates (opposite the old convent - present day Topsail House) were manufactured by the firm of Sir John Jackson when the extensions to the Dockyard were built and were in place for the opening ceremony and very handsome they are too.



The original entrance to the West Dockyard was opposite Runciman's Building (Arm Scor to-day) and consisted of two large and two smaller gates as can be seen in the picture overleaf. As you can see they bear the date 1863 and VR. They were designed by Mr Charles Henry Algar and made in the West Dockyard in 1862/63. The South African Navy took over Simon's Town in 1957 and in 1961 it was decided to remove the VR monogram together with other British badges and insignia. However, this caused much ill-feeling in the town and the monogram was replaced. It has often been said that from both the artistic and historic points of view these gates should be declared a national monument.

About 1967 the main street was widened from 18 ft to 42 ft outside the West Dockyard and the road re-aligned. The gates were moved to their present position opposite the British building. A replica of the original gate, considered one of the finest examples of the iron-worker's art was made in the East Dockyard blacksmith's shop by Mr. Claude Randall of Simon's Town. Mr. Randall recalled that "this kind of workmanship had never before been called upon to be performed in this Dockyard as scroll work is an art of its own. Therefore, when my foreman Mr. R. Eddles told me that a set of four gates had to be manufactured on the pattern of the 1863 pair and I was told I was going to get the job I had such misgivings as to the result of so huge an undertaking."

As can be seen over the page the two sets of gates are very similar and are much admired by passers by. They are very sturdy - so much so that recently, in 2000, when the left hand 1863 gate was "bumped" by a lorry it was the stone gatepost which suffered most damage.

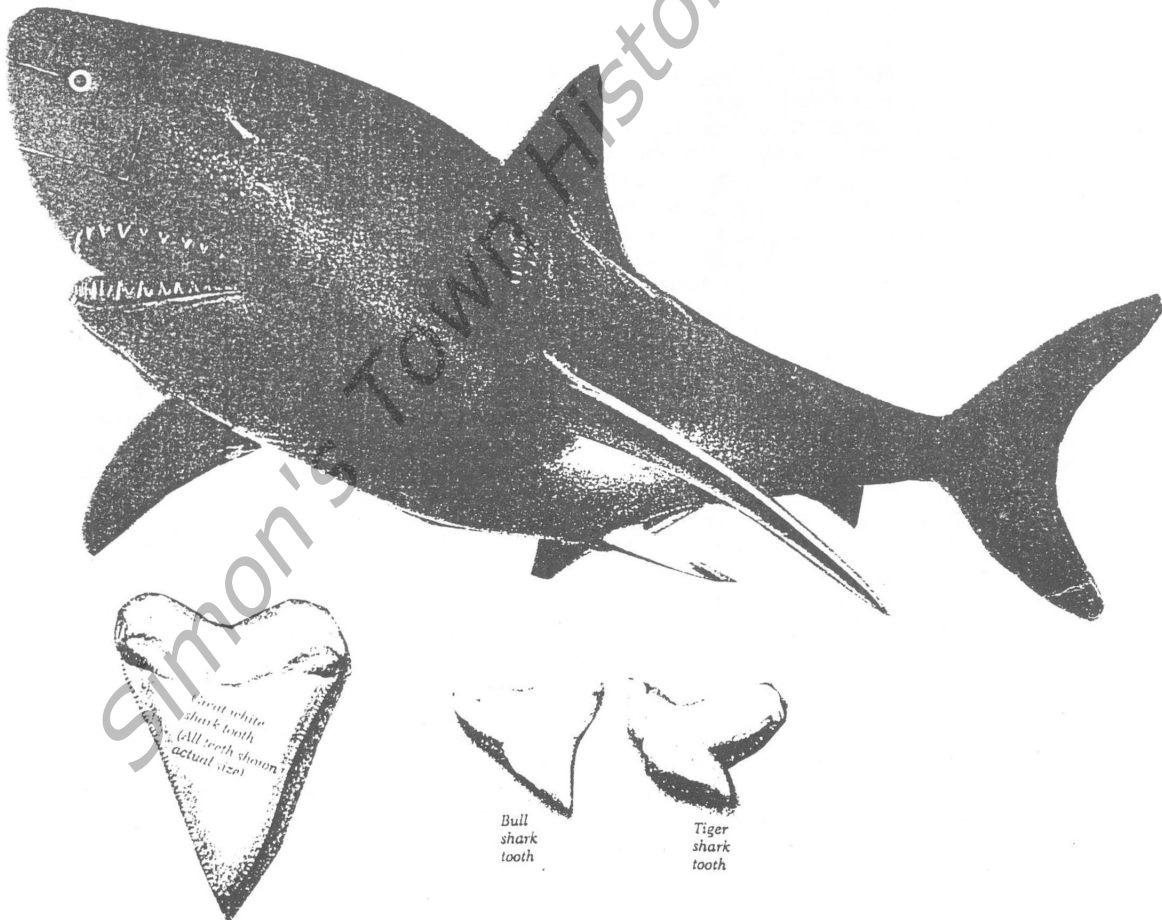
SHARKS

A.E. READ

Sharks have been swimming the earth's oceans for hundreds of millions of years. To-day we know of at least 370 species ranging in size from 6 inches to 40 ft (15 cm - 12 m).

Sharks have a network of pores connected to long canals spread across the head which enables a shark to sense weak electrical fields that small fish and other sea creatures create as they breathe. Like a cat, a shark has a special reflective layer behind the retina which helps it to see in the dark. A shark must move its head from side to side to see objects directly in front.

Tiny holes on top of the head lead to very sensitive ears. Three semi-circular canals in the inner ear help maintain balance. It is thought a shark may be able to pick up the sound of a struggling fish about 600 yards (550 m) away. They have a fairly acute sense of smell. They can detect concentrations of blood as low as 1 part per million. Its jaws are made of cartilage not bone and contain multiple rows of razor-sharp teeth. Each time a tooth is lost another one moves forward.



The shark's skin is covered with a protective layer of microscopic, toothlike scales, called denticles. Like teeth they are pointed, covered in enamel and contain a nerve. They also are shed and grow again. The jaws are normally positioned under the braincase. As the animal homes in on its prey, it lifts its snout, enabling the upper jaw to slide forward and the lower one to drop. Once the jaws are fully open, muscle contractions shift it away from the braincase and out of the mouth, giving the shark a better grip. A Great White's bite is so powerful that it can exert pressure of 2,000lbs per sq.in.

The Great White, which is the most common in False Bay, is now protected as its numbers have greatly diminished and it forms an important role in the food chain, its diet being seals (Seal Island), turtles, sea birds (it has not yet found the penguins), fish and small whales. Its latin name is CARCHARODON CARCHARIAS. Its habitat is temperate and sub-tropical waters world-wide. Its size can exceed 20ft (6m) and 4,000 lb (1,800 kg).

The Bull Shark eats other sharks, fish, birds and dolphins but this is found more in tropical waters. Cousteau has actually witnessed two dolphins attacking a shark. The Tiger Shark prefers both tropical and temperate waters and in earlier days has been found in False Bay, nearer to Cape Point, where the Agulhas warm current meets the cold Benguela current.

In earlier days, till the mid-1960s, sharks were caught in abundance by the local fishing boats from Simon's Town and Kalk Bay. The livers were thrown into 44-gallon drums for delivery to Marine Oil Refiners at Glencairn for refining for use in margarine etc. Sharks livers are very large and the liver oil is rich in vitamins and is often sold as Cod Liver Oil. Cod Liver Oil is now synthetically manufactured. The fins were exported to the Far East. The meat of the fish was dried and exported to the Congo and other African countries. The overfishing had a serious effect on the shark population.

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THE SOUL OF THE GUNS

Maj.Gen. G. Dunbar-Moodie SM

When one looks at the ruined, ravaged remains of the coast batteries which once protected our harbours, one must try to envisage them as they were in their heyday, pampered juggernauts, the *raison d'être* for the numbers of dedicated soldiers who maintained and operated them, who lived and laughed and loved and cursed them and who webbed around them an aura of power and preparedness. Who were those soldiers and whence came they?

In those faroff days when the Cape Mounted Rifles had the duty of preserving law and order in the wild country north of the Kei River, they had a reputation unexceeded even by the Canadian Mounted Police. The fame of the CMR was, I am sure, richly deserved and gained more and more renown as the adventurous youth of an Empire competed to enter its ranks. The formation of Union in 1910 caused a name change to SAMR and a loss of some of the glamour and then the outbreak of war, four years later, must have caused its members to be scattered far and wide, and when peace came many ended up in the S.A. Army, Airforce or Police. A large contingent came into the Army, nearly all of those into the Coast Artillery which was being built up to take over the S.A. harbour defences from the British. This transfer took place in 1921 and with it came a White Paper, in which the S.A. Government undertook to maintain a Permanent Force strength of Coast Gunners sufficient to man the guns and instruments fully, at very short notice, even before the outbreak of hostilities, to prevent a Pearl Harbour type of premature naval attack. As far as human material was concerned the Coast Artillery therefore started with tremendous advantages. It could offer a degree of permanence of employment to newcomers and, in taking the men from the SAMR it had acquired the type of NCO of whom Napoleon spoke when he said "Give me British NCO's and French Officers and I will conquer the world". The type of recruit the White Paper made it possible to attract (even in the dreadful days of the depression) and the standard of instruction and example set by the old SAMR members, ensured a type of other rank with whom it was an honour to serve.

In the months before the war, I was stationed at Simon's Town as subaltern second-in-command to the Captain who was in control of Second Heavy Battery SAGA. Our offices and stores were in Palace Barracks. There were 9.2 guns at Scala, 6 inch at Queens and 12 pdrs on the docks, and some other guns, all of which were our responsibility. For the rest the docks, Admiralty House and virtually all the official buildings were the property and under the control of the Royal Navy (assisted of course later by Just Nuisance!). As war was seen to be approaching we were warned that an armed merchantman (disguised warship) the WALFISCH was in the vicinity and might be expected possibly to attack the harbour before or just after the outbreak of hostilities. The older officers hoped it would not show up, the younger ones hoped it would!. I can remember going to Queens Battery to discuss inter alia whether we should have armour-piercing or high-explosive ammunition ready on the gun-floor, and other matters, with Sgt Koos "Heeskeel" Oosthuizen (to

distinguish him from another of the same name referred to as Koos "Bek" whose forte was gun assembly). Koos Heeskeel was a marvellous auto-sight layer. On being asked for his reaction to an approach by the WALFISCH his simple response in that deep hoarse groan was "Ons skiet haar stukkend" (We'll shoot her to pieces) and I think they would have. I was quite thrilled at the thought of a contest between Koos's gun and anything afloat. With skills inherited perhaps from generations of frontier hunters and those same skills of precision, concentration and "gunfeel" skilfully applied to this different weapon he would certainly have been a dangerous opponent. Behind him would be his team whose drill would be as always a poetry of motion as they loaded, rammed, closed the breech and fired, moving like ballet dancers reacting to a sombre music, the music of the thunder of the guns.

When I talk in somewhat lyrical terms of good gun drill being almost like a dance I think of an occasion late in the war when the demands of war had taken most of our original gunners to man anti-aircraft guns in the fighting sphere, and their place had been taken by coloured recruits. I was visiting Simon's Town as Chief Instructor and was walking with a Warrant Officer Sgt Piet van der Merwe, somewhere near the Boulders where, on a parade ground, a dummy-loader had been erected on which a squad of these recruits were being drilled by quite a reasonable instructor. The dummy-loader was a contrivance to teach gunners to load by hand the 100 lb shells of a 6 inch gun. It had a breech block fitted into a "breech" into which a dummy shell could be rammed and would then slide through into a container while the rest of the team went through the motions of loading the cartridge, closing the breech, fitting a tube (like a blank rifle cartridge), firing the "gun" and opening the breech ready for the next round which should by then be on the arm of the next loader ready to be lowered into position and rammed virtually off his arm. The particular team we were watching were doing things right but just without real speed or rhythm. Van der Merwe beckoned the instructor aside and quietly took over. One might have expected the proverbial army shouting and abuse but there was nothing like that. A word here, a little demonstration there, a tap on a shoulder somewhere else and the team slid into action like a well-oiled machine. Only the sound was missing as the shells slammed into the breech in endless smooth succession and the measured movements and faultless footwork of the team made it all seem so easy.

If you imagine that gun-drill is entirely a masculine affair, I am happy to disillusion you as I have seen some very efficient female gun teams. Sometime in 1940 when the demands of the army "up North" had deprived us of most of the male volunteers who had the educational capacity to cope with the multiple instruments associated with the new weapons, someone hit on the idea of employing women. A group of women all well educated and some with degrees, assembled at Scala Battery at Simon's Town and underwent a course which amply demonstrated their ability to handle the intricate equipment. The rest of the story is conveyed in my article on Women Soldiers. A full course in Coast Gunnery which they underwent demanded drill on all the guns and their concomitant equipment and this included preparing each

type of gun or instrument for action and its full operation in action whether that particular bit of equipment would be your responsibility or not. One had to have a full picture, and although, because of hand operation and heavy ammunition, firing a 6 inch gun would not be one of their duties, the women were certainly expected to know all about them, and to pass the necessary examinations and tests using a lighter projectile than the normal 100 lb shell. I can, however, well remember one female gun team on course preparing the 6 inch guns of Cornelia Battery on Robben Island for action. The duties of each gun number are laid down in sequence in the relevant drill book. The rather obvious first action of the No.1 when the gun is uncovered is to "look through the bore and see that it is clear" (imagine what would happen if it were fired with some obstruction in the barrel!). On this occasion the No.1 (I think it was Sgt Galliers) duly looked through the bore of the gun, shook her head and stood back, beckoning to another gun number and then another, all of whom looked through and seemed equally non-plussed. I was in the Battery Observation Post on the top floor of a three-storey concrete structure which still stands some 200 yards from the gun emplacement. With me was Sgt Maj. Nortjie, the drill instructor. He immediately got on the phone and demanded an explanation but the phone had broken down and he turned at once to go down those three flights of iron ladders and march firmly across the sand to solve the problem. His fierce demand to the gun captain "What is the matter with that gun" was met with the report "April Fool Sgt Major". We all (even Nortjie) loved it of course and it did show that although their discipline was immaculate the ultimate woman still flickers through the uniform. That the men could occasionally get their own back was shown when my adjutant, on a later occasion, came into my office hugely amused to report that he had overheard, from behind the trees lining the parade ground, Sgt Maj. Brough drilling a squad of female recruits. The first thing any raw soldier has to learn is not, instinctively, to turn his head towards the man shouting the orders. Brough was heard to admonish his drill squad with a loud "Look to your front don't look at me - I am a married man with four children!"

Military life is made bearable by the underlying irrepressible sense of dry humour of so many of its participants whatever their sex or race. All BL guns be they 6 inch or 9.2 had their gelignite charges in cloth bags with a gunpowder base in a separate pocket. When the gun is fired a "tube" which is like a rifle blank cartridge is fired through the breech block into the gunpowder which then sets off the main charge. There are two types of tube, one of which has the ordinary type of percussion cap ignited by the firing pin of the gun; the other is loaded in exactly the same way but is ignited by an electric charge when the firer pulls the "trigger". The battery commander before an action may order "electric" or "percussion" firing and the corresponding tube will be loaded. A coloured gunner, having been moved from the comparative luxury of Robben Island to the starker conditions in Queens Battery, engaged in his weekly clothes wash, was heard to complain "met hierdie percussion ysters kan ek nie meer klaarkom nie" (I can't cope with these percussion irons any more) when faced with the use of an old-fashioned stove-heated flat iron.

The scrapping of the old GENERAL BOTHA Training ship which was decreed to be an honourable end by gun-fire, was handed to us to be undertaken at a very considerable range by a gun from Scala Battery with a fixed amount of ammunition. The Royal Navy officers who were present were horrified that we did not have an explosive device in the target ship "just to make sure" as they had seen a fleet of ships move past an empty hulk floating high in the water and empty their guns at it without hitting it below the waterline and causing it to sink. This was just our experience, as although I had recently calibrated the guns at extreme range, was using Koos Heeskeel as line layer, was setting the elevation with a clinometer and the splashes seemed to be deluging the target, GENERAL BOTHA just would not sink. Even after we had been granted more ammunition the ship just floated on and we had to give up. ** In the train, on the way back to Wynberg, we were however delighted to get the message that she had gone down and one wonders how often she was hit. It was all quite an experience and we were lucky to get away with it.

A happy memory of Simon's Town was the visit of the Royal Family in 1947 in the days when South Africa was at the height of its popularity in Britain. General Smuts was everyone's hero and so many families had such joyful (sometimes their last) letters from relatives and friends who had been treated so royally when their ships, going to the fighting front, called at Cape Town or Durban. And now, at Smuts' invitation, the Royal Family were with us and Simon's Town had to be visited, and obviously the Royal Navy was not to be involved, as this was to be a S.A. occasion. A dais was set up in front of Palace Barracks and I, from the School of Coast and AA at Youngs Field, was ordered to supply the Guard of Honour which was to form up facing the dais to pay the usual respects. I had selected to command it a certain Captain Nel, as eccentric as they come but an outstanding drill man, and he had of course a guard of really old soldiers. By the time the guard was in position the whole rather small area was absolutely packed with spectators, who had to be held back when the King and Queen arrived to tumultuous cheering, which continued as they approached the stadium and mounted it, and the noise reached a crescendo when the King took up his position on the dais. The cheering continued at a high pitch with Nel motionless in front of a guard rigidly at attention. Even the King looked slightly non-plussed until suddenly as crowds do, everyone realised simultaneously that nothing was happening and something was wrong and there was sudden complete awed silence. At that moment Nel gave the order "Royal Salute present arms" the band struck up "God Save the King" and the execution was perfect. I believe the King turned to the person next to him and said "There is someone here who knows what he is doing" but only Nel would have the nerve to keep a king waiting until his troops could clearly hear his orders.

Another happy memory of that Royal Visit was the celebration in South Africa by Princess Elizabeth of her 21st birthday. A parade in her honour was to be held at Youngs Field. The artillery being traditionally Right of the Line, I had to lead my unit as the first one to salute her as we passed the dais on that momentous occasion. A large number of Citizen Force units were taking part of course and on such an important occasion even

more than usual practice and repetition were necessary beforehand so that by the time it was successfully over we were all pretty well exhausted. That evening was the celebratory Ball at the City Hall to which my wife Sheila and I had been formally invited. After the first one or two dances I said to Sheila "My feet just can't take it - lets find somewhere to sit down" and we duly found some chairs in an obscure corner. We had barely taken our seats when the Princess passed at almost touching distance in a lovely ball-gown. Sheila gasped "She's BEAUTIFUL" and so she was. Now when I see the Queen on TV looking older and sadder and perhaps a little disillusioned, it is nice to recall that picture of her as a fairy princess, looking radiantly lovely on the day when she shared with our country the joy of her coming of age.

The next year came that fatal election and changes to the fighting services, few of them to the good, but in 1952 General de Wet took command of the Navy as a Marine Officer and the whole Coast and AA force was converted to the SA Corps of Marines, taking with them their guns as part of the SA Navy. The standard of drill of our soldiers had always been high but with the incentives of a distinctive uniform and their own band they hit the ceiling as far as esprit de corps and smartness were concerned. On any occasion demanding those qualities, such as manning the steps at the opening of parliament and any public displays, they always showed up well. So strong was the unit feeling that when de Waal handed over to Admiral Biermann (an officer for whom I have always had liking and respect) some two years later, we were horrified to hear that the future of the Marines might come under threat. General Klopper (then Commandant General) discussed it with me and questioned the future which the Marine Corps could offer to its members. I can remember vehemently asserting that I personally would rather end my service as a Lieut Colonel in the Marines than a General in his Army. However the writing was on the wall and, in due course, the dissolution order came through and members could choose whether they wished to be transferred to the Army (AA) or to the Navy (Coast). Most of us returned to the Army but my best Officer Instructor (Edwards) plumped for the Navy and ended up commanding it some years later. The bitterness at the dissolution of the Marine Corps, after all we had done to build it up, was intense however, and the forbearing nature of Admiral Biermann was demonstrated by his failure to react adversely to a telegram exchange between myself and the Marine Officer on his Staff. I received a message "Admiral suggests farewell parade for the Marines which he will attend and also an evening function. Please comment". The reply came promptly "The Marines will parade whenever and wherever they are ordered. If voluntary any evening function is not likely to be well attended". So the Marine organisation died quietly with its boots on and Admiral Biermann later admitted to me that its dissolution had been a grievous mistake. One wonders whether, if the coast artillery weapons had continued to be under the control of the Marines, the devastation of its equipment would have been quite so complete.

I would like to conclude with a final tribute to the men who manned those guns, a few of which still stand rusting on our

hillsides. On a foundation which had its roots in our earliest war history they formed an organisation which fulfilled the highest ideals of military competence. They manned those guns in peace and the early days of a war, then trained their successors before leaving for the North to make a more certain contact with the enemy. When hostilities were over they returned to their guns to resurrect, in that old domain, those bonds of military pride and comradeship. It was always a joy to me at unit meetings to see how ready they all were to spring to the aid of any of their comrades who were in unexpected difficulty be it financial or otherwise. In the former case they were quick to pass round the hat and donate in a brotherly fashion one could only admire. "The moving finger writes and having writ moves on" and we come to the 1960's when coast artillery had become obsolete and most of the guns and their equipment had been handed over to the Navy to be ripped out and destroyed, as seems to have been done all over the world. Our task was now the manning of anti-aircraft weapons with the usual extraneous duties that were bound to fall on the largest regular army unit in the area. In 1967 came that political incident which ensured the eventual end of the apartheid regime. That was the police action at Sharpeville, and the country was in tumult with murder at the Cape and the townships in semi-insurrection.

In the course of their duties my men then committed a simple deed, the recital of which to me was one of the thrills of my whole career. I had personally been detailed for special staff duties and the unit under the second-in-command had been issued with armoured cars to patrol the townships and to protect the Police stations located in them. On one particular occasion Captain Loffhagen was patrolling a township with about 6 armoured cars when one stopped at one of the houses. Sgt. Kasner got out of the car, the stopping of which had brought the whole convoy to a tense halt, entered the house and returned after a few minutes and the convoy proceeded. When out of the area Loffhagen halted the convoy, called Kasner to his car and demanded to know the reason for his action. Kasner explained that the day before they were covering a police patrol, the members of which were searching houses for weapons. In that particular home there stood a glass-fronted cabinet which held what were obviously the treasured possessions of the housewife. In the course of his weapon search one of the policemen had put his shoulder against this cabinet which fell flat on its face to the obviously deep distress of the owner. "We sent the hat around last night, Sir, and I just went to give it to her". That was something that was neither ordered or directed, it was just the thoughtful act of a band of decent men. Those men had been the life element of the guns we loved, the men who made my nearly a quarter of a century of service with them prove to be a lifespan that it is good to recall.

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**The Royal Navy had in fact to put aboard an explosive charge as the ship refused to go under.

There were small wooden steps in a grassy slope at Cole Point. In this vicinity Mr Thomson (grandfather of Lewis and Llew. Gay) made fishing boats for many years. For 90 years until 1967 or 1968 the Jaffa family also had a boat-building shed here. Mr Jaffa senior was the first Jaffa to carry out his trade here and when he died Osman and his brother Sonny gave up their fishing and carried on the trade. Osman was born round the turn of the 20th century and has seen many changes in his life.

Osman recalls the days when the Royal Navy wore extra-wide bell-bottom trousers and wide-brimmed straw hats (known as Sennet hats). This was their tropical rig. In those days beer was sold on the pavements when British ships called and the jovial proprietor collected the money in a hat. Lucky little boys romping around often won a tossed penny, but others who didn't never cried when they failed to catch a penny for they were often awarded one for being cheerful losers.

Many were the pranks and games when Osman Jaffa was young and the streets of Simon's Town were gaslit. "I remember the lamp-lighter going his rounds with his long ladder and stick". All went well on calm nights but on the nights when the south-easter blew hard and strong, the little boys would follow him on his rounds. He would place his ladder against a pole, try to climb it, then decide it was wobbling too much. One of the youngsters would then volunteer to run up for a penny reward. When all the lamps were lit on a windy night they had made quite a few pennies for sweets. Bread was 2½d a loaf in those days and Osman was often sent to Mr Whyte the grocer with a pillowslip. You could fill that with stale loaves for 6d.

There were good and bad times in Simon's Town. Some years boat-building work was slack and not many ships called so there was little for the Malay folk to do in the dockyard, then they turned to washing and laundry work. Life was often a struggle but they got on with it. Then ships would call in larger numbers and there would be additional work.

Before extensions to the East Dockyard, Steenbras Bay was the home of trek fishing and great hauls of fish were caught there. Then the area was filled in with sand and stones taken from Fishermen's beach at Froggy Pond to fill in and reclaim the area. Before that the youngsters swam around there and dived for coins. Osman remembers fishing with George Sharp, an old fisherman who lived at the fresh water spring along the Millers Point road and who carried water in paraffin tins supported on a beam across his shoulders, to the bungalow dwellers at Castle Rock. Everywhere he went George was followed by his big black dog "Kaffir".

When the 'flu epidemic struck in 1918, life in Simon's Town came to a standstill. Everyone was sick and many of the shops were closed and at night there was no one to light up the streets. A soup kitchen was started in the large house across from the Dutch Reformed Church (Mr Hablutzel's house which passed to his daughter Mrs. Dooley on his death). There was a separate kitchen for the Moslems. Osman kept very well and one of his jobs was

to go and fetch soup for the family. Undertakers could not cope there were so many dead and often people were buried alive. Many were so weak that they lay unconscious all day and were taken for dead. The butcher's wagon was used to convey the bodies to the old Somerset Road Cemetery in Cape Town. Coffins could not be made in large enough numbers so mailbags were used. On one occasion the wagon driver en route to Cape Town was tapped on his shoulder and turning round he saw a poor soul emerging from one of the mailbags. The man looked at the number on his hand and pointed to that on the bag. "Why am I here?" he asked pitifully "I am not dead". Simon's Town stank with the dead then said Osman.

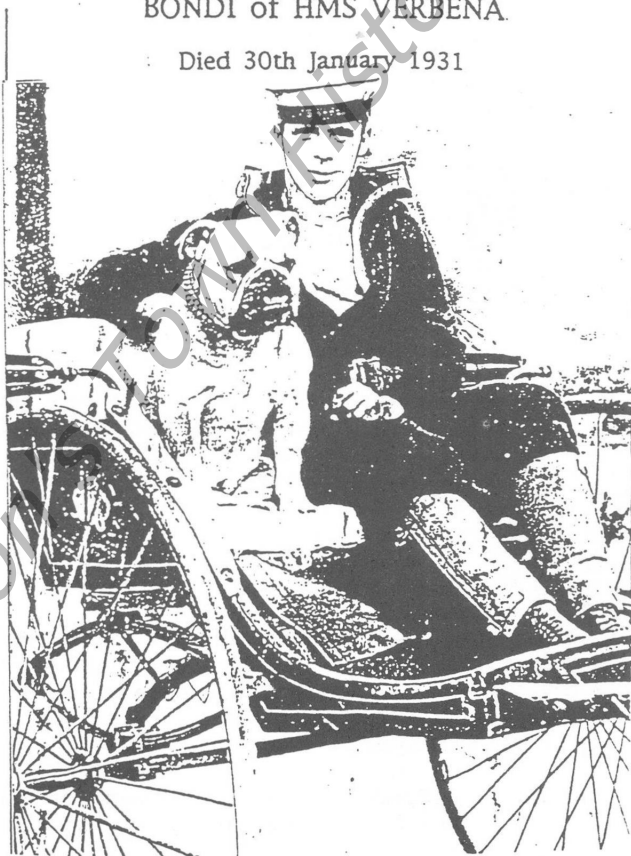
Osman Jaffa's grandfather was a slave and handed down to his family many stories of his early days at the Cape. Osman Jaffa had a very sturdy shed on the beach and patting the thick wood affectionately said that the Royal Navy had given him the wood many years ago. Osman Jaffa recalls that when Mrs Dooley's house was razed for the building of the Police Station in 1935 there were cellars and slave quarters under the old house and the rusty chains were still fastened into the walls.

(Taken from an article in the Cape Times 27.10.1967)

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BONDI of HMS VERBENA

Died 30th January 1931



"BONDI" - PEDIGREE BULL-DOG OF HMS VERBENA

(From a leaflet issued by the Mayor of Knysna, Cape)

HMS VERBENA was a Royal Navy sloop of the Arabis Class, built at the Blyth Shipyards and launched on 15 November 1915. She served on the Africa Station in the 1920s and 1930s. As was the custom the Royal Navy ships paid annual visits to the East coast of Africa often calling at ports like Knysna along the way.

"BONDI" had been given to the crew of HMS VERBENA by the people of that city during a visit to Lourenco Marques (Delagoa Bay) in 1928. He was the ship's mascot and his name was entered on the ship's list. He drew an allowance for victuals from the Admiralty.

It was on HMS VERBENA's third visit to Knysna in 1931 that tragedy struck. The crew of the VERBENA were due to give a variety concert in the Knysna Town Hall on Friday 30 January 1931. A party was sent ashore to decorate the hall for the event and had to march up from the wharf. "BONDI" joined the men on this march, on a very hot January afternoon, and collapsed and died from sunstroke near the Town Hall.

"BONDI" was buried on the wharf just north of an old warehouse and a wooden tombstone placed at the head of the grassy mound which marked his final resting place. A brass plate with the inscription "BONDI of HMS VERBENA" was screwed onto the wood.

The ship's log for Friday 30 January 1931 records very simply: "1600 hours - Bondi died ashore".

Thereafter whenever a British ship visited Knysna a detail of seamen was sent ashore to polish the brass and clip the grass on "BONDI'S" grave. The tradition started by VERBENA was continued by HMS DELPHINIUM in 1932, HMS ROCHESTER in 1933 and HMS MILFORD and HMS WESTON in 1934. Up until the outbreak of war in 1939 sailors from HM Ships BRIDGEWATER, PENZANCE, AUCKLAND and LONDONDERRY maintained the grave in a "ship shape" condition.

During the war years a local firm Thesens, were involved in the building of 10 "little ships" (Fairmiles) and the wharf became a restricted area. British ships no longer visited the port. It was not until 1948 with the visit of HMS NEREIDE to Knysna that the tradition of tending "BONDI'S" grave was revived and continued later that year with the visit of HMS ACTAION. HMS NEREIDE visited a further 5 times, the last being in 1953. The Knysna harbour was closed to shipping in 1954 so bringing to an end it's links with the Royal Navy started in 1817 by HMS EMU.

The land on the wharf had been granted to the Royal Navy in 1814 and they for a short time brought timber from Knysna to the dockyard in Simon's Town. They kept this land till after 1890 when it was swapped for a similar size piece of land which now forms part of the West Dockyard.

The SAS UMHLOTI and SAS UMZIMKULU visited Knysna on 13 July 2001 and revived the tradition of tending the grave of "BONDI".

DOCKYARD EMPLOYEES R.N. DOCKYARDS

Until its abolition in 1832, dockyards and naval establishments were the responsibility of the Navy Board, a body technically subordinate to the Admiralty, but distinct from it, and in large measure independent of it. Victualling yards and depots were in the same way answerable to the Victualling Board, and it in turn to the Navy Board and the Admiralty. The gunwharves, however, belonged to the Ordnance Board, an entirely independent body responsible only to the Master-General and the King. When the Ordnance Board was abolished in 1855, control of naval ordnance passed to the War Office and was not recovered by the Admiralty until 1909.

ORGANISATION BEFORE 1832:

Dockyards were entirely run by naval officers, civilian employees of the Navy Board, not sea officers. The senior official of each yard was the Commissioner, appointed by, and nominally a member of, the Navy Board. Under him were the Clerk of the Cheque and the Storekeeper, who with their clerks were responsible for the financial and administrative business of the yard; the Master Shipwright, who with his colleagues the Master Sailmaker, Anchorsmith, Rigger, Boatbuilder etc, was in charge of the building and repair work of the yard; the Master Attendants and the Boatswain, who supervised the yard craft, the ships afloat and 'in Ordinary', that is in reserve, and finally the Master Ropemaker who ran the Ropeyard. These senior officers, together with the clerks and foremen known as Inferior Officers, were salaried, and borne on the Ordinary vote, as were the established artificers and labourers of the yard; unestablished employees were borne on the Extraordinary vote. Although all yard officers were naval and not sea officers, there was movement between the two services. The Commissioners and Masters Attendant were usually retired sea officers; dockyard shipwrights, having served their apprenticeship, often became carpenters in the Navy, and might return to be Master Shipwrights, and in the same way the other Master Tradesmen and the Boatswain were normally recruited from the Sea Service. The career of any man, therefore, especially one of the skilled men, the 'artificers' or 'tradesmen' may have to be traced in the records of both services if one is researching overseas.

The senior officers of a Victualling Yard were the Agent Victualler (in the larger establishments only), the Storekeeper or Naval Officer, and the Clerk of the Cheque. In or around dockyards might also be found the Transport Agents, Agents for Prisoners and Hospital Agents who represented the Transport Board and the Sick and Hurt Board, and each had their own clerks and labourers.

ORGANISATION AFTER 1832:

All yards and establishments in each port, excepting the gunwharves, were now amalgamated under a single authority, though the Victualling Yards continued to be practically distinct and independent. The senior officer of each yard was now the Superintendent, an Admiral or Captain-Superintendent according to the size of the yard, who was a serving sea officer and was

often also the Port Admiral, that is the local flag officer. The duties of the Masters Attendant were distributed to the Captain of the Guardship, the local flagship which acted as barracks and headquarters, and a Captain of the Ordinary. When the introduction of steam engineering led to the building of "Steam Factories" attached to major yards, an Inspector of Steam Machinery and a Captain of Steam Reserve joined the Admiral Superintendent's subordinates. Later the Steam Factories were integrated into the yards, and a Chief Constructor took the place of the Inspector of Steam Machinery and the Master Shipwright. Though many titles have since changed, the yards continue to be run by a mixed body of civilians and sea officers under the authority of the Admiral Superintendent.

Reference:

Public Record Office, Kew, U.K.

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ROYAL NAVAL ARMAMENT DEPOT, SIMON'S TOWN

INTRODUCTION & GENERAL:

Up to 1890 armament stores for the Royal Navy were the responsibility of the Master of Ordnance at the Tower of London. The origin of this post is lost in antiquity, but probably dates from the time of the Conquest in 1066. From 1299 onwards there are numerous records of an "Artillerator" being appointed at the Tower of London as maker and provider of military implements. With the advent of the cannon the office acquired greater consequence, the casting of guns and the making of gunpowder being new and difficult arts, and from 1414 onwards a regular succession of Masters of the Ordnance at the Tower of London can be traced.

About 1890 Captain (later Lord) Fisher was appointed to the post of Director of Naval Ordnance, and he urged that the Navy should have an Ordnance Store Department instead of relying on the War Office. In 1891 such a department was set up under the control of the Director of Naval Ordnance. At first the head of this new department was known as the Storekeeper General of Naval Ordnance, but in 1902 the title was changed to Superintendent of Ordnance Stores. During the 1914-18 war the department was made a separate Directorate. In 1923 its head became known as Chief Superintendent of Armament Supply and in 1939 the title was changed to Director of Armament Supply.

Further information on the development of the Armament Supply Department appears in "Royal Fleet Auxiliary" by Captain E.E. Sigwart which reads as follows:

"Although the Armament Supply Department is officially only 76 years of age it can trace its origin back much further than 1891 and its ancestry is not without interest. The civil Admiralty Administration is directly descended from certain of the King's Clerks who were entrusted with the care of the King's

ships of war and this office is first specifically mentioned under King John. The first mention of an Ordnance Branch of the Navy was when Henry VIII constituted the Navy Board by letters patent in 1546. This Navy Board, which was nominally subordinate to the Lord High Admiral but which was in practice very independent, carried on the civil administration up to 1832, but the Ordnance Stores Service had a more varied career. The care of the guns of the Fleet and the provision of warlike equipment were transferred early in the 17th century from the "Surveyor of Ships and Masters of Ordnance", a member of the Navy Board, to the Honourable Board of Ordnance, an independent Department which had evolved from the administration of the King's Artillery and Fortifications and which was chiefly under military control. This system under which the Navy left one of its vital supply services in the hands of an outside body lasted for nearly 300 years in spite of constant complaints of the Board's sloth and incapacity".

In 1855 during the Crimean War, the letters patent for the Board of Ordnance were revoked and the duty of administering the Department was vested in the Secretary of State for War. There was at one time a Director General of Naval Artillery and later a Director of Artillery assisted and advised by a Naval Officer, who was responsible for all Naval Ordnance matters. In 1866 it was decided to appoint a Naval Officer as Director of Naval Ordnance at the Admiralty. Until 1880, however, the money provision for all "Naval Warlike stores" was still made in the Army estimates and the stores were bought by the War Office and maintained with military armaments as one common stock. At certain Army Depots, ordnance stores for the Navy were maintained with military armaments as one common stock. At certain Army Depots, ordnance stores for the Navy were maintained by Army Officers, but at others the Depots belonged to the Navy and were in charge of either Gunners RN or Naval Stores Officers. At all Depots, however, and on board ships, the stores were known as "War Office Stores".

In 1888 it was decided that the money provision should be transferred to Navy Votes, the War Office acting as agents for the Admiralty, but it was soon realised that a separation of Naval stocks from the Army was necessary. This was put into force and store ledgers were opened for Naval stocks. Even this modified system, however, did not give satisfaction, and when Captain J.A. Fisher (afterwards Lord Fisher) became Director of Naval Ordnance he urged the formation of a separate Ordnance Store Department in the Naval Service to maintain and distribute the Naval Ordnance stores as they then came to be called. A Committee was appointed by the Government to investigate the question and their report in July 1890 recommended the separation of the two Ordnance Store services as far as practicable. This recommendation was approved on 16 December 1890 and the new Department took over responsibility from the War Office on 1 October 1891.

When the principal Depots were transferred from the Army, certain Army Ordnance Officers were taken over, and thereafter served under the Admiralty. The first head of the new Admiralty Ordnance Store Department with the title of Storekeeper General

of Naval Ordnance was Colonel Pease (afterwards Sir Thales Pease). The moving spirit of the new Department was recognised to be the Storekeeper General's civil assistant Mr David Evans, who had been Secretary of the Naval Warlike Stores Committee which arranged the transfer. Mr Evans later became Director of Stores.

When the Storekeeper General retired in 1902, Rear-Admiral S. Eardley-Wilmot, afterwards knighted, succeeded to the post with the title of Superintendent of Ordnance Stores. He was followed in 1909 by Captain B.H. Chevallier RN, who served as Superintendent until 1917.

The 1914-18 war saw many changes and considerable expansion, with the result that in 1918 the Department became a separate Directorate under Captain H.R. Norbury CB RN, who had succeeded Captain Chevallier in 1917. The title was changed to Chief Superintendent in 1923 with Captain Norbury still in charge until 1927, when he was replaced by Commander (later Captain) H.J. Burnett Hall CBE RN.

The first civilian head was Mr. R.W. Wharhirst who succeeded Captain Hall in 1937 as Chief Superintendent of Armament Supply and as Director of Armament Supply from 1939 - when the title was again changed. He was knighted in 1946 and retired in 1947.

For the purpose of this article the term "naval armament stores" covers a range of weapons and ammunition and has to be interpreted in the light of naval armament in service at any given time during the years from 1880 to 1957 when Simon's Town Naval Base was handed over. This can be said to include:

guns small arms ammunition propellant charges
explosives mines detonators fuses torpedoes
pyrotechnics smoke stores and components of most of
these items.

The term "laboratory room" may convey the wrong impression in the present day understanding of a laboratory. In armament depot terms a laboratory room is a building used only for the examining and repair of ammunition. The Shorter Oxford English dictionary defines a "laboratory" (in military usage) as being "a department of an arsenal for the manufacture and examination of ammunition and combustible stores". Over the years numerous safety measures have been prescribed for laboratory rooms and magazines as ammunition has become more sophisticated. The standards adopted in 1880 would not be acceptable these days.

SIMON'S TOWN R.N. ARMAMENT DEPOT:

In the Navy List of June 1884 we find "Chief Gunner James May (borne in HMS FLORA) appointed 20 August 1880, in charge of Ordnance Stores". His pay is set out as £164.5/- per annum (the daily rate was 9/-). His seniority was given as: Gunner 13 December 1859 and Chief Gunner 16 August 1883. Despite the use of the term "Ordnance Stores" it would appear that the responsibilities attached to the appointment included:

1. Magazine buildings near the Martello Tower, then generally called the 'Block House', at South Point (as it was then known).
2. Ordnance stores at the Arsenal in Arsenal Road, and

3. If they were not already in use at this time, then certainly by 1887/88 (Council Minutes 21/11/1887), a magazine and associated buildings at the Kloof.

The Martello Tower with its adjacent magazines was later to become part of the East Dockyard after 1910.

In the absence of precise information on this matter, the type of stores held at the time of this appointment, and in the earlier years of the depot, would have to be inferred by ascertaining the armament carried by ships at and calling at Simon's Town. It is reasonable to assume that the appointment was made to meet increasing requirements of ships for naval armament stores, and to eliminate the problems which must have been experienced with supply having to be made from distant depots.

The staffing of naval armament depots followed the pattern developed for depots in this and other branches of the Royal Navy, that being, wherever possible the senior posts were filled by suitably qualified or skilled personnel from the United Kingdom performing "foreign service" duties, while the subordinate posts were filled by recruiting local available labour.

Possibly during the period of Chief Gunner May's appointment, and certainly during that of Gunner George J. August RN from 1 February 1886 (Navy List 1888), the Kloof magazines provided storage accommodation for both the Admiralty and the War Department. The Kloof Magazine is situated at the foot of the Simonsberg mountain behind the ground established as the Admiralty House garden. It passed to the South African Navy in the handover in 1957 and is now used by the Happy Valley Home.

In the winter months a small waterfall may be seen behind the magazine area (subject to there having been sufficient rain). The water falls into a stream which runs in front of the magazines, through Admiralty House garden, under the main road, south of Admiralty House and into the sea. The water originates in the Klawer valley. The Kloof magazine area has drainage gulleys which carry seepage away from the magazines for the better part of the year.

The selection of the area for the storage of ammunition appears to have been motivated by it being:

1. reasonably remote from habitation
2. within an acceptable distance of loading/unloading areas so as to minimise transportation problems, and
3. in an area difficult to attack.

Magazines which came to be known as magazine nos. 3 and 4 were constructed in 1882. By the very nature of this area it would appear that magazine no. 2 was built prior to 1882.

On a map dated 1890 of the Naval Yard at Simon's Bay magazine no. 2 is shown as in use by the Admiralty and magazine nos. 3 and 4 by the War Department (i.e for the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers who were then stationed in Simon's Town). This map was compiled by E.J. Powell from a Survey by Mr. J. Reid in 1854: a

plan of the Dockyard by Mr F.K. Taylor, Master RN in 1853: the Low Water rocks and soundings by Mr F. Skead Master RN in 1859 - corrections 1878 and 1879. To the right on the map can be seen the Arsenal, the Naval Yard (West Yard) and in the inset the Block House (Martello Tower) and associated buildings. The three naval magazines on the left side of the inset appear to have been demolished - possibly at the time the East Dockyard was constructed.

On 16 March 1892 (Navy List June 1892) Gunner William C. Tarrant was appointed in charge of the Ordnance Stores and he was succeeded by Chief Gunner Frederick J.M. Johnson on 2 April 1897 (Navy List 1897). Very few drawings of buildings used for the stowage of armament stores in the early days of the depot are available for examination. One of the early buildings was known to have been a guard-house which was later extended. This building bears the endorsement: "Existing building handed over to Admiralty by War Dept 18 February 1899". Next to it is another building which consisted of laboratory rooms for working on ammunition from the nearby magazines. Tools and equipment used in this laboratory were stored under the rooms.

Two more buildings can be seen in the bottom left hand corner of a photograph as printed on page 66 of "Historical Simon's Town" which was taken from above the waterfall in 1899. Neither building appears on the 1890 map referred to at the top of this page. The Arsenal can be seen in the centre of the photograph, it being the square of buildings with a cleared area around it. A feature of the magazines at the Kloof additional to the thickness of their walls and roofs, is their close proximity. It would appear that their type of construction was such that, for the ammunition and/or explosives stores at that time, any explosion would have been sufficiently contained.

Both the gunpowder magazine, built between 1890 and 1901, and no. 5 magazine built 1901, are of stone and appear to be on ground on which there was shown to be a wall on the map referred to at the top of the previous page. Since there was no mechanical means of lifting and moving ammunition, magazines were fitted with overhead travellers, or where this was not possible, block and tackle. Lifting equipment, where installed, all appears to be part of the original construction. Ammunition was moved between magazines and laboratory rooms on a low trolley. On the hillside above the magazines were two dams and a pump-house to provide water in the event of a fire.

In the Navy List 1906 Lt Christopher H. Deighton was appointed i/c Ordnance Stores from 24 March 1902. Next (Navy List December 1907) we find Gunner Henry McGill from 23 March 1907. During his term of office reference is made to an Ordnance Depot in a notice of his appointment in Navy List 1909 which reads: "R.N. Ordnance Depot, Simon's Town: (Under Naval Officer in charge Naval Establishments) For Charge of Naval Ordnance Depot - Chief Gunner H. McGill...7 April 1907". In comparison, in the same issue, appointments at Sydney and Bombay only had "Naval Ordnance Stores" status.

A drawing was prepared by John Lysaght Ltd, Constructional

Engineers, Bristol, dated 8 September 1908 and it shows details of the roof trusses required and refers to an "existing gutter", which indicates that the magazine had already been constructed and was in need of attention. The wall to which the trusses were to be fitted is considerably thinner than the walls shown in earlier drawings.

Navy List 1913 showed Commissioned Gunner Thomas W. Powell's appointment effective from 23 March 1912. In Navy List 1918 Lt William B. Fuller was appointed from 10 Sept. 1917 and with him G. Carter Esq. as Deputy Naval Ordnance Supply Officer from 20 April 1918. The appointment of a deputy, i.e. a second in command, does not appear after this entry except for appointments during W.W.II

In July 1919 the Navy List shows the title of the post, although still set out under the heading of "Principal and other Officers in the Royal Naval Ordnance Depots and Factories: changed to that of "For Charge of Naval Armament Supply Depot". This was followed in 1921 in the List with the main heading now reading "Principal and other Officers in the Royal Naval Armament Depots".

The introduction of a new date stamp reflecting the change of name is noted in 1921 with the stamp "Naval Ordnance Store" being used on 16 March and "Naval Armament Depot" stamp being used on 26 April. In the October 1921 Navy List the title of the appointment is "Officer in charge of Armament Supply".

Commissioned Gunner Frederick W. Sweetingham was appointed into the post in September 1922 (Navy List June 1923). He is shown in September 1928 as Lt Sweetingham (retired) but is not described as "Officer in charge". However, from Simon's Town Museum documents we know he was still in the position in 1930. January 1931 Deputy Armament Supply Officer K. Boutwood, a civilian, was appointed (Navy List 1931). He was thus the first civilian to fill the senior post. Subsequent appointments were:

St G. Redhead	DASO	October 1933	Navy List Dec. 1933
R.R. Bailey	DASO	December 1936	Navy List Dec. 1937
M. Godfrey	ASO	January 1940	

When it became evident that there was a need to supplement ammunition stowage space, Klaver Valley was selected as being the most suitable site locally but this took second place to the development of an armament depot at Jan Kempdorp, in the Northern Cape (now 93 Ammunition Depot). Jan Kempdorp is virtually at the centre of South Africa. Harbours at Simon's Town, Walvis Bay and those in Natal form a triangle with Jan Kempdorp at the centre. It also has a good rail service and is easily accessible by road.

The depot was constructed so that practically every magazine could be reached by an internal railway line. From a single line at the entrance to the depot the system developed into two overlapping ovals and a central line with a loop which in effect provided six lines of magazines. Work was commenced in 1939 and completed in 1941. An additional feature is that the site selected is flat. At Klaver three magazines were first built along with laboratory rooms. Later six more magazines were

constructed. Working conditions in this storage area were far from comfortable. There was no piped water supply nor was there any electricity. Water had to be fetched daily from the Signal School. Lighting was provided by the use of oil lamps.

The transport used had to be suitable both for the conveyance of personnel and the movement of stores. The first and last duties each day were the unshipping and replacement of the frame and protective canvas cover to facilitate the loading and unloading of ammunition during the course of work. As most of the roads were still gravel, dusty working conditions were experienced in the summer months.

Reginald Felix (still employed in November 1989 by the S.A. Navy), who had commenced employment with the Royal Navy in 1936, recalls some of the problems encountered with the handling of ammunition during WWII owing to there being insufficient storage space available. When warships put into the harbour their ammunition was brought ashore for gauging and checking. Whilst it was being worked on it would have to be stored in whatever space was available, that being either the Kloof, East Yard, Lower North Battery or in barges or lighters.

Owing to the limited handling facilities available ammunitioning and de-ammunitioning of ships took place over a number of days at that time. Felix was a member of one of the work parties which for four days unloaded only pom-pom ammunition from HMS DORSETSHIRE. He was also a member of a work party which went to Port Elizabeth to assist with the unloading from a supply vessel of ammunition destined for railing to Jan Kempdorp.

During the war when ammunition supply ships came into Simon's Town they were anchored in the Bay for ammunition to be off-loaded into lighters. These lighters were towed to the West Yard camber where the ammunition was again off-loaded for stowing in the most suitable places available. The pressures on ammunition stowage space, at this time, was such that ammunition even had to be stored outside under canvas, a practice which is used only as a last resort. This was in addition to ammunition being stored in lighters and barges moored in the Bay.

In 1941 Walter Edgar Cozett commenced employment with the R.N. He was still employed in the depot as at November 1989. After a period of service as a messenger he was transferred to the Torpedo Section which was situated in the West Yard. At this time torpedoes came under the Chief Engineer but as they are clearly armament stores (and were later transferred to the depot) it is appropriate to record his recollections in this history. When he was transferred to this section torpedoes were worked on in the Torpedo Workshop, a building constructed in 1893. It is now the Simonsberg Theatre. This workshop was responsible for the repair and maintenance of :

1. 18 and 21 inch torpedoes
2. paravanes and
3. other mine-sweeping gear.

Each vessel that put into Simon's Town had to be issued with paravanes. Any paravanes already held by the ships were returned

for maintenance and/or repair. A paravane is a torpedo-shaped device towed at a depth regulated by its vanes or planes to cut the moorings of submerged mines.

The airbottles of torpedoes after repair or overhaul had been completed, were subjected to air pressure testing in the test room in the Torpedo Workshop. Torpedo spares were held in an adjoining building. This store was accessed by steps from the Torpedo Workshop, thus making it convenient for the drawing of spares. Some of the steps are still visible in the store building.

This section only provided torpedo bodies. Warheads were drawn from Lower North Battery and were fitted by suitably qualified personnel when they were received on ships. As torpedo bodies were stored in the West Yard and certain repair facilities were in the East Yard it was a common sight to see torpedoes being pulled on trolleys along St George's Street between the two Dockyards. What was known as the Spare Parts Distribution Centre, was erected for the stowage of torpedo bodies due to the existing storage space being inadequate for the larger quantities having to be stored in wartime. Up to 200 torpedoes were reported to have been stored.

Alfred Charles Lewry arrived in Simon's Town in 1941 as a R.N. civilian employee and worked at the Arsenal, (present day Logistic Base) which for a number of years had been, and still was, the headquarters of the Armament Depot. At the entrance to the Arsenal two notices were displayed. On the gate a notice stated, quite appropriately, that photography and sketching were strictly forbidden in the vicinity. Nearby on the wall the second notice contained the stern injunction that "Pedal Bicycles Are Not To Be Ridden Through The Main Gate And Into The Yard." His impression of the buildings that housed the workshops and stores at the Arsenal was that they were primitive. They were constructed of corrugated iron and leaked.

The Factory, which was the workshop responsible for small arms repairs, had a small test range adjacent to the waterfall at the Kloof. It was used for proofing Lewis and Hotchkiss machine guns during the 1939-45 War. His opinion of the workshop buildings did not deter him from returning to Simon's Town from the U.K. after having completed his tour of duty. He took up employment locally at the Depot and retired in 1982.

Another employee at the Arsenal was George Wilfred McDaniel (retired October 1989) who worked in the Gun Wharf Store which in those days dealt with spares for all guns, both large and small calibre. Part of his duties included the writing up of the bulky, heavy, loose leaf ledgers in vogue at the time for issues from and receipts into the store. Once a month a section of the ledger was compared page by page with the Main Office ledger. In 1943 Edward Arendse (still working in the depot in November 1989) commenced employment as a labourer with the Royal Navy at Lower North Battery.

Both torpedo warheads and depth charges, along with other small ammunition, were stored in the underground storage chambers.

Moving the items into and out of the chambers presented problems owing to steps having to be negotiated. Extensive use had to be made of block and tackle.

Warheads were worked on in a building which is now an electrical sub-station and scraping and painting was done under cover outside the building. Depth charges were rolled up planks from the ground onto vehicles when it was not possible to use the hoist for loading. The underground storage chambers, although they served a useful purpose in providing storage space for the smaller types of ammunition and explosives were cramped and tended to be damp. A part of the armament depot had over the years been established in the East Yard at the head of the Selborne Dry Dock.

Once again it is noted that safety distances between magazines were virtually non-existent and the concern which was to become evident in later years over the storage and proofing of ammunition in close proximity to offices, workshops and residences is understandable.

A building near the Martello Tower which was later to become a chapel, was a detonator store and the Dockyard Supply Organisation (DSO) building now stands on the site formerly occupied by a pre-fabricated building which served as a box store. Gun barrels were stored in the open on what was known as the gun ground. To preserve them the bores were smeared with grease by using tow and rods, both ends were blocked with plywood and they were sealed with pitch. Three-ton lorries remained in use for a number of years for the conveyance of armament stores.

The last appointments found in the Navy List are those in April 1946, all effective from 15 May 1945 for:

G.S. Steed	Naval Armament Supply Officer (Actg)					
S.R. Callis	Deputy	"	"	"	"	and
M.L. Beaumont	Asst.	"	"	"	"	

Subsequently the following were appointed as Armament Supply Officers:

L.W. Bethel	March 1949
A.E. Morgan	May 1953 and
J. Wedlake	September 1954.

Wedlake stayed on until the handover to the S.A. Navy in 1957 and by arrangement continued in this post while a South African naval officer qualified for the appointment. He died suddenly in his sleep in April 1958 before the training was complete.

References:

1. Relevant Navy Lists
2. Card Index Simon's Town Museum
3. Vice-Chairman Simon's Town Historical Society who was O.C. Armament Depot 1986-1993.
4. Simon's Town Municipal Archives.

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WOMEN SOLDIERS

Maj.Gen. G. Dunbar-Moodie SM

The basic training which all soldiers undergo in the first months of their service involves repetitive and other drills. Its primary object is to cause the individual voluntarily to sublimate freedom of action and to accept group obedience. Infantrymen are then divided as a rule into groups of less than a dozen under junior leaders and these small sections always acting together, develop pride and comradeship, and form the building blocks of which larger formations are made. Acting thus not on own initiative but under rigid control at all levels the soldier is trained to be an obedient but intelligent automaton - if this is not a contradiction in terms. This is, or ought to be, the classic difference between military and police training, a difference so sadly misunderstood during the last stages of the apartheid era, and a concept obviously foreign to present ideas in this country of military "trade unions".

Perhaps the ideal is best expressed in the words of Piet Moll "If you ask who I am I can tell you that I am Lance-Corporal Moll - the commander of the best section of the best platoon of the best company of the best battalion of the best brigade of the best division in the Western Desert".

The same principle applies in specialist arms such as artillery where basic training is followed by specialist training, where rigid drills on guns and instruments again leave no scope for initiative but plenty of incentive for unit pride. This negation of originality, of freedom of action and of individuality would seem to be completely foreign to the female paradigm but women take to it like ducks to water. I discovered this for myself when I was faced with the problem of training the first group of female artillery specialists on Robben Island during World War II. This specially selected group had been on a course on the mainland presumably to satisfy some doubting senior male officer that female intellect was capable of comprehending the intricacies of the Fortress Plotter, the Battery Plotting Table, the Position Finder etc etc! Of army procedures or the guns or the whole set-up they seemed to have been taught very little being rather like someone who had been taught the principles of the internal combustion engine and the theory of the clutch, differential and gearbox but not how to drive a car. Faced with this problem I decided to treat them exactly like male recruits giving them basic parade-ground training first and then marching them to the training sites to undergo the full Gunnery Course with lectures, drills on each type of gun and all equipment (they were excused only the hand loading of a 100 lb 6 inch shell but not the power loading of the 380 lb 9.2 inch projectile). Their response was magnificent and so enraptured were they with the process that this became standard procedure with each subsequent course using both male and female instructors, producing I am sure, one of the smartest and most efficient female corps in the Commonwealth armies. They laugh now when they talk about discipline and the marching from place to place but they were the corps d'elite and they knew it. As

to their competence on the instruments one might generalise by saying that women on the whole were better operators than men in their ability to concentrate simultaneously on a multiplicity of moving dials and verbal orders, and in their "unphased" reaction to external distractions. They possibly showed up less well than the men in their reaction to instrument break-downs and ability to extemporise. Some 500 members of this corps eventually took over the instruments in Coast Artillery batteries all along the S.A. coast, even ousting the men from their posts as Battery Commanders Assistants demonstrating thereby their complete ability to take over the command, firing and ranging of the batteries at live shell practice on towed targets and of course enemy targets should these have appeared.

The war effort of these women should have been officially recognised by decorations etc but was never properly acknowledged due probably to a blunder by some senior officer at Defence Headquarters who was obviously completely ignorant of their special status. These women were soldiers and could be ordered to perform any function within their capabilities with the proviso that they should operate as a unit under their own command. When the Coast Artillery was closing down towards the end of the war the telephone exchange of Johannesburg city was unable to find recruits under the conditions offered. The order went out that members of the Artillery Specialists Womens Auxiliary Army Service (ASWAAS) as they were known, would be posted as individuals to this public telephone exchange and forced to serve under their wartime oath of allegiance. Of course they were furious - it was like ordering volunteer Grenadier Guardsmen to drive London buses. I have no doubt that they showed their disapproval and were promptly labelled as insubordinate and the Corps lost the recognition it so richly deserved.

Having exhausted myself in the expression of my admiration of the women soldiers with whom I had dealings in World War II I must disappoint feminists when I express doubts as to whether the recruitment of women as regular soldiers in peacetime involves the best expenditure of tax-payers money. Peacetime soldiers are a heavy burden on any state and they remain an expensive responsibility from the date of recruitment till their death. Extra administrative arrangements which two sexes in such an organisation demand are a consideration, as is the fact that women must never be put in a situation where they can become prisoners of war, but most important of all is the fact that your regular soldier must be exceedingly versatile to justify his/her keep. Besides preparing for war and taking part in parades the regular army must be available for such duties as peace-keeping in other countries, crowd-control, fighting veld fires, storm and earthquake rescue and virtually any job (usually unpleasant) demanding disciplined manpower at often the shortest notice. The Army should be allowed to reject recruits who cannot reasonably be expected to fulfil all of such duties at all times to the best effect. People who would like to be regular soldiers might be born with health problems, sight or hearing deficiency, or homosexuality or flat feet or female sexuality or any other condition which might affect versatility and make them less acceptable for a lifetime of service in the Forces.

To admit the ability, even superiority of women in many specialist army posts in war time and yet deny them the right to serve full-time under peace conditions might seem to be unfair. Wars in any case however, do make their greatest demands on volunteers and conscripts. The retention of women's right not to be conscripted to fight in war or train in peace should be seen as some compensation for denying them appointment to most forms of peacetime military employment.

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CORONATION OF KING GEORGE VI

A.E. READ

The coronation of King George VI was celebrated in great style in Simon's Town. This was in 1937 only 2 years after the silver jubilee of King George V and the planting of the palm trees on Jubilee Square.

Simon's Town was floodlit at night and festooned with bunting. The Municipality even went to the expense of importing from England several magnificent plaques with which they decorated the Municipal building (now Patel's). Bonfires were lit in the very large quarry and on the hill above Luyolo township. The public crowded onto Jubilee Square when the Mayor and Council were "at home" to the ratepayers. There was also an all-day sports meeting for children. The newspaper report says that commemoration trees were planted round Jubilee Square by the Mayor Mr L.C. Gay, Commander-in-Chief (Vice-Admiral Sir Francis Tottenham) and other prominent members of the community. We presume that these must have been the gum trees which now have sadly been removed in the past ten years. They had become rather unsafe and did not fit in with the redevelopment of the square.

During the day an ox was roasted in accordance with native custom and sheep were distributed among the Malay and coloured community. In the evening a dance was held in the West Dockyard Sale Floor (not to be confused with the Sail Loft/St George's Dockyard Church). About 300 guests enjoyed this dance with music provided by the Milcordians Orchestra of HMS MILFORD. The music during the day had been provided by the band of HMS AMPHION.

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(From her Diary and letters published as "Being a Record of the early days etc" and edited by Evan Kyffin Thomas. A Mr. G. Brooks of Adelaide, Australia brought this to the attention of one of our members Bob Johnston).



"September 19 - a Tremendous sea, though but little wind, which is usual in these parts. This evening there was a faint glimmering of the Cape of Good Hope. It appeared like a cloud at a great distance, and none but those who had been to sea before would have taken it for land.

September 20 - This morning the cliffs of Simon's Bay were distinctly visible, and gradually increased on the sight. A lofty range of mountains stretched on each side of us, and formed a grand spectacle, and, of course, an agreeable one to all on board, it being exactly twelve weeks since we left London.

September 21 - This day, Wednesday, about noon, we anchored in Simon's Bay. A gentleman and lady in the cabin of the name of Hallett, with their family of three children and a servant, joined us in a boat, as they preferred going on shore with us rather than with the cabin party, on account of their family. Some black natives came alongside, and we engaged one of their boats. When we reached shallow water, there being no jetty, we were carried on shore in the arms of the men, to our no small amusement, and my daughter Mary was the first of our party to set foot on Africa.

There is a small town here, as they call it, which consisted entirely of one street, or rather, one row of houses at the base of tremendous hills and facing the water. The whole much resembled a newly-founded watering-place in England. The inhabitants were chiefly English, with some Dutch, but we saw a great many of the native Africans, quite black, with woolly hair. They took much notice of us, and seemed to be well aware that we had just arrived from England.

We went to the Anchor Inn, kept by an Englishman (Mr. Kelly); others to different inns and lodgings, of which there were several in town. We partook of lunch as soon as we arrived, of bread and cheese and butter, with bottled ale, all of which were excellent.

Never did I relish anything so much, after being so long confined to ship diet, and this seemed to be the case with everyone. We then took a walk, as the weather was very fine, and returned to dinner at 4 o'clock. This consisted of a boiled leg of mutton and rump steaks, with potatoes and cabbage, followed by a bread pudding and excellent pastry. Four bottles of Cape wine were also placed on the table, and everything seemed to be in a style which we did not expect from the appearance of the place, especially as the Anchor was not the principal inn, which was called the Clarence, and where we first went. Some of the cabin party having taken possession of the latter house, the landlady turned us out rather unceremoniously, at which we were not a little surprised, considering our number - fourteen in all. However we immediately went to the Anchor, and there remained till Friday afternoon, and most likely were the better customers, as all the cabin party set off the same night for Cape Town, about twenty miles distant. I must add that our landlord sat at the head of the table at dinner, assisting us and doing all in his power to make us comfortable, at the same time amusing us with many anecdotes respecting the Cape and its inhabitants. Fifteen years before, he said, when he first came there, the monkeys used to chase each other on the tops of the hills behind the houses, but now a wild animal of any kind was rarely seen.

There was not much to be had at Simon's Bay besides fruit, as the shops, or stores, as they were called, contained but little stock. The poultry were very fine, as also the sheep. The tails of the latter sometimes weigh as much as twelve or fourteen pounds and are nearly all fat, which is often used as butter, being soft and yellow. The carcass, however, is generally lean in comparison with that of English sheep. Cattle, too, were abundant, and much used for draught; horses likewise seemed to be plentiful.

A sort of caravan, resembling a London omnibus, drawn by six horses and driven by a Malay with a tremendously long whip, brought our captain and party from Cape Town. I heard one gentleman say that he rode in one drawn by fourteen horses, but they are invariably small, and would bear no comparison with those in England. We likewise saw a light wagon, to which were attached eighteen bullocks.

The oranges are very fine. I bought a hundred for 3/6d, also a hundred of a smaller sort, called snatches (naartjies) for 1/-. Mr Thomas purchased a box of raisins, containing 28 lbs for 4/-. They were very sweet and without stalks. There was also a great quantity of dried fruit, such as apples, pears and apricots, but we were too early for grapes and melons, as we arrived in the spring.

Mr Thomas and Mr Hallett went some miles up the country to a farm which was recommended to the latter, who wished to purchase a milch goat for his children, as they were all young. He bought two, with kids by their sides for 35/-. We bought some fowls from our landlady for 1/9d each. The captain purchased a great many sheep and a cow and a calf. Livestock of every kind was much cheaper than in England, but bread at a higher price. Fuel was also scarce and dear.

Mr Thomas purchased some potatoes for seed, and a roll of canvas for a tent to supplement a large one which we had on board, bought from a man at Chalton, in Hampshire, recommended to us by Mr. Martin while we were staying at his house before we left England; also a box of candles at 6d per pound. I bought a quart bottle of genuine cayenne pepper for 7/6d, some of which I have to this day.

I mention these things to apprise those who may have forgotten to provide themselves with some such necessary articles, and are fortunate enough to put in at the Cape of Good Hope, that they may be obtained at Simon's Bay on reasonable terms and I believe still cheaper at Cape Town. No doubt, in the lapse of time since we were there (nearly 28 years) everything has been greatly improved and the stores are supplied with a greater variety.

On the day we left we requested to have a roasted leg of mutton, as they call it, but which is always baked. As the bakers had consumed all the fuel in the morning to make a larger quantity of bread than usual for their customers (there being a ship of war also in the bay) and consequently could not bake for dinner, the mutton had to be boiled. Their only supply of fuel seems to be small wood, which is brought daily by the natives, and bushes, which bear the most beautiful flowers imaginable, are cut down and burnt (possibly proteas?). We saw whole hedges of myrtle in full blossom; the Cape lily too (arum lily?) which is so highly prized in England, grows there on the hills and by the roadside in great abundance and very large. We also saw some running water of the colour of vinegar, but very clear and not bad tasting. What made it of such a singular appearance I could not learn.

On the whole we enjoyed ourselves very much and so well satisfied was our landlord that before we parted he insisted upon our partaking of a bottle of champagne, and wished us a good voyage and prosperity in our new settlement. We had some difficulty in making him understand where it was to be, for at first he imagined that we were bound for van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), South Australia being then a new name for the colony and I believe not till we arrived at the Cape had the inhabitants heard of such an intended settlement.

I must here mention the wine called Constantia, which as our landlord told us, can only be produced on two or three vineyards within a small district where the soil is favourable to the growth of a particular grape from which it is made. It is very rich in flavour, and was indeed a treat to us. It sold at 2/- per bottle. The ordinary Cape wine was sold a 1d per glass. Mr Hallett's and our men were on shore drinking it as they did beer in England. It got the better of them and they continued drinking and smoking nearly all night, making such an intolerable noise that we could not sleep. However, they seemed to enjoy themselves, like their masters, and the next day we treated them to a good breakfast and dinner, with sufficient wine to make them comfortable without being tipsy. They returned to their ship highly gratified."

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