

NEWSLETTER

Volume 2011 Issue 4

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QUOTABLE QUOTE

I trace my family history so
I will know who to blame.
Every family tree has some
sap in it.

Friends come and go, but
relatives tend to
accumulate.

Genealogy: A hay stack full
of needles. It's the threads
I need.

Genealogy: Collecting dead
relatives and sometimes a
live cousin!

Genealogy: Where you
confuse the dead and
irritate the living.

Next Edition due:
April 2012

EDITORIAL

STAND BY FOR A NEWSLETTER OF 'EPIDEMIC' PROPORTION!

Sorry about the dreadful pun but it must be the Christmas Spirit in the air!

Two of our articles deal with epidemics—the one a follow up on the ROSE family history (kindly supplied to me by a member) in which Mrs Rose hears from her daughter and then her daughter's friends of how the entire family, save one son, Tom, was wiped out by cholera on the island of Mauritius in the Nineteenth Century. Read all about it in the article on page 2.

The second story arose from the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918. I was asked to do some research on the old Black River Cemetery, which hasn't been used for nearly 90 years, and it has been suggested that it be re-developed. All grave markers and gravestones have already disappeared. Those researching this possible project wanted to know the number of burials that could have taken place there. A glance at the Burial Register of St Paul's, Rondebosch shows that this could have numbered well into the thousands and a thoroughly-researched archaeological disinterment would have to take place.

While glancing through the register I came to October 1918 and found pages of those who died in the Spanish Flu epidemic. I also found the relevant editorial from the parish magazine, *The St Paul's Record*, which gives a more personal story for the period. These are incorporated in the story on page 5.

FORMAT OF NEWSLETTER

I received four letters-to-the-editor concerning the format of the newsletter. Two like the single format and two preferred the older version of two columns per page.

I'm sticking to two columns because those of you who get the printed version might have trouble following the small font size across an entire page, while those reading it online can enlarge your view and thus fill an entire page making the fonts easy to see.

But that poses another question—How many of you read it on the computer screen and how many print out a hard copy?

Responses to the format and, of course, the content are always welcome.

EPIDEMIC I: Cholera in Mauritius

Last month I included some of the earlier history of the Rose family at the Cape. The second extract from a family history she wrote for her grandson tells of a cholera epidemic in Mauritius that she narrowly escaped by being at that time at the Cape. Unfortunately it took the life of her daughter Caroline and all but one of Caroline's children.

Mrs Rose had joined her daughter Caroline, now married to a Mr Kelsey, in Mauritius. There she tells us in her diary she spent five and half "peaceful years in paradise". She was asked by a friend, a Mr Steadman to travel to the Cape in order to look after his ailing daughter and as Mrs Rose had suffered a paralysis of the right hand the family thought that a sea voyage and time at the Cape would be beneficial for her too.

While at the Cape Mrs Rose received the following letter from her daughter in Mauritius:

May 29th, Monday.

My ever precious Mother,

I can indeed say that it is well for dear Mama...[not to have returned to Mauritius as] the Lord's hand is stretched out over this land; cholera is making dreadful ravages - it is time of weeping and mourning.

Day after day we hear of one and another being taken away. Yesterday at chapel Mr Le Brun was very earnest, and much affected in speaking of the many who had been called from the church and congregation, and while preaching a note was brought saying Mrs Anderson had died that morning. Oh! dear Mama, we do indeed feel that we are in the hands of our heavenly Father, and that a "Father's hand will never cause his child a needless tear", and earnestly do I pray for entire submission to God's will; but it is a fearful time, a time of heart searching and walking safely before the Lord.

As yet the ravage of the cholera seems to be principally confined to Grand River and Port Louis. Oh pray for us, dear Mama, that we may all live more to the glory of God. Much as I long for your presence, I feel thankful that you are not here now.

May 30th. Through the mercy of God we are all pretty well. But how dreadful have been the ravages the last day three days, upwards of one hundred a day. Coffins can no longer be supplied for the multitudes, and carts are sent about for the dead. Yesterday carts, carriages, of all sorts were passing as rapidly as possible all day, carrying people out of the country. Oh my precious mother, how earnestly do I pray for submission to the will of God; to feel my interest in the Saviour, to be willing to suffer his will; but at times heart and flesh will fail. My beloved husband is calm and peaceful, and prays earnestly that living or dying we may glorify our Heavenly Father and often reminds me that our times are in his hands we are of course taking every precaution, such as chloride of lime in every room, smelling camphorated brandy, making the servants wash their rooms often and then we desire to leave the results to "him who do all things well."

May. 31st. Through God's pity we are permitted to assemble

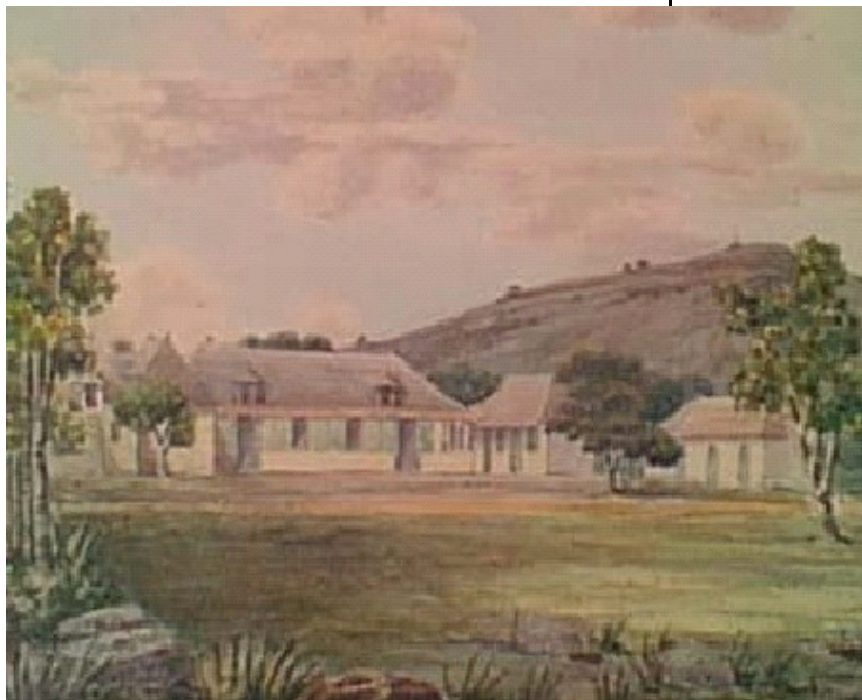
at the family altar an unbroken family. "Oh, for a heart to praise my God, a heart from sin set free." Is not this fearful? I want to feel the inward witness that I am born of God. The heart is so deceitful, so desperately wicked, and if I could not look to Jesus, what should I do? I know you pray for me, dearest Mama, may God hear your prayers

June 3rd. Again, dear Mama, have we to sing mercy, for all are well. My nurse has been ill for the last two days so the dear children are very fractious.

June 5th. Yesterday my own dear mama, I did not write for I was so fatigued, I felt unwilling to exert myself more than was necessary. On one afternoon of the 1st. my darling Fred took ill, I feared the symptoms were those of cholera, purging vomiting, and cold feet: We immediately sent for the Doctor, and through God's blessing the child is lively and pretty well to-day; but as cholera is very rapid in its effects, we were loath to retire to rest and I remained with the dear child nearly all night; but it proved to be an attack of dysentery. I cannot tell how distressing. This disease puzzles all the doctors. The bazaar is deserted, no meat to be obtained I am thankful that for the present, our poultry is pretty well supplied. The weather is bracing and delightful, the last two days the wind had blown much, and we anxiously hope to hear that the malady has somewhat abated. Much as I rejoice you are not here, yet how oft do I long to breathe my hopes and fears in my mother's ear.

Monday, ... Oh how earnestly do I pray for submission, to the will of God. We know our lot is determined and that nothing can happen without his will. The great business of life is to prepare for heaven, and to be ready watching for the coming of the Lord. Had it pleased God, I should indeed have rejoiced to have had you with me in my time of trial. Should it please our Heavenly Father to remove me before you, I know you will have superintend my beloved, my precious little ones, though I should not wish them to be removed from their dear father's example and authority.

Tuesday. The mortality yesterday was very dreadful five poor creatures came at different times for relief, and Oh how thankful I feel when it is in my power to help them. Adel our washerwoman had an attack, but we immediately administered Dr H's remedy, and through God's blessing she is much better, though she is very feeble. She has left, this morning for Nouvelle Decouverte. This puts us to great inconvenience. I do not know if I have told you Dr H's remedy, it is as follows: a handful of Kiaoua leaves, ten ounces of ginger, one quart of boiling water, after being well fused and one wineglass full of brandy, and drink the half as hot as possible, and in half an hour the other half



A Typical House in Mauritius

if not relieved. If taken in time this often proves efficacious.

Wednesday. Again, dearest Mama, have we to record God's goodness and mercy, we are all well. We rode into Town this morning, the first time for three weeks. Many shops are shut, and little business doing, for the cholera is still ranging in some parts. Yesterday 140 deaths were recorded. Carts and vehicles of all sorts are employed to carry the dead to the grave.

Thursday, June 8th. Anxiously do I hope to hear the malady has somewhat abated; but I fear it is not yet the case. The Lord's hand is still stretched out over the land. Oh, that mercy may be mixed with judgement, and that many may be led to look to Jesus.

Friday, June 9th. Saturday June the 10th. My journal, my own dear Mama, will in some way prepare you for the painful intelligence I have now to communicate. On Thursday evening we met a happy family all well. Darling Fred the merriest of the merry, he went to bed at the usual time slept sweetly till twelve, at which time he woke vomiting, I immediately said our darling was taken with cholera, as it proved: at four my beloved husband went to send for a doctor, while waiting I thought he had ceased to breathe, and sent for him. He came immediately and saying "The only hope is now in the water" he plunged him into cold water and the dear child revived. Dr. M came, highly approved of the means and although very, very bad he is still alive and the doctor gives us hope that he will be spared to us. But, Oh my precious mother, I fear not. Oh, what a trial! May God give us grace to leave him with him. The Lord gaveth, the Lord has a right to him.

Last night at ten, my pretty sweet little Nat took ill and

this morning at five he was a corpse. The Lord doth all things well. This I know and feel. But Oh how earnestly do I pray for submission to my Father's will. What a rending of mother's feeling cut down in a moment, yesterday in perfect health, today in Jesus' bosom, and safely housed from all the dangers and trials of life.

My precious Tom is at present well, at this moment at my side with Noah's Ark but Oh how I tremble as I look at him. Before I closed my letter I went to look at my precious Fred, he is very low, but he knew me, and gave me a sweet smile. Dear Nat is dressed in the little white dress you gave Tom; he is such a sweet object. Oh how my mother will sympathise with her afflicted child; but trust Jesus is nigh to us. My beloved husband is very low spirited but he is looking to Jesus, who alone can sustain him. Pray for us dear Mama, may you be preserved and kept by our Heavenly Father.

My own dearest Mama will be somewhat prepared to hear that my pretty darling Fred was removed to Jesus' bosom on Saturday

the 10th June at half past nine. Oh dear Mother would you could have seen the pretty creature, he was more beautiful than ever, he was patient as a lamb took all that was given to him, but God took him and we are bereaved.

On Sabbath morning poor Edward was attacked, and to-day he is dying. The doctor ordered me to keep him in a horizontal position I have only been to see the poor child three times; we were much tried when he was attacked, because his mind was unprepared, but God in Mercy has heard our prayers, he is in a very sweet frame of mind. I just went in to see him, and he told me he was willing to go to Jesus, he is in no pain, fast sinking.

Oh, dear Mama, since last Thursday night, two taken a third laid low. Oh, how solemn, how trying. But I trust Jesus is with us in these fiery trials. Should it please our Heavenly Father to remove us, dear, dear Mama, I entrust my darling Tom to your care during your life. Oh I feel my utter unworthiness but Jesus dies that is my only hope, my only refuge,

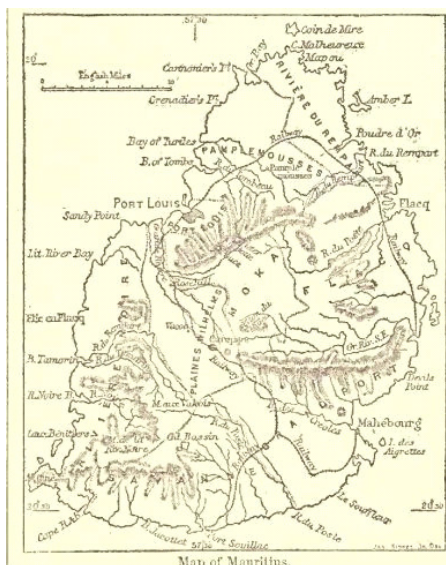
Your own afflicted Caroline.

My beloved sends much love.

Mrs Rose continues in her history:

Two days after this letter was written, Mr. Kelsey was seized with cholera. The following account of his death was forwarded to me by a friend.

It was a lovely Mauritius morning, and everything around the exterior of the building was just as I left it a few days before, but the angel of death has since then visited that circle and the voice of joy, and the accents of praise had been turned into mourning. Mrs. Kelsey observed my approach and came to arrest me, she welcomed with tears, saying, "You have indeed come into the house of mourning, I stood it well till he gave way, but his illness tries me very



A map of Mauritius

much, I am glad you are come, for we are worn out with fatigue."

The loss of his two little ones affected Mr. K. very much, and left a strong impression upon his mind that he should soon follow them. He immediately set his home in order, and, from that period, till he stood in the presence of Him whom he loved and

served so well he enjoyed in a remarkably degree that peace which passeth all understanding ardently rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God. When I entered his chamber, he appeared on the verge of eternity. To my question of how he felt, he replied in a lowered voice "Very ill". I said, "Do you feel Christ to be precious to you now?" He said "Unspeakable, unspeakably precious".

Captain Gordon had sat up with Mr. K the previous night, and he had read to him many passages of scripture, which refreshed him greatly, and I did the same in the day, and thus with prayer we cheered him through the dark valley, as best we could. He gradually grew weaker and suffered greatly from cramps in legs and feet. In the course of the day little Tom came into the room and thinking his Papa dead he looked up into his mother's face and said "Mama, is Tom going to die" "I hope not, my dear" his mother replied, "why do you ask?" "Oh Mama Nat is dead, Fred is dead. Papa is dead, Tom died too." At three o'clock in the morning Mr K. sang in a low but distinct voice, his favourite hymn "Hallelujah! We are on our way to God". These were his last or among his last words of the triumph over death leaving a bright example for a Christian to follow. During these sorrowful hours Mrs Kelsey's sorrow for the loss of her children was absorbed in the greater grief she felt for her husband. I knew not how to comfort her, says Captain Gordon but she seems to rest upon the Lord for comfort. She could bear the loss of her children she said, but could not bear the loss of her husband; but although in the deepest grief, she was yet supported in her faith. As soon as Mr. K's spirit had taken its flight the medical attendance had Mrs. K. and her children removed from their own residence to a house in the Champs de Mars. Mrs. K. was laid upon the sofa, apparently quite calm. At twelve, two gentlemen called to know if she would have the coffin of wood or lead, this quite overcame her and it was long before she regained her composure. At nine o'clock she took the children into Edward's room, opened her bible, closed her eyes for a few moments, read, the 52nd, 53rd, 54th of Isaiah and then knelt in prayer; her voice tremulous at first

became firm and clear, but its tones so touching as must have melted the hardest heart, the children retired to rest.

At twelve Mrs Kelsey was taken ill. Violent cramps, vomiting, and fainting fits told the sad tale that cholera was doing its work of death. Whenever the fainting fit had passed away; she raised her voice in prayer for strength and patience to bear her sufferings. It was in one of these short intervals, between the paroxysms that she dictated the following lines to her absent mother: "My Own precious mother, the Lord's hand is upon me and I cannot write myself, I earnestly pray for submission, and desire to cling to Jesus. I commit my precious Tom to you, and may God grant that he may walk in his father's footsteps, and be His own dear servant."

Captain Gordon, of the Royal Engineers sat up with Mrs Kelsey that last sad night. He says: "I found Mrs, Kelsey very ill. Her attentive loving servants and her children sitting round her bed watching over her, no complaint

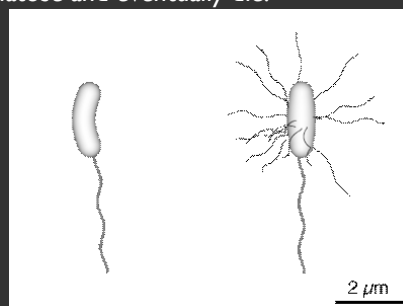
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How Cholera kills

Cholera is a disease caused by waterborne bacteria called *Vibrio cholerae*. They enter the body via ingestion of water contaminated with faeces from cholera victims. Generally, people don't ingest others' faeces, so this usually only happens when there is a very poor sewer/sanitation system, as was the case in Victorian London, Cape Town and Mauritius.

Upon ingestion of 1 million to 100 million of bacteria (less than the number of organisms in a glass of contaminated water), the bacteria spread to the small intestine and multiply, creating huge blockages and interrupting the body's ability to maintain water balance. Additionally, *V. cholerae* release toxins that cause the intestinal cells to secrete a whole lot of water rather than absorbing it. The effect is an immense case of diarrhoea that can result in the loss of 20 litres of fluid. Epithelial cells of the small intestine and trillions of bacteria are also released with the water, which is one reason why ingesting that effluent would be particularly dangerous.

When the human body loses that much water, blood volume begins to fall. The heart has to pump faster in order to maintain blood pressure, and organ failure follows. As blood pressure falls while heart rate spikes, the victim can become comatose and eventually die.



The Cholera bacteria

(Continued from page 4)

escaped her lips she spoke gently and calmly to all. To my questions of what I should read, she replied; "The Sufferings of Jesus". Hymns and passages of scripture were occasionally read to her. The dear old servants would none of them leave her at all. The Rev. J. le Brun came at eight o'clock, quite exhausted. Mr. Le Brun read and prayed with Mrs. Kelsey, she was in a most happy state of mind, waiting for the Lord, and ready to depart. Little Tom was by her side, she held up his hands, and put words of prayer into his mouth, until she became insensible, and her spirit took its flight to the mansions of the blest.

Mrs Rose ends her telling of the dreadful cholera epidemic, still believing in the loving mercies of God. She states:

Thus at the fiat of Omnipotence I was bereaved of my beloved children, my peaceful holy happy home, and left a pilgrim and a stranger to tread life's dreary path alone. Every attempt to describe the deep exercises of her sorrow stricken soul has so failed that I prefer following the example of a celebrated painter, who despairing of depicting enough of grief in a face he had to paint, drew a veil over it; but while a veil in silence grief too deep for utterance, I desire to magnify the grace that has supported me under it. "In judgement God has remembered mercy, he is gracious and full of compassion", and I would abundantly utter the memory of his great goodness.

Praise with my heart, my mind, my voice,

For all they mercies I will give;

My soul shall still in God rejoice.

My tongue shall bless thee while I live.

[Editor's comment]

How differently from us did our ancestors bear the death of children and husband in epidemics such as the cholera epidemic in Mauritius in 1854. Caroline's strong faith although admirable in one sense does not leave room for lament, a time for her, like David in the psalms, to shake her fist at God and shout, "Why?" But perhaps with death being so much more commonplace then than now this resigned fate-filled attitude was her only way of dealing with it.

Cholera as well as small pox epidemics struck the citizens of Cape Town too. Read Vivian Bickford-Smith's book *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town* for more details of the struggle between the "Clean" and "Dirty" Parties in Cape town in the Nineteenth Century.

EPIDEMIC II: Spanish Flu 1918

The Spanish Lady!

I am sure that many of you have found, like I did, that there are ancestors in your tree that died in October 1918. I have a 24 year old first cousin once removed, Claude REYNOLDS born in Kimberley in 1894 who died on 11 October 1918 also in Kimberley. Although not stated, I'm pretty sure that he died from "the Spanish Lady", the so-called Spanish Influenza pandemic which killed more people worldwide than the First World War did.

Although called "Spanish" there has been a variety of opinions on the source – none of which are from Spain! Listening to QI on BBC Entertainment the other night, I heard Stephen Fry say that the so-called Spanish Flu began in ducks and spread to humans. Perhaps a more scientific approach I found on the 'net in an article which looked at the spread of diseases in Africa using the Spanish Flu Epidemic as the classic case study [1]. Jan-Bart Gewald says that the origin of Spanish flu was not in Spain, instead it is likely that the deadly virus developed in "Etaples", an enormous military staging camp in Northern France where, at any one time, no less than 100,000 men could be found in close proximity to both pigs and poultry. John Oxford, one of the foremost researchers on the pandemic, noted that, "although there is general agreement that the name 'Spanish Influenza' is inappropriate, we now conclude that the virus could have been designated A/Etaples/1/1916 or A/Aldershot/1/1917". (I think I will stick to Spanish Flu, thank you.)

But what were the medical conditions that those who were infected suffered from? Gewald, quoting Oxford describes it as follows: "Most strains of the flu do not kill people directly; rather, death is caused by bacteria, which surge into the embattled lungs of the victim. But the Spanish flu that circulated in 1918-19 was a direct killer. Victims suffered from acute cyanosis, a blue discoloration of the skin and mucous membranes. They vomited and coughed up blood, which also poured uncontrollably from their noses and, in the case of women, from their genitals. The highest death toll occurred among pregnant women: as many as 71 percent of those infected died. Many young people suffered from encephalitis, as the virus chewed away at their brains and spinal cords. And millions experienced acute respiratory distress syndrome, an immunological condition in which disease-fighting cells so overwhelm the lungs in their battle against the invaders that the lung cells themselves became collateral damage, and the victims suffocated."

In case you think that this pandemic is purely of historical interest, Gewald extrapolates the number of people killed in the Spanish Flu to the present day and he estimates 180 –

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360 million people would likely die should something like the H5N1 virus (bird flu virus) become capable of human-to-human transmission.

So often with pandemics the mere numbers of those infected and affected leave us stunned and we can't relate to them ourselves personally. Thus I found it moving to find the Rector's Letter and some discussion on the epidemic in the November 1918 magazine of the St Paul's Anglican Parish, Rondebosch. The pastoral care team of the parish tried to minister to their congregation which, in those days, included Rondebosch



and Athlone (then known as Milner or West London). This is a very personal presentation of how the people of the parish were affected, both those who lost loved ones and others who were affected economically.

from **The Rector's Letter** [2]

Only one thing has occupied our minds during the past month, and that is the, epidemic of "Spanish influenza." Unseen, but swift as the wind, it swept over the whole country, and has left behind it such a legacy of sorrow that this beautiful month of spring will always be remembered as the Black October of 1918. Everything had to give way before it. The arrangements for "Our Day," so splendidly organized and copiously advertised, went to pieces. Business was brought almost to a standstill. Every home was affected by it. In most cases the servants were the first to be taken ill, and either went home or had to be nursed by their employers, while the housework had to be done by members of the family, who soon fell victims themselves to this treacherous sickness. The ordinary work of the parish ceased, and all the energies of those who were well and could be spared from their homes were devoted to the work of tending the sick, feeding the hungry, trying to save the dying, or helping the bereaved to bury their dead.

I am deeply grateful to all those who worked so splendidly in Rondebosch and on the Flats, and helped to save many lives by providing them with proper nourishment and giving them valuable advice and attention. At a time when it was possible for the clergy

to visit only the most urgent cases, it was a very great relief to them to know that the bodily needs of all the poorer people were being attended to daily, either at the various depots or at the houses of the sick. The mortality in this parish has been terrible, especially among the poorer parishioners. At Black River no less than five of one family died in a week. One of our old coloured parishioners of Rondebosch, Alfred Adams, lost two sons, a daughter, and a son-in-law, one of the sons and the daughter being married and leaving behind several young children. The verger at S. Paul's lost a son of 15 [3], and the verger at S. Thomas's a daughter of 20. One of the saddest deaths was that of a choir-boy of S. Paul's, Jack Andrews, at the age of ten years. On behalf of the parish I wish to convey to the bereaved parents, in each of the above-mentioned cases, our heartfelt sympathy. It is difficult to express adequately our sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. Roper in their great-sorrow. Their eldest daughter seemed to be going on well, when a collapse came suddenly, and in a few hours she was called to her eternal rest. The shock to her family was accentuated, too, by the fact that she died at a time when help was unobtainable from those who ordinarily arrange the details of a burial. May God in His infinite mercy help and comfort her sorrowing family and all those thousands who have been plunged into mourning by this terrible visitation.

I am very sorry to have to refer to finance in this letter, but I am afraid that I must do so, as the parish has 'been reduced to a very serious position by the epidemic. During October the Church collections have been about a quarter of the average for a month, for the Sunday congregations were the smallest on record. The Mission Schools have been closed, and so no school fees have come in. And as the parents pay by the week, and only then if their children have been to school that week, the school fees that ought to come in during October are irretrievably lost. But the teachers' salaries must, of course, be paid in full, as usual. And the income for the General Purposes Fund during October will be very small, as many of the collectors and subscribers have been ill, and home expenses have been heavy. The consequence is that in order to pay stipends, salaries, and other current expenses, the Churchwardens have been compelled to overdraw to the extent of £75. We must somehow make this amount good before the end of the year, as well as pay the next two months' expenses. I would therefore make an earnest appeal to all who were absent from church during October to bring with them, next time they are able to attend the House of God, the offerings that they would have made each Sunday if they had been in church. And I would also suggest that all who have been spared an attack of this treacherous sickness, and those who have safely recovered their health, should endeavour to make a worthy thanksgiving to Almighty God for His "late mercies vouchsafed unto them."

The Rev Brooke goes on with "Notes on the Epidemic":

As soon as it was realized that a large number of the poorer parishioners were ill with "Spanish influenza," Mrs. Currey, of "Welgelegen," [4] very kindly sent a large quantity of milk daily to the Rectory for distribution. The demand soon

began to exceed the supply, even though the latter was supplemented from another source. Just in time the public depot at the Town Hall was opened and put in working order with wonderful promptitude, and the milk from "Welgelegen" was sent elsewhere to those who needed it. Mrs. Cripps and her band of helpers lost no time in making the Rondebosch Town Hall a centre of relief and a blessing to the neighbourhood. Medicines, soup, and milk for the sick, and food for the families thrown out of employment, or rendered destitute and helpless by sickness, were served-out daily to very large numbers of applicants. The suburb was divided into districts, and all the houses of the poor, were visited daily by ladies, who brought nourishment and medicine to those who were unable to send for them, and who gave valuable help and advice to the sick and those of their friends who were nursing them. Scarcely any of the poor were able to secure the services of a doctor, though, when the seriousness of the situation was realized. Dr. Parson and Dr. Galpin, who years ago retired from practice, kindly turned out, and attended all whom they had time to see. Even so, in the first ten days of the epidemic many poor people died without the comfort of seeing a doctor. At first the City Corporation provided; for only one Relief Depot in this parish, at the Town Hall, and so some of the ladies of the parish, Mrs. Cronwright, Mrs. Peters, and Mrs. Nimmo Brown, with the help of other parishioners, opened a depot for Black River at the Klipfontein Hall (formerly a slaughter-house, now kindly lent to us by the Imperial Cold Storage Co. for parish purposes). Almost as soon as it was opened, the City Hall authorities made themselves responsible for all the expenses incurred in connection with its maintenance.

Meanwhile the state of things at Milner (i.e. West London) was most serious, and Mr. Floyd made urgent representations to the authorities. As soon, therefore, as

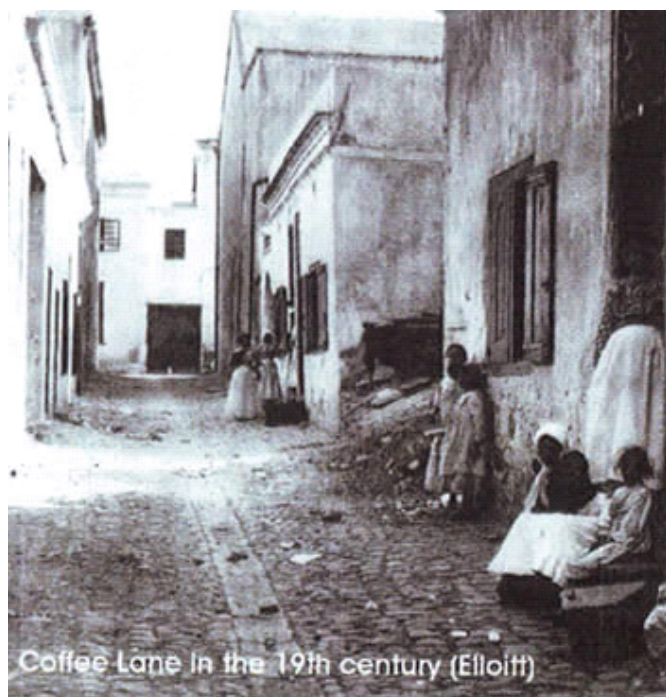
Mr. Sawkins had completed his arrangements for the Rondebosch Town Hall, he paid a visit to Milner with Mr. Floyd. The Wesleyan Church building, being central and near the hard road, was chosen as the most suitable place for a depot, and the Wesleyan authorities very kindly at once agreed to lend it, and gave every facility to the workers. Miss Hall, Miss Parson, and Miss Syfret soon established a soup kitchen there, with medicines, etc., for all applicants. Mr. Floyd was given authority by the City Corporation to issue bread, meat, and other necessities to those who were in urgent need. Both at Black River and Milner, and later at Welcome Estate, he organized a committee of coloured men and women to visit from house to house in their district. He selected the most respected and reliable persons for his purpose, those who knew the coloured people and could best judge of their needs.

From further down the Flats came reports of sickness, helplessness, and destitution, and on the second Sunday in October Mr. Floyd was able to establish another depot at Welcome Estate, some five or six miles from Rondebosch Town Hall. The Black River Depot being in full running order, Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Nimmo Brown were able to leave it in Mrs. Cronwright's hands, and they transferred their energies to organizing and carrying on the Welcome Estate Depot. In this they were devotedly assisted by Mr. Nimmo Brown. This served the people at Rylands Estate and for miles around, food, etc., being carried on foot or by motor-car to people as far as ten miles down the Cape Flats.

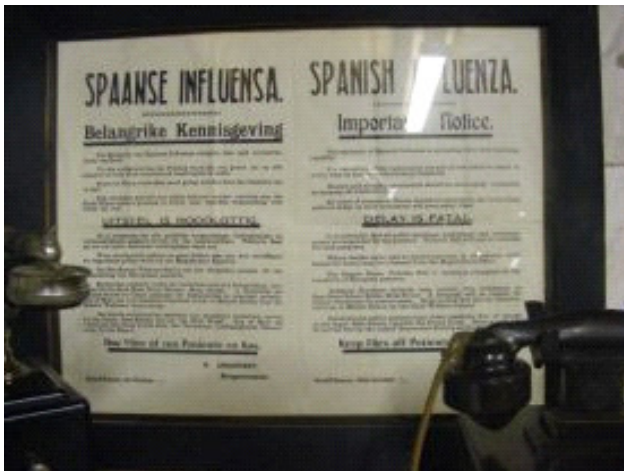
This work could not have been carried on if Mr. Hartford, of "Elwyngor," Silwood Road, had not been so thoughtful and kind as to place his motor-car entirely at the disposal of the workers. Every day they were taken to their depot and brought back by car, and incidentally Mr. Hartford's car relieved the Rector and Mr. Floyd of some of their longer bicycle rides to Maitland Cemeteries and down the Flats. The Rector is also very grateful to Mr. L. Spilhaus for taking him on a round of visits one night, after a long and tiring day on his bicycle. [5]

When anyone in this parish dies without having been attended by a doctor in his last illness, the body has to be removed to Wynberg for a post-mortem examination by the District Surgeon. By October 7th this rule had been suspended, as more than half of those who were dying of pneumonia had not been able to get a doctor's attention. Mr Floyd was appointed a Registrar of Deaths for the flats districts, and from early in the morning his house and the Rectory were besieged by those wanting burial orders, coffins, and graves. From October 7th it was practically impossible (for the poorer people to get a coffin from the undertakers and even some of those who are well-to-do found themselves in the same dreadful situation. The City Corporation realized the position of affairs just in time, and placed large orders with firms who employed carpenters. The Rector made representations to our local City

(Continued on page 8)



Coffee Lane in the 19th century (Elloitt)



A notice issued by the Mayor of Graaff Reint during the 1918 Flu Epidemic

(Continued from page 7)

Councillor, Mr. Sawkins, who immediately sort out a dozen coffins from the City Hall, and saw that a sufficient supply was sent daily to the Rondebosch Town Hall and the Relief Depot at West London. These are gruesome details, but they help one to realize what an extraordinary time we have been passing through.

The Cemetery at Black River was originally secured for the Church people of that Mission Station, and by them it was fenced in and put in order. Since then, as the Flats became populated, it was thrown open to Church-people in our other mission stations, at Milner and Rylands Estate. This epidemic, however, produced a sudden congestion at the Maitland Cemetery Office in Capetown. It was believed to such an extent that sometimes it took hours for the bereaved to get into the office and purchase a grave. And even then, when the funeral at last arrived at Maitland No. 3 (the cemetery of the poor), there was more congestion and a long delay before anyone could be found to point out which was the grave. Accordingly the Rector and Mr. Floyd decided to suspend the rule limiting the right of burial in Black River Cemetery to Church people who lived on the Flats, and it was thrown open to people of all denominations in the parish. Several additional grave-diggers were engaged, with orders to dig graves all day long. At 5 o'clock each day the funerals began, when Mr. Floyd had finished his work at the depots. When possible after his return from Maitland, the Rector went to assist him at Black River Cemetery. Over 150 burials took place there in three weeks, where the monthly average is about six or seven. This little cemetery has been rapidly filling up, and we shall have to endeavour to enlarge it by securing some of the adjacent vacant ground. A glance at the list of burials at the end of this issue will show that it makes an interesting, if terribly sad, "barometer" of the epidemic.

Owing to the epidemic the October meeting of the Church Council had to be abandoned and the next

meeting will be on November 14th, when the problem of the parish finances will have to be seriously considered, as very little in the way of collections and subscriptions came in during October, with the result that we have to wipe off a deficit of £75.

Little Jack Andrews, son of the Principal of Milner Mission School, and a choir-boy of S. Paul's, died of pneumonia on Saturday October 12th. The funeral service was conducted by the Rector, on the Sunday afternoon. The body was taken over to Maitland by motor-car, and six of his friends, Choir-boys and Boy Scouts, carried it to its last resting-place. It was indeed a pathetic little funeral. May God console the hearts of his grief-stricken parents.

Footnotes:

[1] Jan-Bart Gewald, *Spanish influenza in Africa: Some comments regarding source material and future research*, ASC Working Paper 77 / 2007

[2] The Rev J. C. H. Brooke, *St Paul's Record*. Vol XIV No 11 November 1918

[3] The Verger at this time was a Mr A Duncan. One of his grandsons is Alan Duncan, a member of The CTFHS.

[4] Mrs Currey's was the widow of John Blades Currey (1829-1904) who had an interesting and varied career at the Cape before being employed by Cecil Rhodes as steward of the Groote Schuur Estate, where he lived in the old Cape Dutch house, "Welgelegen". The Currey family were very active in the life of St Paul's Parish.

[5] This is impressive – that The Rev Mr Booke and his curate the Rev Mr Floyd **rode** from Rondebosch to Maitland to bury the dead! Today we would think twice about **driving** from Rondebosch to Maitland by car!

To make this an article on family history rather than 'church' history, here are the entries from the burial register for October 1918. If anyone wants more information on any of these people please contact me so that I can see if they appear elsewhere in the Registers of St Paul's, Rondebosch.

Oct 6

Arthur Lionel Fry, 6 months.

Katherine Davids, 1 year.

Thomas Augustus Le Grange.

Kate Hendricks, 4 years.

Oct 7

Stephen Ashown Addinall, 28 years.

Christina Maria Solomon, 53 years.

Kenneth Andrew Murison, 46 years.

Henry Barthus, 40 years.

Isabella Davids.

Oct 8

(Continued from page 8)

William Wilson, 45 years.
Harold Nelson, 11 months.
Rosie Steward.

Oct 9

Charles Abraham. Abrahams, 20 years.
Frederick Jacobus Scholtz, 26 years.
Isabella Manuel.
Emma Ferris, 33 years.

Oct 10

Johanna Adonis, 68 years.
Neville Henry Higgs, 37 years.
Benjamin Arèndse, 22 years.
Francis John Watsøn., 25 years.
William Obery, 43 years.
Catherine Coetzee, 19 years.
Jóhn'Jacobs, 19 years.
Victoria Florence Jonathan, 14 months.
Louisa Ingwan, 22 years.
Silas Mothibi, 28 years.
John Henry Arderne, 40 years.
William John de Villiers, 50 years
Henry Wilson, 25 years.
Salmon Engelbrecht, 25 years.
Johnson Jacob, 28 years.
Abraham Louw, 31 years.

Oct 11

Violet Mary St. John Garcia.
Edith Mary Roper.
Luke Marthinus, 30 years.
Joseph Stephen Meyer, 24 years.
Dorothea Petersen, 5 years.
Derica Jacobs, 25 years.
Benjamin Matthee, 24 years.
Lena Otto, 29 years.
Lettie Stanley, 25 years.
Mary America, 29 years.
John David Hope, 26 years.
Thomas Vincent, 54 years.
Michael Roman, 39 years.

Oct 12

Cornelius Roberts, 54 years.
Alice Maude Potter.
Lena Daniels, 6 months.
Jacob Jackson, 41 years.
Fred America, 11 years.
Eva Davids, 26 years.
Maria September, 22 years.
Amelia de Beer, 15 years.
Blossom Florus, 3 years.
George Alexander Sharpe, 27 years.
Johanna van Derberg, 1.5 years.
Abraham Adams, 26 years.
Peter Fortuin, 25 years.
David Galant, 23 years.

Oct 13

Maria Mackenzie, 19 years.
John Neville Andrews, 10 years.
John Daniel Petersen, 25 years.

David Stark, 19 years.
George Douglas Lodewyks, 27 years.
Hessie Samuels. 1 month.
Jacobus Stenekamp, 36 years.
John Johannes, 6 months.
Daniel Hess, 30 years.
John Fourie, 36 years.
Jaftha Lewi's, 13 months.
Charles Stanley, 4 years.
Winifred May Adams, 22 years.
Fockie Baatjes, 17 years.
Sarah Christina Wilson, 1 year.
Peter Thomas, 23 years.
Annie Thomas, 23 years.
Eveline Stoltenkamp, 9 months.
Annie Noble, 32 years.
Solomon Noah. 19 years.
Frederick Williams, 32 years.
Clarence Owen Schiiller, 14 months.

Oct 14

Henry James, 13 months.
Sarah Williams 25 years.
Johanna Davids, 16 years.
Elizabeth Catherine van Graan, 28 years.
Maria Martins, 36 years.
Frances Cooper, 26 years.
Robert Cecil Steyn, 4 months.
Rachel Elizabeth Williams, 35 years.
Arthur Thomas, 40 years.
Henry Coetzee, 9 days.
William Jacobs, 45 years.
Abraham Samuels, 35 years.
Benjamin David Smeedo, 27 years.
Frederick Baatjes, 18 years.
David Grant, 2 years.
Eizabeth van der Poel, 5 years.
Japie Manell, 45 years.
Edward Daintree, 2 years.
Franz Antong, 60 years.
Sinna Quatte, 5 years.

Oct 15

Margreta Hendricks, 38 years.
Henry Esau, 11 years.
Ivan Barry Murison, 37 years.
Bernard John Duncan, 15 years.
Martin Jacobus Awood, 19 years.
Dorothy Elizabeth Johnson, 36 years.
Frank Richard Bathus, 23 years.
Sarah Hermanus, 40 years.
Anajetta Jurgens, 2 months.
Charles Stanley, 29 years.
Godfrey Robert Arderne, 2 years.
John Henry Ardeme, 16 years.
Pauine Bushilo, 18 years.
David Nicholas Adams. 15 years.
Hester Davids, 5 months.
Jim Gawder, 35 years.
Catherine Riley, 6 months.
Minnie Daniels, 68 years.

Oct 16

(Continued from page 9)

Jacobus Cook, 6 years.
Nancy Wyngaard, 37 years.
Philip John Frisby, 28 years.
Una Sevenoaks, 15 years.
Johanna Henry, 52 years.
Dinah Davies, 68 years.
Rosie Martins, 26 years.

Oct 17

Sarah Dyers, 62 years.
Rachel Arendse, 26 years.
Delfina Peterson, 4 years.
Minnie Gallant, 31 years.
Cornelia Petersen, 1 year.
Gertrude Liedeman, 30 years.
Edwin Samuel Petersen, 6 months.
Elizabeth Swanepoel, 58 years.
John Jacob Adams, 30 years.
Apollos Dampies, 70 years.
Adam Boettler, 21 years.
Sophia Gordon, 27 years.
Allan MacGregor, 32 years.

Oct 18

Arthur James Mitchell, 12 years.
Alice Walker, 26 years.
Maria Phillips, 23 years.
Minnie Butlers, 9 months. ^
Samuel Samnells, 4.5 years.

Oct 19

Frederick Martin, 11 years.
Lena Klaarsen, 30 years.
Eric Dudley, 2 years.
Lilian MacGovern, 12 years.
Annie de Mink, 24 years.
Emily Krotz, 30 years.
Frederick Arderne, 9 years. ,
John Clarke, 38 years. ,
Lydia Adams, 39 years.
Louise Taylor, 6 years.
Leah Daamsters, 45 years.
Catherine Cornelia Maneveldt, 31 years.
Christopher Michael Kemp, 32 years..

Oct 20

Elsie Maoktnnie, 38 years.
Leila Pilgram.
Richard Kodle, 1 year.
Maria Hendricks, 39 years.
Catherine Nero, 2 months.
Samuel Seramphim, 2 years.

Oct 21

Alfred Davids, 19 years.
Margaret Hare, 16 years.
John October, 1 year.
Spasie Jacobs, 54 years.
John Davids, 18 years.
Magdalena Sanga, 23 years.

Oct 22

Ada Sarah Hare, 31 years.
Mary Richards, 21 years.
Alfred Richard Marsden Shaw, 36 years.
Jane Vilander, 27 years.
Damel Tacob Banks, 4 months.

Oct 23

Elizabeth Swartz, 48 years.

Oct 24

Muriel Rushton, 2 years.

Oct 25

Judah Williams, 68 years.
James Adams, 2 years.

Oct 26

Johanna Samuels, 19 years.
Henry Brown, 7 years.
Dirk Adams, 6 years.
Margaret Susan Mackinnie, 14 years.

28 Oct

Thomas Martin, 3 years,
Joseph Peter Barthus, 1 day.
Clara Atkins, 29 years.

A SONNET OF LAST WORDS

I should have drunk more champagne

I should have drunk more champagne. And the rest
of the world can kiss my ass. Plaudite,
amici, comedia finita est.

Better to burn out than to fade away.

Tell Fidel that this failure does not mean

the end of the revolution. I see

black light. I can't sleep. Rain had always been
a harbinger of tragedy for me.

You can stop now; I'm already dead. All

my possessions for a moment of time.

Please put out the light. Please don't let me fall.

I am not in the least afraid to die.

I must go to meet God, try to explain...

Do you hear the rain? Do you hear the rain?

Compiled from the famous last words of real people, as
recorded at Wikiquotes. The contributors, in order, are
John Maynard Keynes, Johnny Frank Garrett, Beethoven,
Kurt Cobain, Che Guevara, Victor Hugo, JM Barrie,
George Beard, Abigail Folger, Queen Elizabeth I, Theodore
Roosevelt, Mary Surratt, Charles Darwin, Bernard
Montgomery, and Jessica Dubroff. The word 'in' has been
added to line 12, and a comma substituted for 'and' in line
13.

MEETINGS LAST QUARTER

OCTOBER MEETING.

An eightieth birthday of a parishioner prevented me attending the October meeting. I was very sorry to miss it as it was Faan Pistor of the Robben Island International Historical Society. I have no direct connection to the Island, unlike those pictured below, but would love to know more about the Rev William Watkins, who Faan told me at the Heritage Day Meeting, is considered a real saintly hero during the time Robben Island was a leper colony.



This group of people at the October meeting all have Robben Island connections::

Back: David Slingsby, Fred Miller, Beverley Finlayson, Veronica Hopwood, Mel Cross, Faan Pistor, Margaret Ward-Able, Lucy Edwards (Life Member) in front.

NOVEMBER MEETING

At the November Meeting we were fortunate to have Margaret Reed share with us some of the research she did many years ago on the BIRT family from the London Missionary Society who worked in the Eastern Cape. Margaret told us about how this research was “hand-and-foot” research—none of your sit at home and search on the internet applicable here.

Margaret brought some stunning photographs and showed us how really professional research is done. Her interest in the family has continued and she and her husband spent time at Glan Avon, the BIRT farm earlier this year.



Margaret Reed and Everard Van Wulven chatting about the BIRT family after Margaret's talk. Notice the wonderful posters Margaret brought to display

DECEMBER MEETING

As per usual this was our end-of-year function and I was away up the coast so I missed it—second year in a row! I've heard noting about whether it was a success or not but I'm sure it was enjoyed by all who attended. Hopefully some pictures before next Newsletter.

TEA SET



This is a picture of a tea set, a gift from Lord Nelson to Lady Hamilton. The photo was sent to us by Jack Rivers. After Lord Nelson died, Lady Hamilton had no income and William Charles Rivers bought this tea set from her.. It is marked Old Hall 1790.

There was a father and son on the Victory both named William Charles RIVERS, Gunnery Sargent and his son Midshipmen William Charles RIVERS who lost his left leg during the battle. He stayed on in the navy and retired at 65.

CAPE TOWN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

WEBSITE:

<http://www.family-history.co.za/>

Contains lots of interesting and useful information

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Third Saturday of each month at St John's Church Hall, Wynberg

COMMITTEE 2011-12

CHAIRPERSON:

David Slingsby

SECRETARY:

Anne Smythe

TREASURER:

Stewart Peel

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Derek Pratt

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Sandra Cruywagen

GREETING SECRETARY:

Margaret Robinson

TEA LADIES

Betty Nelson

Lucille le Roux

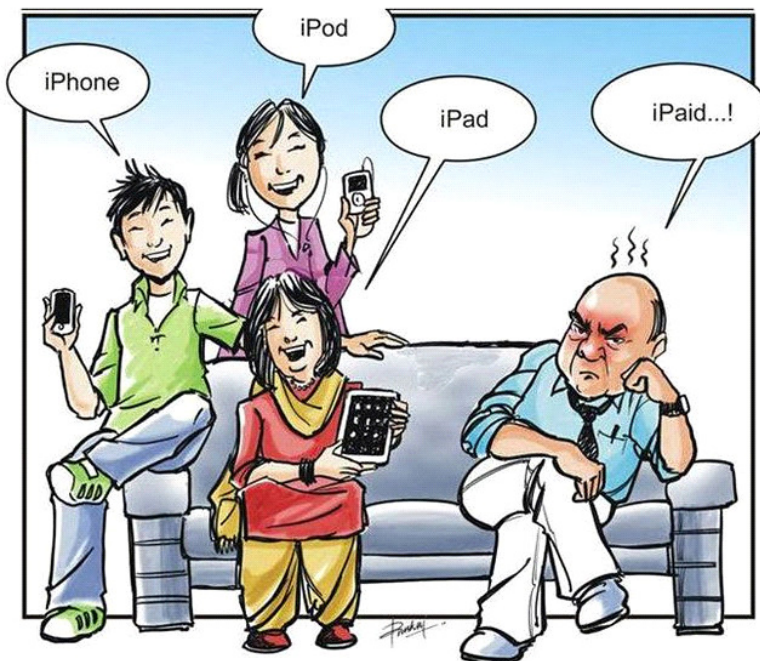
WORKSHOP CO-ORDINATOR

Lois Harley

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

The Workshop Programme for 2012 is still to be finalised. Keep a look out on the web page as well on the back page of the March edition of this newsletter.

Back Page Humour:



DAD'S CHRISTMAS NIGHTMARE

