

NEWSLETTER

Volume 2020 No 4

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**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Hopefully happier than 2020!

A DIFFERENT CHRISTMAS

Yes, this Christmas is going to be different from the Good Old Christmases we remember! Maybe we will be under lock-down again the way the number of infections are rising. Maybe there will be empty places at the Christmas Dinner Table in your home, there certainly will be in mine. That is why I asked you to tell me about your favourite Christmas from years ago. And what a good response I got. Thank you!

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN ...: Christmas Memories in the Good old Days!

Audrene Swart Cooper writes

My mom's lovely Christmas lunches and her homemade Christmas pudding with tickeys in it! The whole family together 🎄👴 Well that's my memory of the old days in Claremont, CT. [Editor: *When I was a little boy, I disliked Christmas Pudding! My grandfather always tried to make sure that the grandchildren got a half-crown rather than a tickey in our helpings. As he served the pudding, he would slip one into my sister's serving. But what about grandson Derek, who only had custard? He didn't fool me – I saw him drop a half-crown into my custard!*]

Renae Gioio Beckett writes

Yes, in those days people had little, but the spirit of Christmas was alive and felt by all. Cheerfulness and being merry was the order of the day. We didn't have much but we were very happy during the festive season. [Editor: *My dad was in the SA Navy in Durban but each Christmas we came down to Cape Town on the Orange Express to be with Granny and Grandpa. My parents had the spare bedroom while my sister and I were put into Grandpa's study. His large mahogany desk, third draw down on the left was where he kept his pipe tobacco – Springbok Pipe tobacco in*

linen bags. That smell as I fell asleep, I can still remember. I had that desk until I retired and that drawer still had a faint aroma of tobacco.

Amy Mostert writes

My Christmas memories aren't that old but here goes... What I remember most of my childhood Christmases in Cape Town is the smell of pine trees... we used to drive around looking for a good one for sale on the side of the road... and we would decorate it on Christmas Eve... I remember dressing up and singing in school and church nativity plays and of course the fun Noddy parties run by Rotary. [Editor: *When I was rector of Steenberg Parish, my daughter who played a flute joined the Church Lads and Girls Brigade so she could play in their band. Every day for Dec 1 to Dec 17 the band would get a mini-bus taxi to drive them to the Rotary Christmas party to play the carols while the families waited for it to get dark. Do remember them and their dedication of giving up every night to make others happy!*]



I've seemed to have lost the name of the person who sent this one – sorry! But you know who you are.

New Year rather than Christmas but I have a vivid memory of the Cape Town minstrels marching past our house in Forest Drive, Pinelands to a Carnival, possibly at Goodwood Showgrounds. I was enchanted by their glittery costumes, their lively music and the joy and energy of their singing and dancing despite the distance they had walked from the city. I longed to attend the festival and feast my eyes and ears on these magical apparitions but alas, my wish was never granted. Another early memory is of going to see the gardens at Groote Schuur Estate, then the Prime Minister's residence, and being awed by the enormous banks of hydrangeas which flourished on the cool mountain slopes. The gardens were open to the public, either on Christmas or New Year's Day, my father was allowed to simply drive in and there weren't many other visitors as far as I remember.

Paul Schlaphoff writes

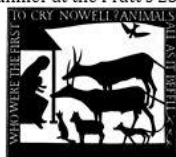
Christmas eve in 1950, I was 3 years and old and would be 4 in March the following year. My parents would put the presents under the tree after I had gone to bed. [Editor: surely you mean Father Christmas?] My sister, 9 years older at 12 knew who bought the presents and was therefore aware what awaited her on Christmas morning.



I awoke very early before anyone else was up and tip-toed into the living room to peak under the tree but the biggest parcel was slightly larger than a shoe box. I heard my mother get up and prepare breakfast in the kitchen , so I sat with her in the kitchen. But, not a word was mentioned about any presents. Later we went to morning church but I was agitating to find out which present was mine, and fell asleep in my mom's lap (she told me years later). Back at home and looking under the tree was a huge package that was not there before. Eventually after all the other presents had been opened my father gave me this parcel, and wide eyed with a huge smile, I opened it to find an army jeep styled pedal car. Within half an hour I was banned from riding it in the house after crashing into my grandfather's shins (my mom's dad and only surviving grandparent.)

Many years later I was told that my father's best man had bought it for me. (He was my uncle by marriage - my father's brother's brother-in-law who remained a bachelor). I cannot remember the rest of the day, except for scooting around the garden, although my feet could barely reach the pedals.

Christmas Day dinner at the Pratt's 25 December 2007



Salmon and Avocado Terrine with a Cucumber and Prawn tower



Gammon Ham with Poached Plums

Blanched Green Beans in Garlic Butter

Cooked Baby Potatoes tossed with grilled Pancetta,
whole grain mustard and extra-virgin olive oil

Blanched Peas tossed in Pesto and slightly mashed

Tenderstem Broccoli steamed and tossed with balsamic vinegar and
walnuts

Beetroot and butternut bake

Cannellini Beans tossed with halved baby Rosa Tomatoes
Italian parsley and Raspberry vinegar



Stollen
Classic Christmas Pudding and Custard
Chocolate Chip Meringues
Chocolates treats

Derek Pratt writes

I enjoy cooking more exotic meals than 'meat-and-two-veg' and after a busy series of services at St Paul's Rondebosch, starting with a 'Build the Crib' Service at 5pm Christmas Eve followed by Midnight Mass 11pm and then Christmas Day at 7:45am and 9:30 and followed by a service at Avondrust Home at 11am I would come home and cook for the family and a family friend, who sadly died during COVID19 this year. She was tremendously impressed by the menu I produced. Of course, with all those services we didn't eat till mid to late afternoon but it was great fun to make the dishes and see how others enjoyed the food.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

by David Slingsby

We all no doubt have positive memories of Christmas, in all probability as young children, waking up early, discovering a Christmas stocking, being devastated as the realization of Father Christmas either by one's own mental faculties or having the truth told by either a parent or superior older sibling.

The Christmases I want to share are those of my own children, their cousins and grandparents. John and Molly Slingsby.



Josephine Mill

My great Aunt Myra East (my Grandmother's sister) owned a property in Newlands known as the 'The Mill House', situated next to Josephine Mill, behind the rugby stadium, Boundary Road, Newlands. But that is another story on its own.

In 1974, Myra East donated the old Josephine Mill, which was attached the 'The Mill House' property. During 1980 Myra East passed away, in terms of the will, a living relative would be able to purchase the property from her estate. My mother, Molly Slingsby (nee Harsant) being a niece of Myra's took up the offer.

My father, John Slingsby set about renovating and refurbishing the 125-year-old house, once done he set about, with the able assistance of mother of re-establishing and redesigning the ±6250 m² or 1½ acre garden with its gentle slope to the Liesbeek River.



Once all these labours had been completed by mid-1980, my parents by that time had been blessed with 11 grandchildren. My mother, Molly, loved painting, drawing, gardening, sewing, writing and organising her family. Christmas in our family had always been an occasion for family, friends and huge celebrations. As children there was always a Christmas party for family and friends of my great uncle and aunt, Jack and Agnes Harsant, they were siblings who lived in a huge house, Ecklenburg in Belmont Rd, Rondebosch. Christmas took the form of a tea party prior to Christmas, cakes, jellies, the thinnest

cucumber sandwiches, after tea we were ushered from the dinning to the drawing room, a huge Christmas tree dominated the bay window, well dressed with the usual Christmas paraphernalia. We were all presented with a gift and a teaser (coloured kite paper cut into strips and fixed onto a stick), which I suspect the groom/gardener/man servant had made.

Fast forward from the 1950's to the 1980's now the turn of my grandchildren. Christmas Day dawned, some of the family attended Church, arriving at The Mill House in time for lunch. Molly had spent weeks planning this day, from the food, presents entertainment.

Many years back the family had dispensed with a traditional hot meal, not to say the Christmas feast was inadequate far from that, a massive cold ham prepared by Mr. Bass (Snr) a butcher from Kenilworth (I think his son still operates here), legs of lamb, chicken, salmon mousse, cold pork sausages, stuffed eggs and of course a variety of salads. My mother would prepare the menu, every family member would be allocated a task which would include how much and exactly how it was to be prepared. If not exactly to specification everyone in the family would chaff the poor provider – but it added to the fun. The Christmas pud was the sole preserve of my grandmother Grace Harsant and her daughter Hilary Harsant. The recipe, a family one, prepared in secret in specially preserved bowls handed down from many generations – I think they are still around. This was served hot amid all the magic, money, charms, burning brandy, placed on the table amid great ceremony, this was served with custard made from eggs!



As previously noted, my mother loved nothing more than preparing for a party. She would spend weeks planning, writing a suitable nativity play, different every year, for those grandchildren who could read. They were given notes from with to read and act, the youngers ones would be dressed possibly as animals, shepherds or a non-speaking part. My father also had his part having to make suitable props to match the theme of the year.

So after the feast no one was allowed to sneak off for a snooze to sleep off the effect of an overfilled body.



All were dragged into a shady part of the garden, garden chairs for the senior family members, grandchildren marshalled into position, strictly no gifts until the Director of Entertainment had finished her performance.

The play duly performed, Father Christmas would arrive, either on the garden tractor towing a trailer full of gifts or having to descend off the stoep roof, this part could be played by grand dad, or one of my siblings, once the grand children got older and capable of voice recognition a friend or out of town family member would be implored to perform this part.

Time has moved on, the grandchildren today are all middle-aged parents, some still follow the traditions set by Granny.

IT'S THAT VIRUS AGAIN!

Are you sick of hearing about COVID19 or Corona Virus already?

I recently put an article on my blog site (<http://www.thefamilyhistorian.co.za/2020/10/08/the-toll-of-the-1918-spanish-flu-pandemic-among-anglicans-in-rondebosch/>) discussing the deaths in Rondebosch during the Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918 and it is interesting to see how it differed from COVID19.

The Toll of the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic, among Anglicans in Rondebosch Parish.

The Burial Register of St Paul's, Rondebosch for the year 1918 makes fascinating reading. Of course I'm talking about the period in October when the second wave of infections of the so-called Spanish Flu caused havoc in South Africa.

Although Apartheid legislation – especially the Group Areas Act (GAA) was not yet part of South African way of life, society was most definitely divided, usually economically but that really meant racially because of the poverty among the people of colour. In Cape Town that meant the so-called 'Coloured' population who were descendants of the original population from around the Western Cape (San and Khoi people), the descendants of slaves brought to the Cape during the previous two centuries and the descendants of mixed-race marriages. Having always held lowly paid jobs and without any opportunity to improve themselves through education, the 'Coloured' people held lowly paid labouring jobs and in attempts to improve the health and sanitation of the city, had been moved to suburbs well away from the White colonial settlers.

When we look at Rondebosch in 1918 (in fact up to the introduction of the GAA in 1950 and forced removals in the 1960s), it was a very mixed community with pockets of wealthy property owners and small cottages in which the servants lived.

The Parish of St Paul's, Rondebosch at that time consisted of the Parish Church (St Paul's on the Main Road to Simon's Town) and four Chapels. These chapels were St Thomas's near Rondebosch Common, St Mark's in Athlone which was called at various times, West London and Milner, St George's in Rylands (later moved to Silvertown) and St James, Black River (the area immediately below where Red Cross Hospital is now).

The Parish graveyard at St Paul's had been shut in the 1880s and that at St Thomas's in the early years of the 20th Century, however a piece of land had been donated near where Garlandale High School is today and this became known as Black River Cemetery and in the burial Register the initials "B.R." next to an entry meant that the burial had occurred at Black River Cemetery. Because of where it was situated, most (if not all) of the burials at Black River Cemetery were of 'Coloured' people and usually members of St Paul's Parish (including the Chapelries). Other burials would be at Maitland Cemetery. In 1918 there was not a crematorium in Cape Town.

A careful examination of the burial register shows a strange phenomenon of two batches of burial entries for October 1918. Instead of each entry being in date order, the first batch covered the period from 7 Oct to 24 Oct 1918 and completed by the Rector, the Rev. John Brooke. No racial classification was required in the burial and the baptism. This was only required in the Marriage Register where the minister became a quasi-government official registering the marriage. Other Civil Registrations were done through official government channels so church records did not require racial classifications. Because of this it is hard to know which of the burials done in this first batch of entries were of White people and which were 'Coloured' people who lived near the Parish Church in what would later (in the 1960s) be declared a White area.

First Batch of Burials St Paul's & St Thomas - mainly white parishioners

Number of people buried	28
Those younger than 5 years	3
Those older than 45 years	3
Those between 15-45 years	22
Average age of group	29y 4m
Males	17
Females	11
Days on which funeral held	13 out of 17
Highest on one day	6 on both 10 th and 11 th Oct 1918

The Second Batch of entries in the Parish Burial Register were from 5 Oct to 21 Oct 1918. These burials were carried out by the curate, the Rev. T. L. Floyd, who had responsibility for St Marks, St George's and St James's. (St Thomas's fell under the Rector, whose rectory was right next door.)

Second Batch of Burials St Mark's, St George's and St James's:

Number of burials	153
Those younger than 15 years	47
Those older than 45 years	11
Those between 15 and 45 years	95
Average age of this group	23y 6m
Males	80
Females	73
Days on which funeral held	16 out of 17 days
Average number of funerals per day	9
Highest on one day	12 th Oct = 18 people 13 th Oct = 20 people 14 th Oct = 16 people

Conclusion

Over five times more 'Coloured' people living in West London (Athlone) died and were buried in the first three weeks of October 1918.

Of the total of 181 people, 50 were younger than 15 years – 47 of whom came from West London. What must be borne in mind is that poverty with malnutrition and poor housing made the younger 'Coloured' children more vulnerable to disease. Of the 181 people, only 14 were older than 45 years. Seven percent of West London deaths in the older category and 10 percent from the Parish Church (most probably White).

The balance (117 people) were in the working age of 15 -45 years. In the West London ('Coloured') community this made 62% of those buried. In White or Parish Church area this made up 78% of those buried.

As far as Gender breakdown goes, in the West London there was hardly any difference, which is interesting to think about (male 80, female 73, ratio 1.09). In the parish church the number of male to female death is more stark (male 17, female 11, ratio 1.54). Researchers say that younger males in the working age group (15y to 45y), were more susceptible to being infected because they met other people at work. This explains why, in the White community, more males than females succumbed. All I can suggest at the similar number of deaths between male and females in West London is that more women worked from this community and poverty, malnutrition and over-crowded housing had no gender-awareness.

Throughout the COVID19 pandemic we were told how the elderly were more vulnerable, which is different in the Spanish Flu of 1918.

The effect of the 1918 Spanish Flu touched many families and many of us might not be here or might have had a different personality as a result of it not happening. Here is Lucille le Roux's story of her paternal grandparents

STEENKAMP AND WARWICK FAMILIES: THE 1918 FLU EPIDEMIC

Willem Jacobus Louw Steenkamp was born 12 Jan 1883 in Porterville. He was the 3rd child of Jacobus Johannes Steenkamp and Gertruida Sophia Johanna Carstens.

His siblings were:

Gerbrecht Christina Elizabeth(Sarah)	born 12 April 1879 in Porterville
Jacobus Johannes Carstens	born 21 Sept 1880 in Porterville
Johannes Christian	born 14 June 1884 in Porterville
Edward Clarkson	born 13 Feb 1887 in Clanwilliam
Margaretha Wilhelmina	born 16 Oct 1889 in Wolseley

He married Elizabeth Emma Warwick (my paternal grandmother) on 31st Oct 1904 NGK in Sutherland. He was a mechanic. He also traded as a grocer, helping others out in time of need often to his own detriment.

Elizabeth Emma Steenkamp (née Warwick) was born in Sutherland on 26 Aug 1881. She was the 3rd child & daughter of Thomas Allan Warwick & Louisa Jane Shephard. Both the Warwick and the Shephard families came out on the same ship The Bride from England in 1858 as part of the aided immigration to the Cape.

Elizabeth Emma Steenkamp's Warwick siblings were:

Frederick Andrew	born 21 Nov 1876 in Sutherland
Richard Albert	born 20 Aug 1878 in Sutherland
Hannah Matilda (Tilly)	born 27 Oct 1883 in Sutherland
Louisa Jane	born 9 Dec 1886 in Langkloof, Calvinia
Thomas Allen	born 13 Jan 1889 in Sutherland
Unnamed twin	born 13 Jan 1889 in Sutherland
Eliza Jane	born 1 Aug 1891 in Sutherland
Alfred Eli	born 31 July 1893 in Sutherland
Joseph Josiah	born 29 May 1897 in Sutherland

In the 1918 flu epidemic Emma lost her husband, Willem Jacobus Louw Steenkamp, on 24 Oct 1918, her brother Alfred Eli Warwick on 8 Nov 1918 and her father Thomas Warwick on 10 Dec 1918.

So after only fourteen years of marriage Emma now had to bring up her 4 children on her own. Not one of those who had been helped by her husband, Willem when they needed help came forward to help Emma & her children, in her time of need, after his death.

Their children & age at time of Willem's death :

Emily Louisa Jane (Lucy)	born 21 Dec 1905	almost 13yrs
James John Edward	born 20 Jan 1907	11 ½ yrs
Theodore Allan (my Dad)	born 5 July 1908	10 yrs
Willem Jacobus Louw	born 28 Aug 1917	only 1yr 2mths

Two other children had died as infants.

Gertrude Constance	29 Sept 1911 - 24 Dec 1911
Willem	died 5 Feb 1912

James John Edward Steenkamp – only a young boy of eleven had to take his dead father's body on the wagon/cart to the morgue as there was no one else to help.

To earn some money Emma allowed James & Theodore Allan to work on a farm. They had to work side by side with grown men and if they did not keep up in the line cutting the wheat they were thrashed. Sickles were very heavy in little hands. They slept under a bush huddled together trying to keep warm and when it rained they were drenched to the skin. Emma was horrified when she found this out and never sent them out again.

My father (Theodore Allen) told me that one Christmas Eve he had seen their empty Christmas stockings hanging over the fireplace and decided to fill them with carrots and other veggiesnot as a joke. He did not realize how deeply this hurt his mother to know she had nothing for them. She wept. She later married Christiaan De Hoog Moller.

My father Theodore Allan lived and cared for his mother till he married - aged 36. His youngest brother Willem had married 5 years earlier. My grandmother Emma died 28 Oct 1952 in Claremont, Cape. I remember her as a petite gentle soft-spoken woman. I was told that, of all the Steenkamp cousins, I resembled her the most in looks & stature.

Lucille is very lucky to have two pictures of her family – one in 1909 and one in 1951 and they make a good comparison. These are on the next page.



Circa 1909

**Willem & Emma
Louisa (Lucy) & James, Allan on lap**



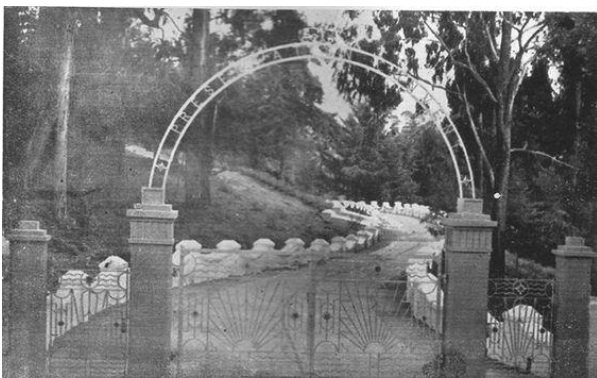
Circa 1951

**Elizabeth Emma (nee Warwick) Steenkamp Möller
James(Jimmy) Louisa(Lucy) Allan Willem(Bill)**

This brief autobiography by Betty Nelson was distributed by Ann Smythe but I think it is worthwhile repeating it and making it a document worth keeping with our CTFHS records.

ETHEL IRENE CLARE NELSON (KENNEY)

Putting ninety-four years of my life into a few words is going to be quite a problem, so please bear with me. I was born in London in 1926 and by the time I was less than a year old had travelled a few thousand miles - to Scotland, Hamburg in Germany and then to Colombo, Ceylon. Eventually there was schooling in England and because of WWII I finished up at a school, 7000 feet up in the hills, in South India. This was the Presentation Convent High School, in Kodaikanal - PCK for short. The Nuns were mostly Irish or English and I must say they all did their best to make our time at the school extremely happy which, I think, can be proven by the fact that PCK Reunions are held annually in London and are always well attended.



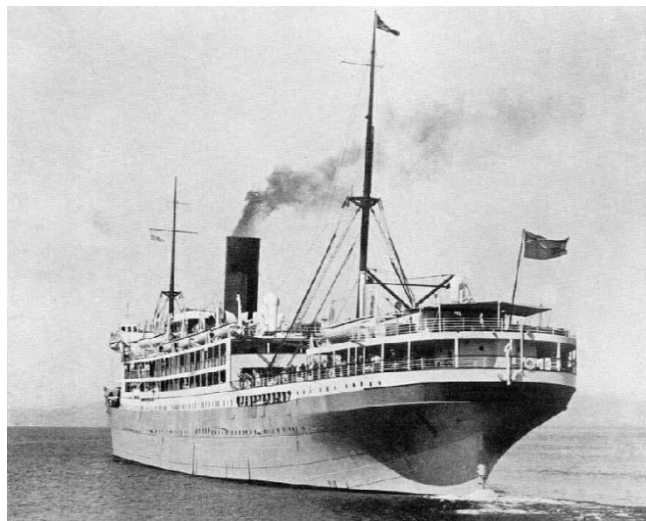
Presentation Convent Kodaikanal – The New Gate. Was it new when Betty was there?

After leaving PCK I did a Secretarial Course in Colombo as I could hardly wait to work for one of the Forces. I wanted to do decoding in the Naval Office but my father wouldn't allow me to because this would have meant I would have had to do night shifts. Anyway, I eventually worked for the Superintending Civil Engineering Department of the Royal Navy. Letters to the Admiralty in London had to be first titled "Submitted"!!! How different official mail is to-day!

Then after about another four years I resigned and decided to join an ex-school friend who was going to England and who was being chaperoned by her father. We sailed on the *Atlantis*, a hospital

ship - so instead of cabins we had wards! We thoroughly enjoyed the trip as the war was over and one thing I remember is Barbara and I waving to all the soldiers who were on either side of the Suez Canal!

After spending some time with various members of my family I decided to do another Secretarial Course. This proved to be a good decision as I managed to get a very good position with a wealthy Company with a head office in a lovely part of London - in Portland Place, near Regents Park. Then with one girl from the College and another old PCK friend, the three of us settled into a private residential hotel. It cost us three pounds ten shillings a week but we didn't have to do any chores whatsoever! Anyway, we weren't very happy there so we found somewhere else to live. Very close by but where everything else was superior - the residents, the food and our room - just up eighty-nine stairs! On top of this we were now five shillings a week better off! Gloucester Road tube station was close by so I travelled to work on the Inner Circle train and my friends - one to the House of Commons where she worked and the other to St. Thomas' Hospital as she was a Physiotherapy student. What a wonderful life we led - going to all the latest plays and films, etc. and no household jobs to worry about.



Time for a change so I decided to resign and travel to Rhodesia to join my mother and step-father. The ship was an old wreck named the '*LlanStephan Castle*'. It broke down before we had left Tilbury! Anyway, we made it to Cape Town via Ascension Island and St. Helena.

I have had a lovely life in Africa. First of all getting married and having a son and a daughter and thanks to Richard and Ann, a granddaughter and grandson and to Mandy and Carl, twin grandsons.

As a family we did a lot of travelling so I have had the privilege of seeing a great deal of Africa - Southern and Northern Rhodesia, Zimbabwe and Barotseland. During this time I worked for various Government Departments but one of my experiences has to be recorded now. Here it is:

It was in 1962 when I was Secretary of the Mongu hospital in Barotseland one of my jobs was making cash payments for incidental hospital expenses. On one occasion three Africans came to claim for a patient they had brought in from up the Zambesi River in a canoe. This involved three days subsistence each at the rate of 3/6d a day. They thumb printed the receipts and went away. Later in the day they returned and through the hospital pharmacist being the interpreter they informed me that as the return journey went with the flow of the river instead of against it when they brought in the patient, it would take only two days for them to return home so they came to return one day's subsistence. I had no alternative but to take their money and ask them to thumb print amended receipts.

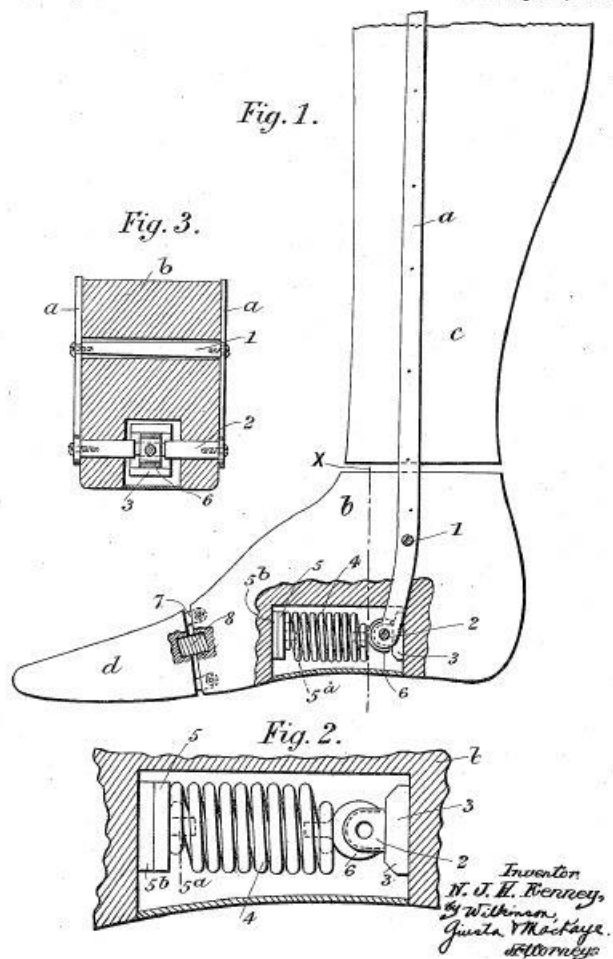
In all my life I don't think I have come across such honesty and I never fail to relate this story to friends and how I wish they had never come back to me. Their 10/6d would have made no difference to the Northern Rhodesian Government coffers but it would have meant a great deal to these three poor honest Africans.

In hindsight I wish I had thought of writing a letter and attaching it their final receipts so that the powers that be could have been made aware of the incident. I could, of course, have given them 10/6d out of my own pocket but it just didn't occur to me to do so. It is something I regret to this day,

One of my hobbies has been family history and this is thanks to a Mormon friend in Bulawayo in the early 1990s. Through her I eventually became involved with the Mormon libraries in Bulawayo, Johannesburg and Cape Town but it was because I took the advice of another family history friend which was to write to the editors of relevant newspapers seeking descendants of the family that I managed to 'hit the nail on the head' and I found family members in Australia and Canada.

For some unknown reason I had a special 'feeling' for my great uncle - my grandfather's brother - Nehemiah James (Henry) Kenney (he gave himself the name of Henry!) although I had never met him. I knew he had an artificial leg because of an accident in a snowstorm but when he didn't like the prosthesis he was given he designed his own and had it patented. I have a copy of this Patent. He and a partner then started an artificial limb making factory in

1,279,356.
N. J. H. KENNEY.
ARTIFICIAL LIMB.
APPLICATION FILED FEB. 23, 1917.
Patented Sept. 17, 1918.



London. After a few years he sold his share and joined a Mining Syndicate in London which resulted in his going to Australia to do prospecting in the Northern Territory. This necessitated a few trips backwards and forwards and finally the depositing of a great deal of his research and private papers in the John Oxley Library in Brisbane.

Henry and his wife had three daughters and a son. One of the girls, Kitty, married an Australian soldier Llewellyn Jones, and after they settled in his home town, they had twin sons. Sadly, Kitty died very soon afterwards. Anyway, through one of my letters to a Melbourne newspaper being answered by a member of the family, in no time, I was Skyping and emailing one of their granddaughters, Brenda Noonan. As her husband is a retired professional photographer they were able to go to the J O Library and copy as many of his documents as they wanted. So, I have a good selection here.

Another of Henry's daughters married a Canadian so after their daughter was born in 1918, they sailed for Canada. This girl, Madeline Ann Meadus, (is/was my cousin), died at the age of 101 so was sent a birthday card from the Queen when she reached her century! I am also in touch with her family. All thanks to another letter to a newspaper!

Henry's other daughter didn't marry. His son went to Australia in 1911 and settled there. I

have information and letters from his granddaughter but she doesn't want anything to do with the Kenney family because of the way he treated his wife. I have respected her feelings but I feel it is all history and she is depriving her children of part of their family.

As for the South African side of the family I have had no problem researching them apart from the fact that my surname should be Nel and not Nelson! My mother-in-law registered my husband and his brother as Nelsons as Afrikaans names weren't welcome on the Rand after World WW1. My mother-in-law was a Zeederberg so I have four or five lever arch files on this family!

I have been blessed with a lovely family and many very good friends. One of whom is Esme Hodgson - ex Mongu, Barotseland, - now lives in Peers Village, and who celebrated her 90th birthday this Sunday, the 23rd August. Another friend, Jean Flisher, Ex PCK in S. India, lives in Meadowridge. So that's it!

I hope you haven't been too bored!

Betty Nelson
Cape Town,
August 2020

WHY WERE MARRIAGES REGISTERED BY THE STATE IN CAPE IN 19th CENTURY? AND WHY SO MANY DIVORCES?

Derek Pratt

Introduction

Have you ever thought why the colonial authorities of the Cape required that the information from all the marriages at the Cape had to be forwarded to them? Why not also collect birth information from the church's baptisms records? Agreed, they did require Death Notices (which us genealogists are thankful for) but these tended to be only for those with Wills and Estates and not all the Cape Colony citizens who died. In other words, there were no Civil Registrations of Births and Death until 1895. Why?

Baptisms



In Britain, before 1837 and General Registration of Births Marriages and Death, it was required that the parishes of the Church of England (CofE) had to forward a copy of all baptisms and marriages to the Diocesan Offices. These are now known as the Bishops' Transcripts¹ in the UK. Why not do the same at the Cape? We need to understand the difference in the administration and demographic differences between the Cape and England and Wales. In England they have what is called the National Church or Established Church i.e. the Church of England (CofE). They had initially the sole right to baptise, marry and bury the dead - the famous BMDs, us genealogists thrive on. At the Cape after the British occupation in 1806 and even after 1814 when it became a solely British Colony, the majority of the population did not belong to the CofE - in fact besides a few Colonial Chaplains there were no CofE bishops or ministers here. The majority of people belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, and through the slaves and their descendants, there were also many followers of the Islamic faith. We also must not forget the indigenous people who might not belong to any of the typical faiths encountered by the Colonial administration and thus "Baptism" would be a poor way of registering births in the Colony.

That no Established Church was recognised by law here at the Cape was proved by certain court cases some of which went through numerous levels of the justice system right up to an appeal to the Privy Council in London who ruled that all churches were voluntary organisations and therefore could not be used by the state to carry out its role and functions and vice versa². In relation to Baptism this was confirmed in 1902 when the Cape Supreme Court ruled in a case where the plaintiff asked the Court to rule that St George's Cathedral alter an entry for a baptism in its register. Justice Buchanan, in his judgement stressed that, as the baptismal register was not a public register (this is what the plaintiff had pleaded), the court should not make an order to amend records kept by the Church³. The church was a voluntary organisation and its records were for members only, so what was written in the Baptismal Register was not for use by state authorities.⁴

¹ The Bishop's Transcripts are copies of the entries in a parish register and were made by the churchwarden or minister. They were sent to the Diocesan Registry each year and are part of the diocesan records. These transcripts were required from 1597. Once civil registration of births, marriages and deaths started in 1837, the bishop's transcripts became less important and many parishes stopped keeping them.

² http://anglicanhistory.org/africa/day_gray.html downloaded 15 Sept 2020

³ J. H. Van Staden, *Church Law as a Isu Sui Generis in South Africa: A Reformed Perspective* (Bloemfontein: University of the Free State, unpublished Phd Thesis, 2014), p. 116

⁴ Having said that, the DHA were willing to take certified copies of Baptism Register Entries when 16 year-olds were applying for ID documents around the time of the 1994 Elections and the Birth Registrations could not be located or if they had never been registered.

Marriage and Divorce

However, in the Cape Colony all the marriages were collected and stored by the State/Colonial authorities from well before compulsory registration of BMDs were introduced 1895. In the Introduction I asked why. One of the reasons perhaps, was that marriage was a contract between consenting individuals and it was on these 'contracts' that the morals of society rested. As the old Anglican Prayer Book (SABP) marriage service says it is not to be entered into 'unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly' but 'discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God.'¹⁵ If marriage, in the parlance of the time, was seen as the bedrock of a moral society then records of marriage were needed to prove that, for example, a child was born in wedlock, that on the death of a parent, any minor children could, if necessary, be cared for by the state and that a married partner could not marry another, until death or divorce from the former partner was ensured.

As with Baptism and the Bishop's Transcripts, marriage too was viewed as a "Church matter". But this was not the case with Roman-Dutch common law where secular marriages were permitted. Here at the Cape this was allowed under the short Batavian Rule between 1803-1806⁶ but with the return of the British it was once again made a religious (i.e. a Christian) event. In some of the ordinances between 1823-1826 it became permissible for slaves to marry - if they were Christians - but not many took up the opportunity. In fact, more married under Muslim rites, which had no legality in the eyes of law.⁷



Civil Marriage Registers were again allowed at the Cape from 1839. In the UK this was from 1836 - in anticipation of the Civil Registration of BMDs in 1837. It was, however, the Church that carried out most of the marriages in both places. Once again in the UK where the majority were in the CoFE this presented less of a problem than in the Cape where there were many Christian denominations. Strict procedures were required to ensure the legality of marriages and thus the legitimacy of the offspring. Without this there could be issues involving succession and the right to property. But there were problems regarding who should be allowed to carry out a legitimate marriage. For example, in 1886 just 53 Christian ministers of the 'mainline' churches appeared on the Civil Service List (that is to say, acknowledged 'Marriage Officers'). However, in Cape Town's General Directory there were 364 people listed as Christian ministers, which under British Common Law were allowed to be marriage officers. That means that 311 ministers exercised the function of marriage officers who were wholly unknown to government⁸. In 1908 Acting Chief Justice Buchanan even stated that "I think it is time the Legislature took up this important matter and placed the marriage laws on a better footing than that upon which they are founded at present".⁹

Vertrees C. Malherbe in his article, "Family law and 'the great moral public interests' in Victorian Cape Town, c.1850-1902" asks concerning all those ministers who were unknown as ministers and yet operated as marriage officers: "What, then, of enforcement of the legal requirements such as banns, parental rights over minors, or proofs respecting degrees of consanguinity?" He acknowledges that race and class were factors and shows that the general view was that with respect to 'natives and half castes in town', surely it was 'undesirable to allow their union by a catechist, evangelist, or local preacher'. It was argued that Parliament should legislate so that the clergy – like doctors, land surveyors, attorneys – be required to register in order to serve as marriage officers. It had tried to do so a decade

⁵ A *Book of Common Prayer Authorised for use in South Africa* (OUP & SPCK: Cape Town, 1954) The Marriage Ceremony, p140

⁶ Malherbe, Vertrees C. "Family law and 'the great moral public interests' in Victorian Cape Town, c.1850-1902" *Kronos* vol.36 n.1 Cape Town Nov. 2010

⁷ Derek Pratt, *The Anglican Church's Mission to the Muslims in the Western Cape* (Grahamstown: Rhodes University, unpublished Masters Thesis, 1997) p.34 also Yusuf da Costa & Achmat Davids, *Pages from Cape Muslim History* (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter, 1994) p. 57

⁸ Malherbe, op cit p.12

⁹ Van Staden, op cit p. 116

earlier but complications cited by churchmen had persuaded it to drop the measure.¹⁰ In fact it was only in the 1960s that ministers of religion had to undergo an examination on the Marriage Act in operation at that time and be licensed to marry couples. Thus, it became the government that gave permission for a minister of religion to be a marriage officer and not the Church. With the coming of same-sex marriage, an additional examination was required and many churches forbade their ministers from taking this additional qualification on the threat of dismissal.

Into this marriage discussion which was based on quasi-religious and moral grounds, there came an interesting legal conundrum. Although the British took possession of the Cape in 1806, they did not change the legal system from Roman-Dutch Law to the British Common Law. Within the British Empire only the Cape Colony (and later South Africa), Ceylon and Guyana retained Roman-Dutch Law. This happened in spite of the gradual 'Anglicisation' of the justice system and its judges and advocates here at the Cape. As most of the judges appointed and advocates called to the bar were trained at the UK bar – the Inner and Middle Temples, they had little experience of Roman Dutch Law unless they specifically went to the Netherlands to train at universities there or studied the legal tomes on Roman Dutch Law most of which were still in Latin or Dutch.

One of the Common Law issues the Courts at the Cape had to face was that of divorce. I have always been surprised at the number of divorces there seems to be here in the Cape and post -1910 in South Africa generally. The number seemed to be much larger than in the UK, especially when we compare the size of population. I have not researched this statistically, but it seems that there are many more divorce records on NAAIRS compared with divorce records found on Ancestry and Findmypast. This might simply be because NAAIRS has an index to all the CSC [Cape Supreme Court] folders online which includes all the divorce cases. In the TV series '*Who do you think you are*', in particular the episode on comedian Vic Reed, they found that his grandfather was a bigamist and the comment was made that it was quite common before the 1930s because a divorce was so complex and expensive. What happened was that the majority who could not afford the divorce process simply left their marriage partner and most probably married another, thus committing bigamy. In the UK until a year or so ago, any divorce had to have blame appropriated to one of the partners. In the 19th Century the only blame allowed was adultery and once again this was viewed as a Church matter.

The British-trained Counsels and Judges had trouble with divorce cases as they had less experience in them. To them dissolving a marriage was seen as destroying a pillar 'on which civilised society rests'.¹¹ In one area in particular, the Cape judges recruited in Britain were uncomfortable with the Roman-Dutch law's admission of malicious desertion as ground for divorce. Vertrees Malherbe in his paper tells of a case from 1853 where Johannes le Roes sued Anna Wiehahn for restitution of conjugal rights – the mandatory first step in divorce proceedings – after she 'unlawfully and maliciously deserted' him, alleging his violence and threats to her life. Justice Musgrave (who in the case) supported the finding for Anna Wiehahn also lamented: 'I have often expressed myself very strongly against the facility which is given to married persons in this country to obtain a divorce for malicious desertion.' Malherbe rather sarcastically adds that a "satisfactory footing" would allow a judicial separation but preserve an unhappy couple's marriage. In the Roman-Dutch tradition a full legal separation was available through courts of law and not through the Church.¹²

Among the arguments put forward by the lawyers included that the total neglect by the husband of the wife would be no bar to his right to divorce if she should commit adultery during his neglect of her. Justice Bell in his comments on a case seemed to think that sexual morality was more important than a wife's predicament where she was abandoned and indigent. She should have reverted to maiden-like chastity. Justice Bell's dictum that Cape law allow malicious desertion as a reason for divorce was simply 'sin and confusion to society'.

Conclusion

Why did the Cape keep records of marriages from such an early date? The Christian sexual moral teaching stresses the need to control who married whom and what happened to the products (children) of that marriage. Who was doing the marriages (ministers of religion), although also important, seemed to be less controlled then could be.

¹⁰ Malherbe, op cit p.12

¹¹ Malherbe *Op cit* p.9 quoting from J. Buchanan, ed, *Cases Decided in the Supreme Court of the Cape of Good Hope as reported by the Hon. William Menzies Esq.*, 3 vols (Cape Town, 1870-1903).

¹² Malherbe, *Op cit* p.9 & 10

Following Roman-Dutch Law, the courts at the Cape were more involved in this area of common law such as the relationship of a man and a woman in marriage than they were in the United Kingdom.

The following of Roman-Dutch Law also led to an acceptance of divorce as a legal rather than an ecclesiastical matter. This was perhaps aggravated by the fact that the population at the Cape were so litigious. Looking at the CSC files on NAAIRS there seem to be a lot of civil cases where one person is suing another for many reasons besides divorce or bad debt. Perhaps the ease with which cases could be brought to court and the 'malignant desertion' cause being allowed for divorce, made the number of divorces appear larger per size of the population than in the UK.

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From webpage

http://anglicanhistory.org/africa/day_gray.html downloaded 15 Sept 2020

Interview Questions and Tips: a Few Questions to Start the Conversation

I found this list of questions in my CTFHS Newsletter Folder. I don't think the Magic Fairy put it there but whoever sent it to me, thank you. These questions are a wonderful way of starting a conversation with our elderly relatives as we delve into our family history. As we ourselves get older, perhaps we can also answer these questions and save the answers for our children's children to find.

Our family's story is a vital part of our family history, and recording our own personal history is just as important as compiling a pedigree. The stories passed down by older relatives may include vital clues that help you in the research process as well.

At one point an elderly aunt came to live with us for a month as she was preparing to move to her brother in Johannesburg. She kept on remembering snippets and stories of when she was in Kimberley during the siege. I was ten at the time and I asked her to tell me all about her life. She didn't know really where to start and what to say. I wish I had this list of conversation starters then.

- How long did your family live in the neighbourhood you grew up in? Are parts of the family still there?
- Was there extended family living in the area at that time?
- Did you live on a farm, and if so, what kind of crops and livestock did you raise?
- Did you have pets in your household?
- What was your house or apartment like? How many floors? How many rooms?
- Where did the family congregate?
- What kind of amenities did it have? indoor plumbing? Electricity? Gas? Telephone? Refrigerator? Cooking stove?
- Television?
- Were there any special items in the house that stand out in your mind? A favourite possession belonging to

- you, your
- parents, or a sibling?
- What kind of neighbourhood did you grow up in?
- Did the town have a railroad? Post office? What kinds of stores or shops?
- Was your family part of a religious community? if so, where did you go to worship?
- What religious ceremonies did you take part in?
- Do you have godparents or sponsors?
- Where did you go to school?
- What level of education do you have?
- What was your favourite subject to study?
- Did you have any special interests when you were growing up (sports, hobbies, crafts, etc.)?
- What kinds of games did you play?
- What was your favourite toy?
- What did you do for fun (go to the beach, a park, movies, a zoo, etc.)?
- Did your family ever take trips to visit family or go on sight-seeing vacations?
- Did you ever attend a family reunion, and if so, where was it?
- Were there any foreign languages spoken in your household? Do you speak any foreign languages?
- Who were your friends growing up? -
- Who were close friends of the family?
- Describe the personalities of your family members.
- Are there any physical characteristics that run in your family?
- Were there any serious illnesses in your family? Do any illnesses run in the family?
- Were there any memorable traditions that your family observed?
- Can you remember any stories that were told to you as a child (fictional, folk lore, or real life)?
- What events stand out in your memories from your childhood?

I presume this was where my 'Magic Fairy' found this from c.ancestry.com/cs/media/interview-tips.pdf

IT'S THAT VIRUS AGAIN! Part 2

If you are planning a visit to the Cape Archives during this COVID 19 period bear this in mind.

Reading Room Rules and Regulations

- Open 10h00 - 14h00, Monday to Friday.
- No more than 10 researchers allowed at a time in the Reading Room. Access into the Reading Room is on a first come first served basis.
- Please sanitise hands, laptops and equipment in the foyer.
- Mask: No entry into the Reading Room without properly fitted mask covering the mouth and nose.
- Assistance provided behind the glass shield only.
- 5 documents allowed per researcher per day. Only 1 document allowed on your table.
- Used documents will be quarantined for 3 days (72 hours) and will not be accessible again during that period.
- Finding Aids Room: 1 researcher at a time allowed in the room.
- Computer Room: 1 researcher at a time allowed in the computer room.
- Pencils are available at the front desk in the foyer. No pens allowed.
- Copies: only 10 copies of documents per person allowed per day. Copies will be certified and emailed (email address must be provided when completing work order in the Reading Room). Only one certification per document. Waiting period for copies is 15 working days.

Thank you for your cooperation. We encourage you to stay safe and appreciate your understanding.

Erika Le Roux

Head: Client Services (Research)

SOME CHRISTMAS CHEER!

SOME RATHER CHEESY PUNS AND JOKES

- “My ancestors are so hard to find, they must have been in a witness protection program!”
- Eventually, all genealogists come to their census.
- Genealogists: The only people who are excited to read obituaries.
- “Done! Everything in the family tree has been found and is completely organized” — said no genealogist. Ever.
- Genealogist: Disturbs the dead and irritates the living.
- Genealogy is like playing hide and seek: They hide... we seek!
- “I’m not stuck, I’m ancestrally challenged.”
- Gene-Allergy: It’s a contagious disease, but we love it.
- Genealogy: Where the answer to one problem leads to two more!
- “My husband calls cemeteries ancestor farms.”
- “I’m more interested in what happened in 1820, than what’s happening today in 2020”
- Wife to husband: “Never mind the children, do you know where your second great-grandparents are tonight?”
- Only a genealogist views a step backwards as progress.
- “I used to have a lot of free time... then I discovered genealogy.”
- “I collect dead relatives!”
- “My ancestors did WHAT?”
- A pack rat is hard to live with, but makes a mighty fine ancestor.
- “I want to find ALL of them! So far I only have a few thousand.”
- “I think my ancestors had several “bad heir” days.”

