

# Deep Time in the Deep South: Archaeological sites and the history of the Cape Peninsula

By Nic Wiltshire & Jim Hallinan

Simon's Town Museum, 19 February 2026





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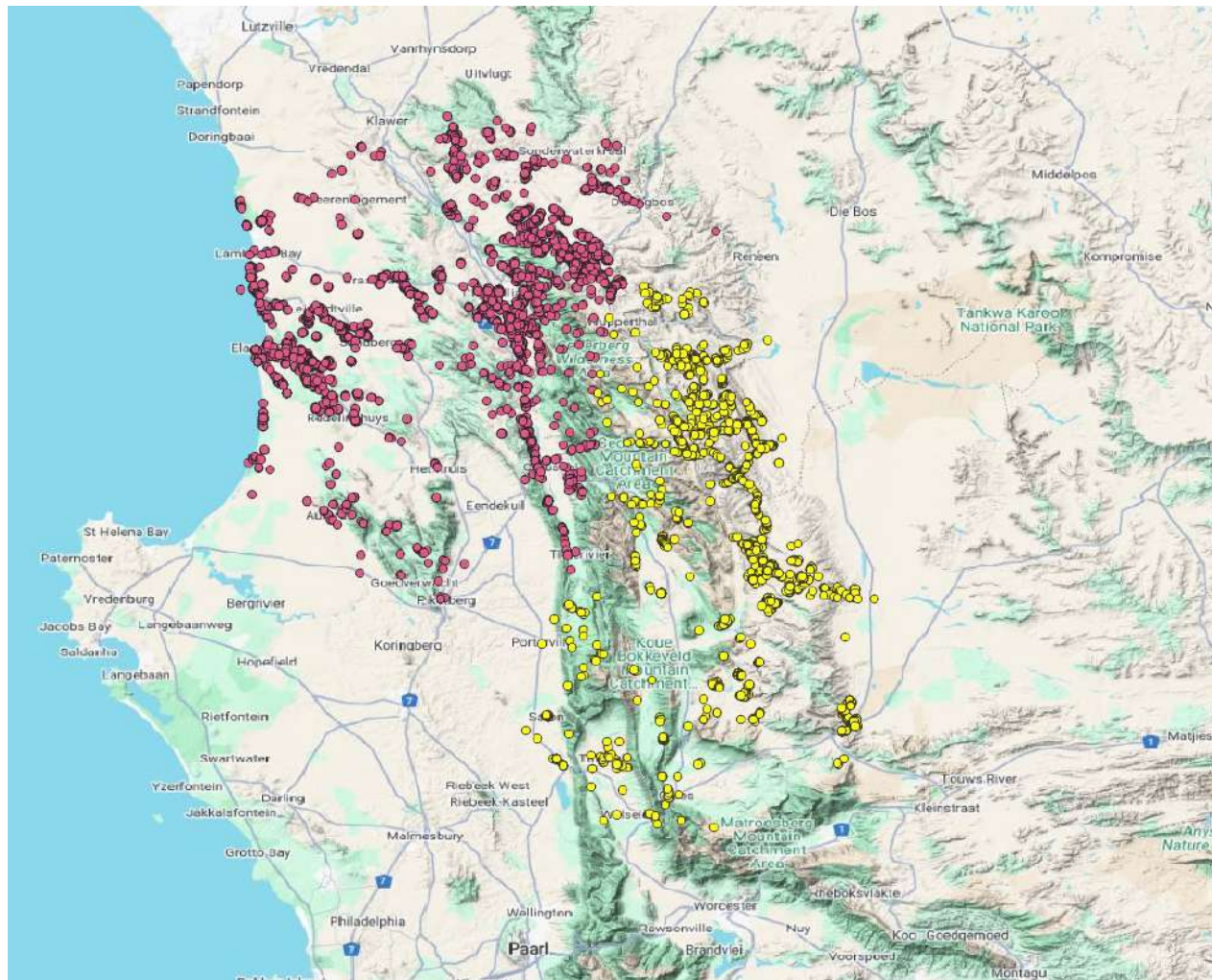


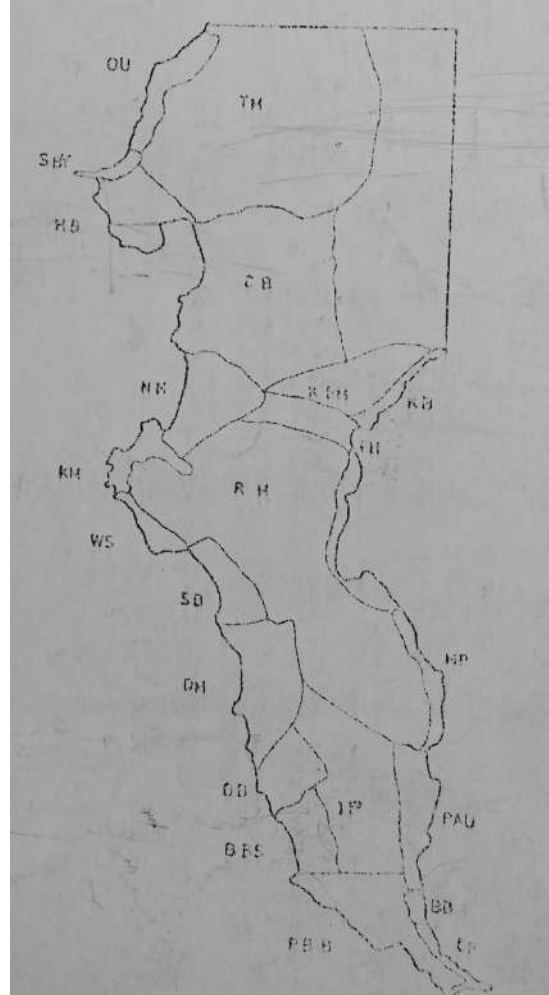
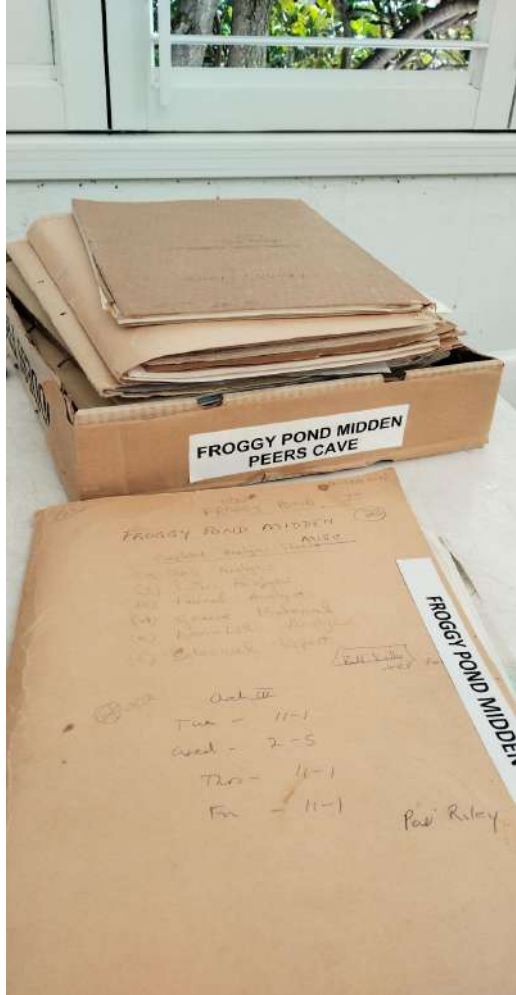
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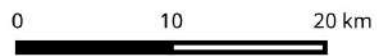
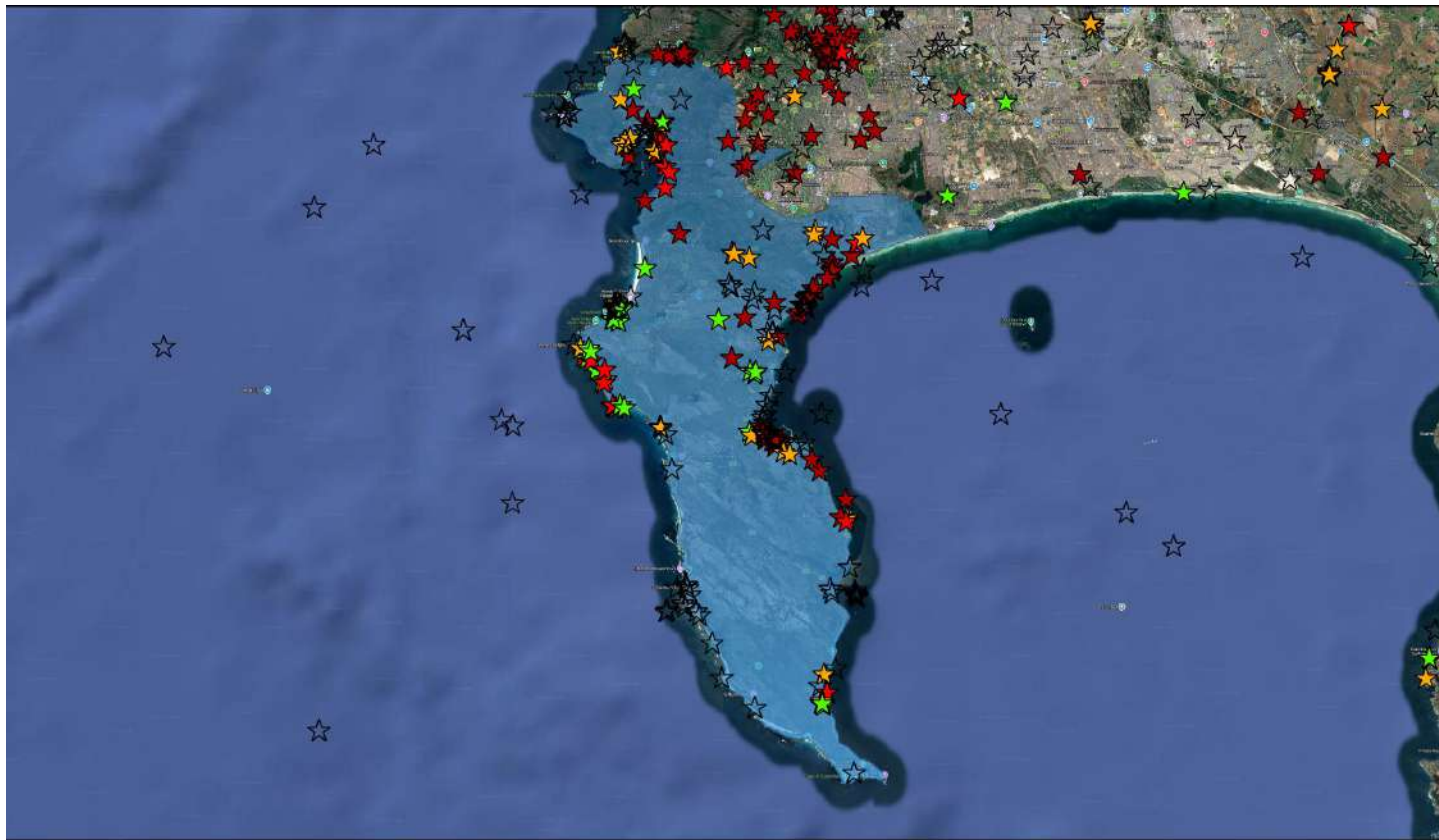
Files from the Simon's Town Museum Archives

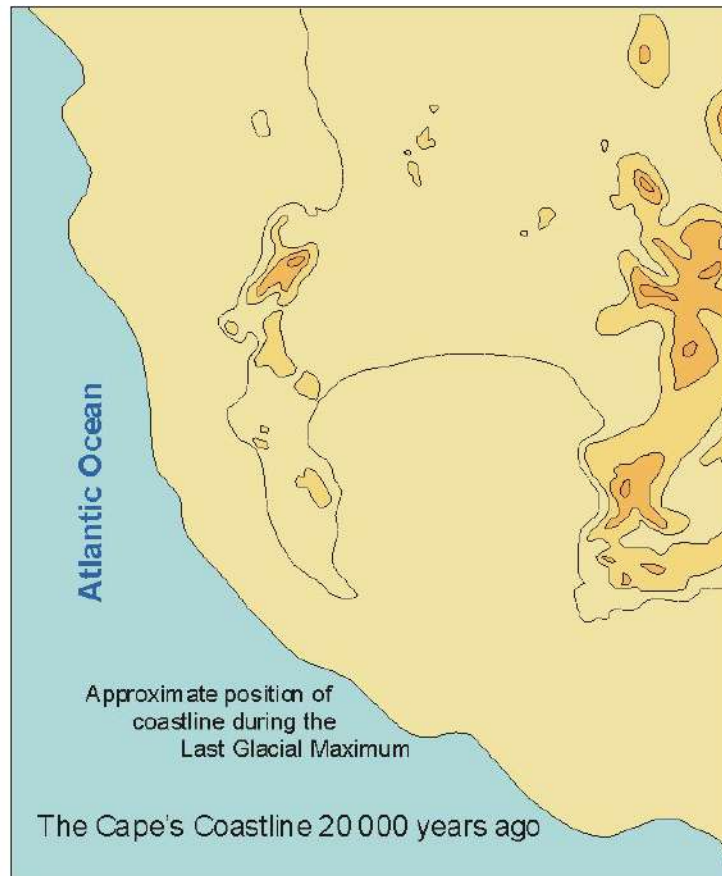
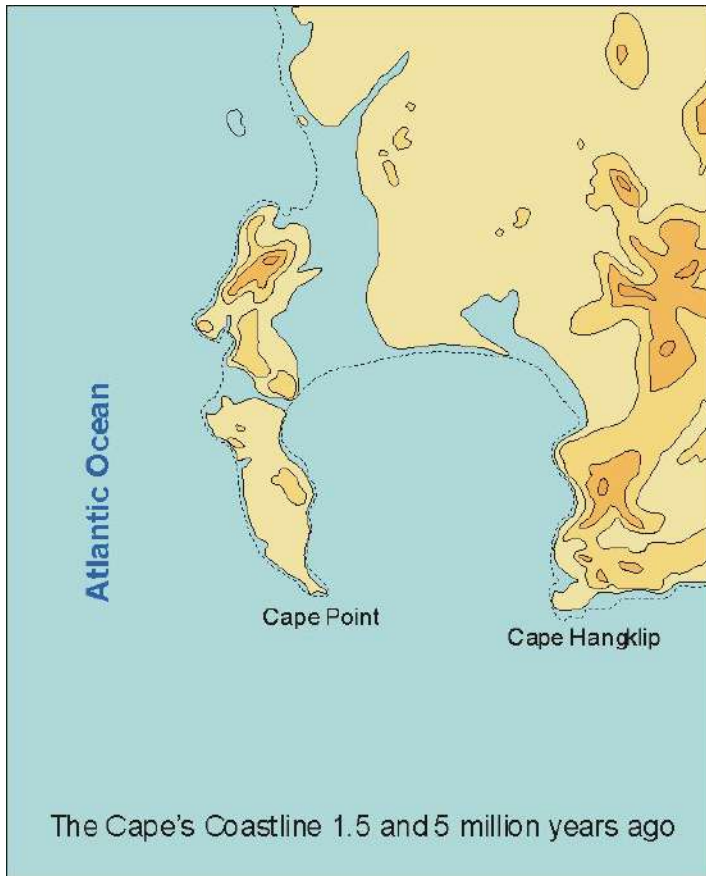


Jonathan  
Kaplan, Ponto  
d'Oura report,  
217 sites in the  
Cape Peninsula

Unit	Description	No # Sites
Kalk Bay Unit	Trappies Kop etc	<b>6</b>
Fish Hoek Unit	Peers Cave etc	<b>8</b>
Millers Point Unit	Windmill Beach (Froggy Pond, etc), Seaforth	<b>3</b>
Paulsberg Unit		<b>15</b>
Buffels Bay Unit		<b>8</b>
Cape Point Unit		<b>5</b>
Platboombaai Unit		<b>14</b>
Bloubergstrand Unit		<b>7</b>
Olifantsbos unit		<b>8</b>
Die Mond unit		<b>4</b>
Scarborough unit		<b>6</b>
Kommetjie Unit	Slangkop and Klein Slangkop	<b>4</b>
Noordhoek unit		<b>8</b>
Sandy Bay unit	Townley Johnson Logies Cave	<b>6</b>
Hout Bay Unit		<b>5</b>

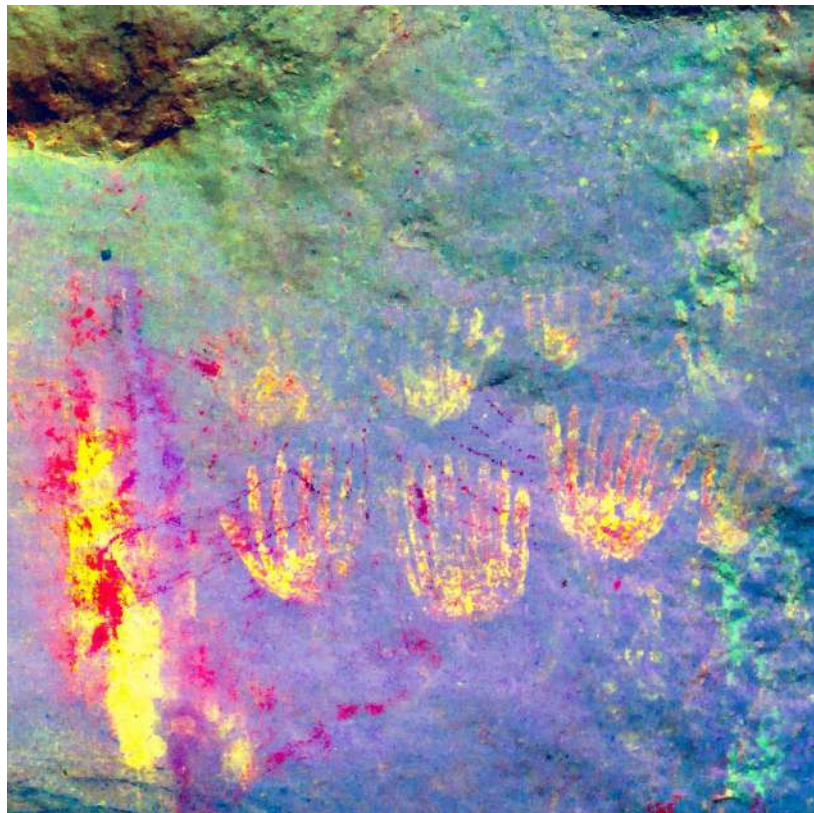
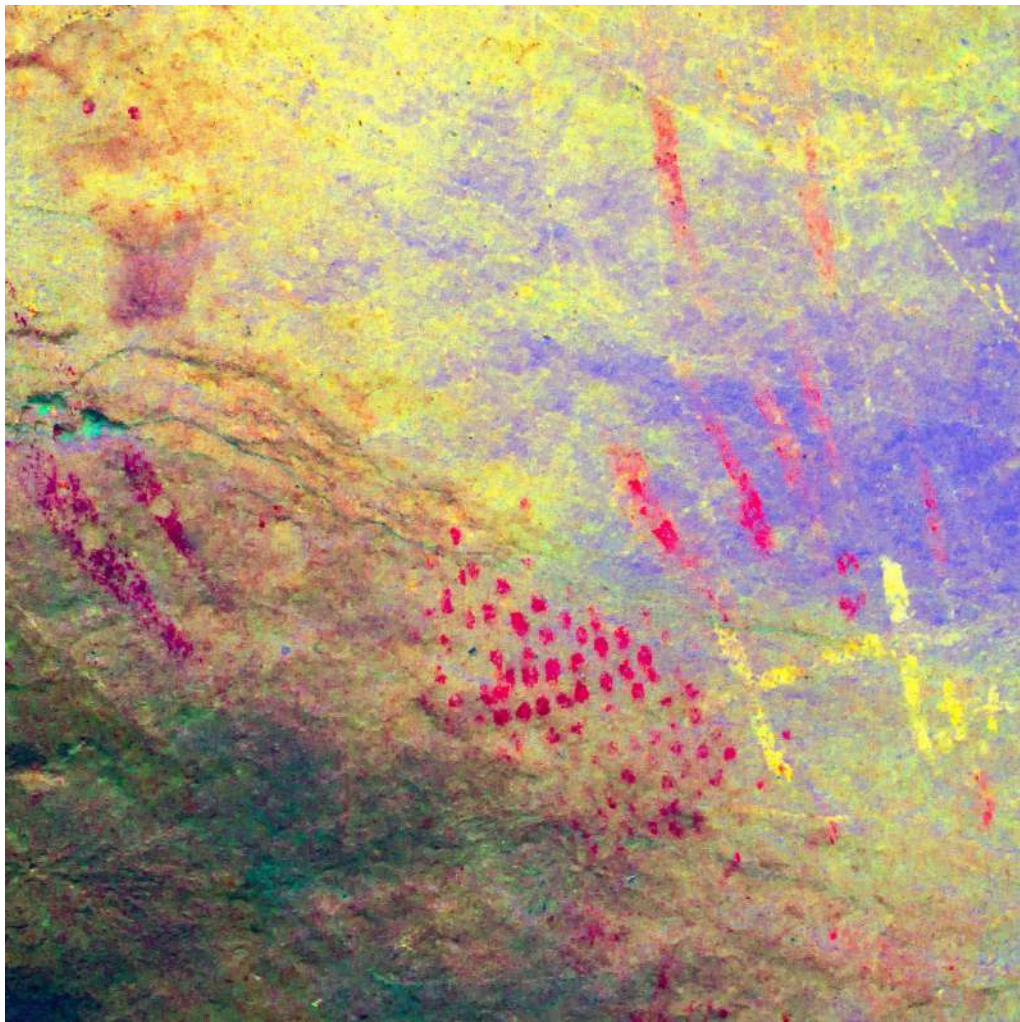


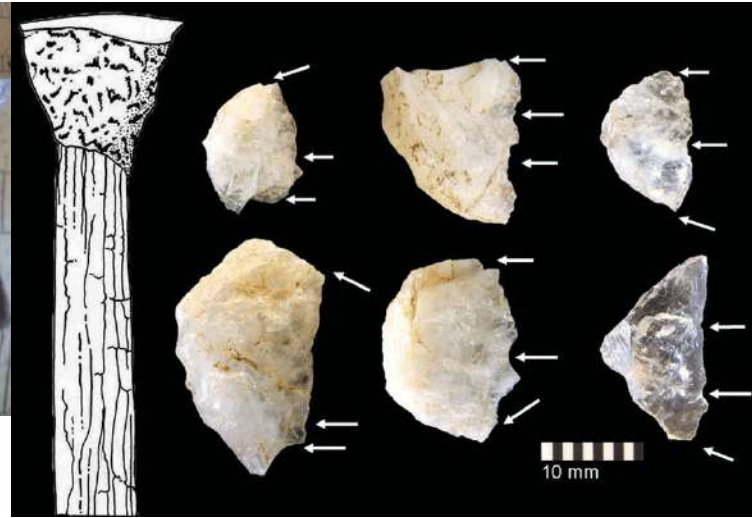
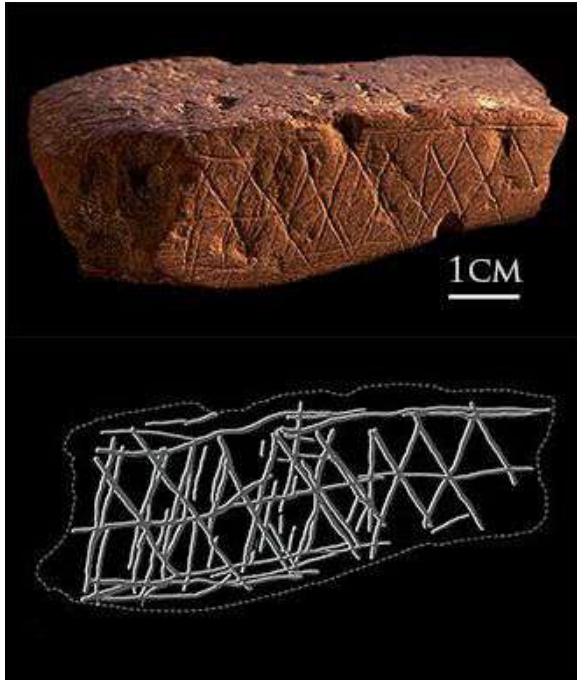












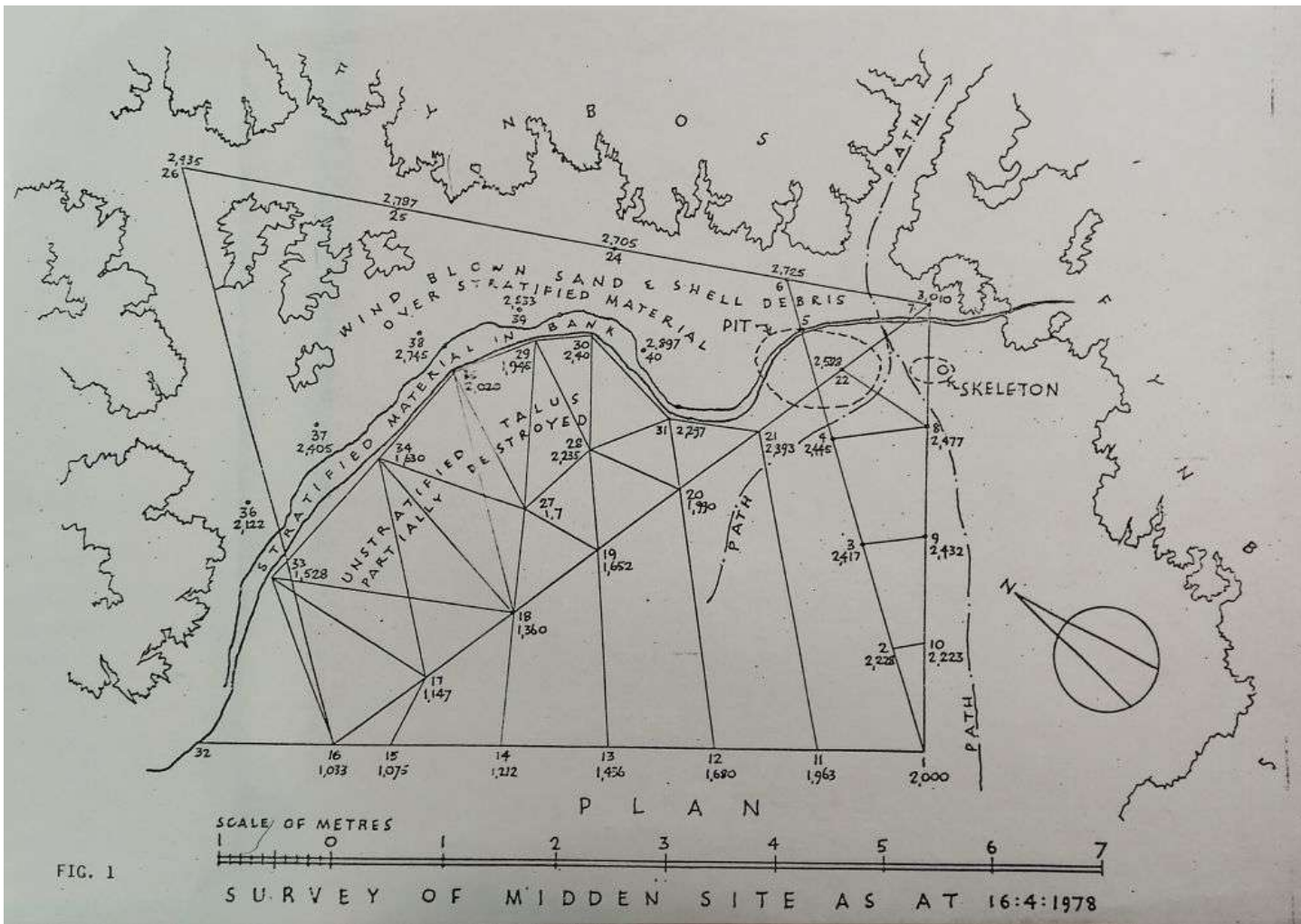
- Blombos Ochre - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Blombo.jpg>
- Projectile points from Sibudu Cave, [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/shows-a-quartz-segment-from-Sibudu-Cave-approximately-12-8mm-with-several-lines-of\\_fig7\\_256678582](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/shows-a-quartz-segment-from-Sibudu-Cave-approximately-12-8mm-with-several-lines-of_fig7_256678582)
- Replicas of Diepkloof engravings ostrich eggshell pieces, [https://x.com/IFAS\\_Research/status/1085486481714675713](https://x.com/IFAS_Research/status/1085486481714675713)

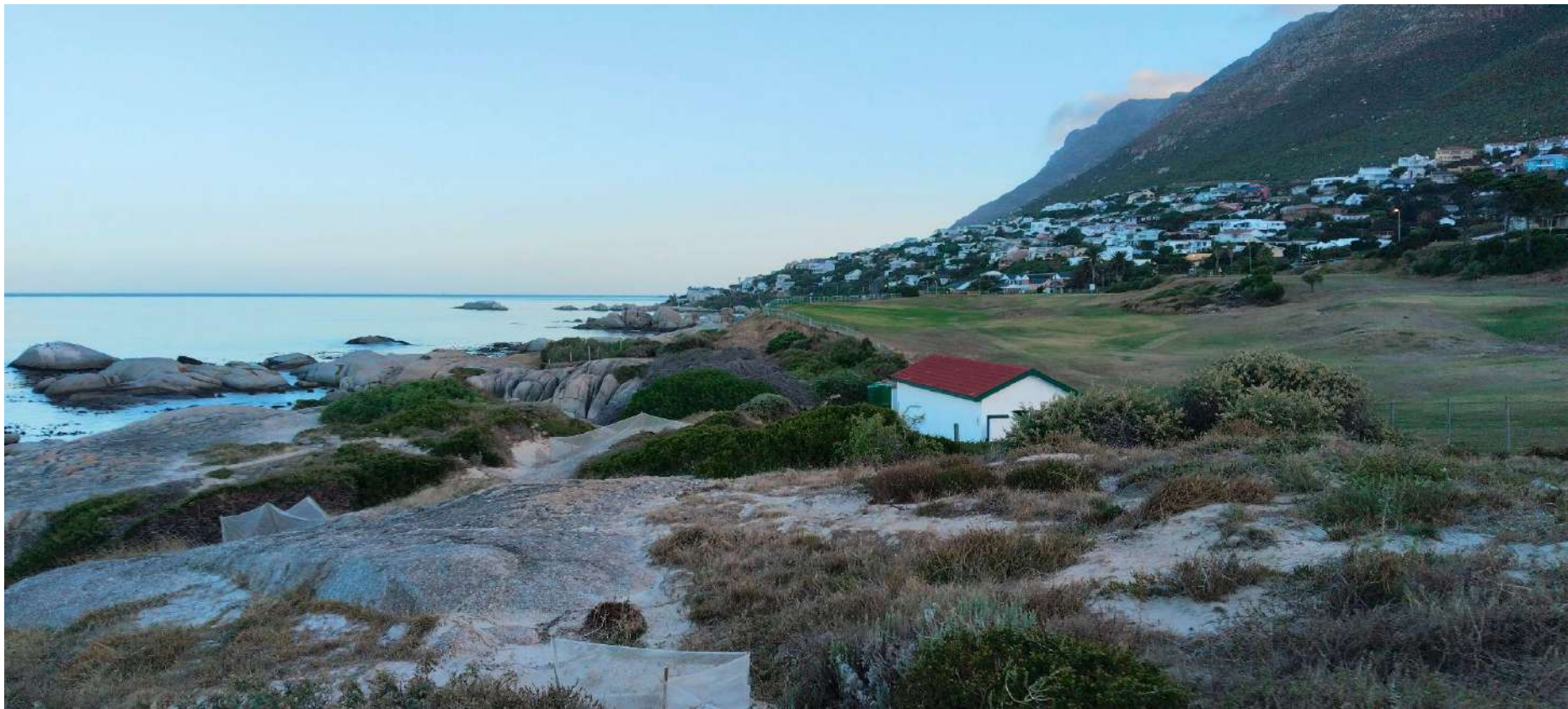
















*J. Smith & W. Miller del. J. Smith sculp.*

**A VIEW of the CAPE of GOOD HOPE.**  
 This Engraving  
*In Commemoration of the taking of*  
**THE CAPE of GOOD HOPE.**  
*As described to*  
*Sir David Baird & Sir Home Popham*  
*by their most illustrious*  
*Commanders.*



*Painted by W. M. Verelst.*

**THE BATTLE**  
*previous to the Surrender of the*  
**CAPE of GOOD HOPE,**  
*to Sir Home Popham, and*  
*Sir David Baird.*  
**Jan<sup>y</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 1806.**  
*Published by W. M. Verelst, and sold by Robert Smeath, Printers to His Majesty,*  
*by Book Sellers the corner of Strand Street, London.*



*Simon's Town was proclaimed the winter anchorage at the Cape after a severe storm on 21 May 1737 wrecked eight out of the ten VOC ships in Table Bay in a single night.*

*The Iepenrode, Flora, Paddenburg, Duinbeek, Goudriaan, Rodenrijs, Buis, and Westerbeek were driven onto today's Woodstock beach when their moorings parted at anchor, in what has been described as the greatest maritime disaster in the history of the VOC. 208 men died and cargo to the value of 1,921,532 guilders was lost, nearly 30% of the total cargo value for that year. In 1741 the Heeren XVII resolved to prohibit anchoring in Table Bay between 15 May and 15 August.*

*Aftermath of the gale of  
July 27<sup>th</sup> 1822*









Goede Gif (c.1743)  
Christiana Diemer's  
guest house and fresh  
produce garden

**Simon's Town**  
(c.1778)

Residency (c.1776) - today's  
Simon's Town Museum

Antoni Visser's house  
(c. 1725) - later the  
Commissioner's House and still  
later, today's Admiralty House

V.O.C. Warehouses (c.1743)  
and extended with a second  
floor added in c.1768

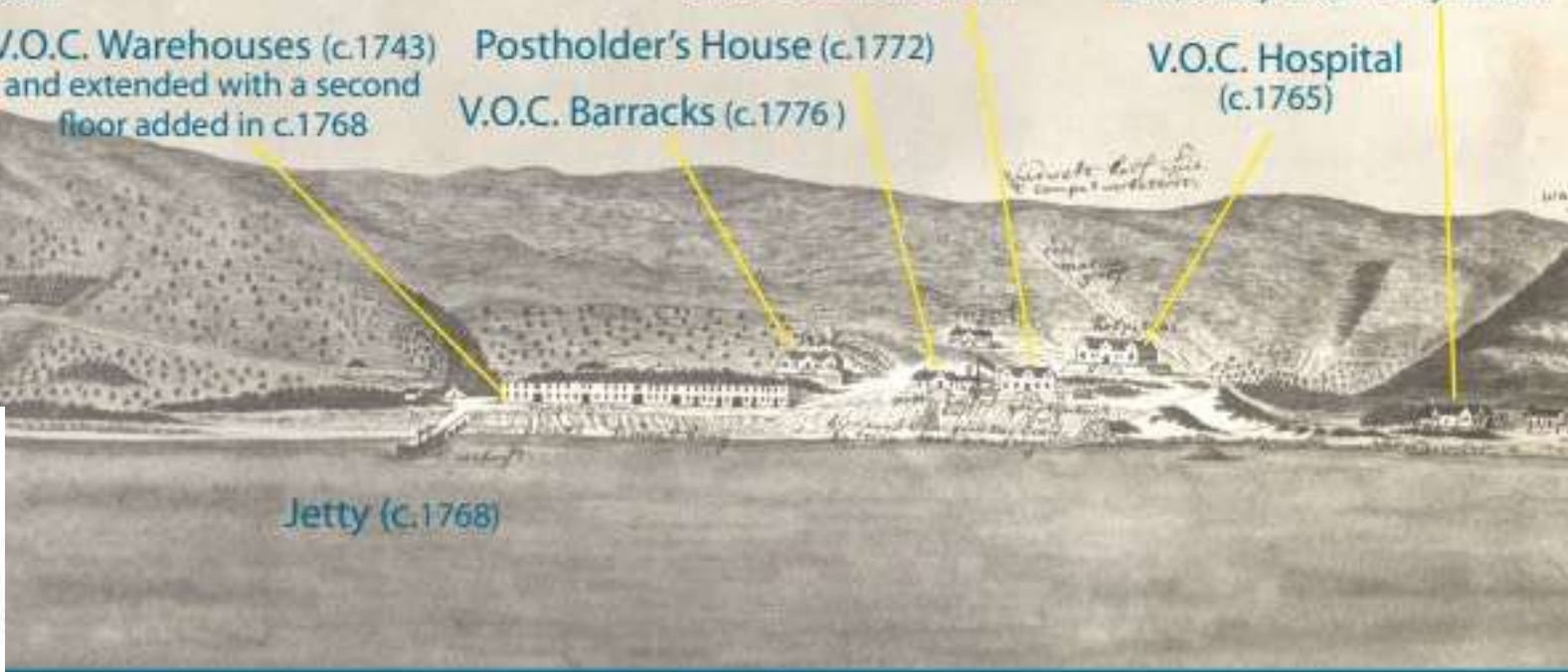
Postholder's House (c.1772)

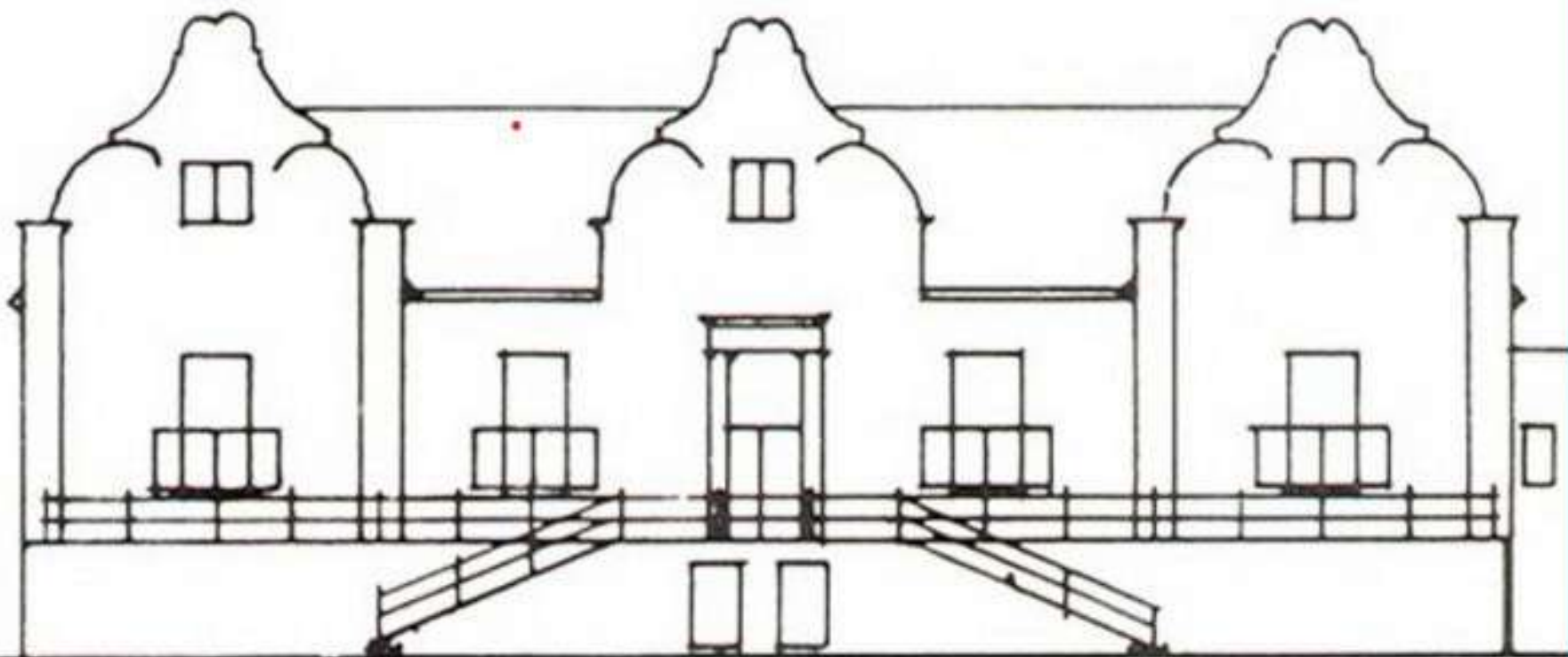
V.O.C. Barracks (c.1776)

V.O.C. Hospital  
(c.1765)

Jetty (c.1768)

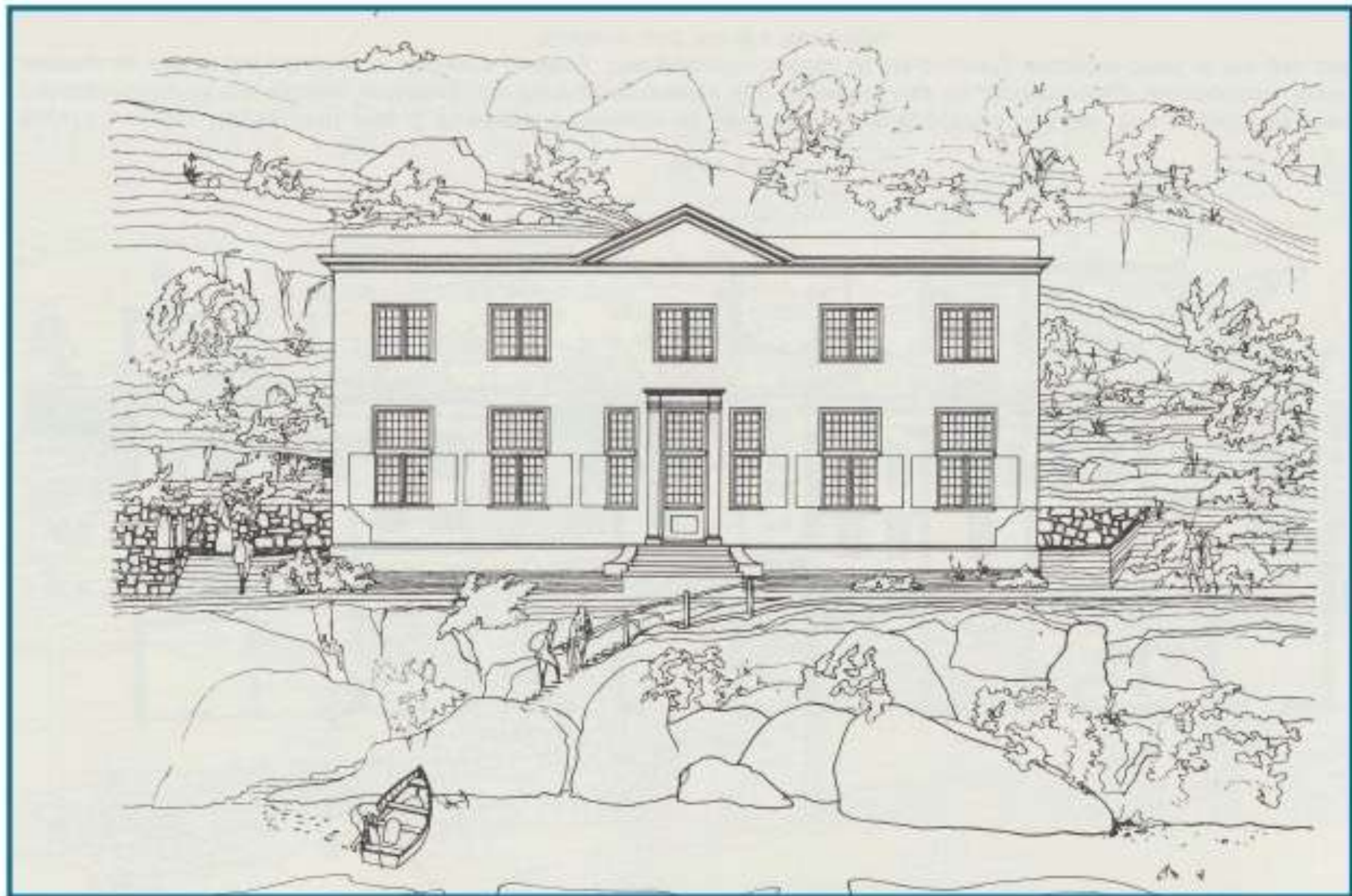
**Simon's Bay c.1778 from a section of the panorama  
by Col. R. J. Gordon**





The Residency as conjectured and drawn by Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the University of Cape Town, Owen Pryce-Lewis, based from his measurements of the still existing building and original drawings and paintings. One of three such stately tri-gabled buildings in Simon's Town built during V.O.C. rule. Note the early, 'holbol' style of Cape Dutch Gable in fashion at this time.

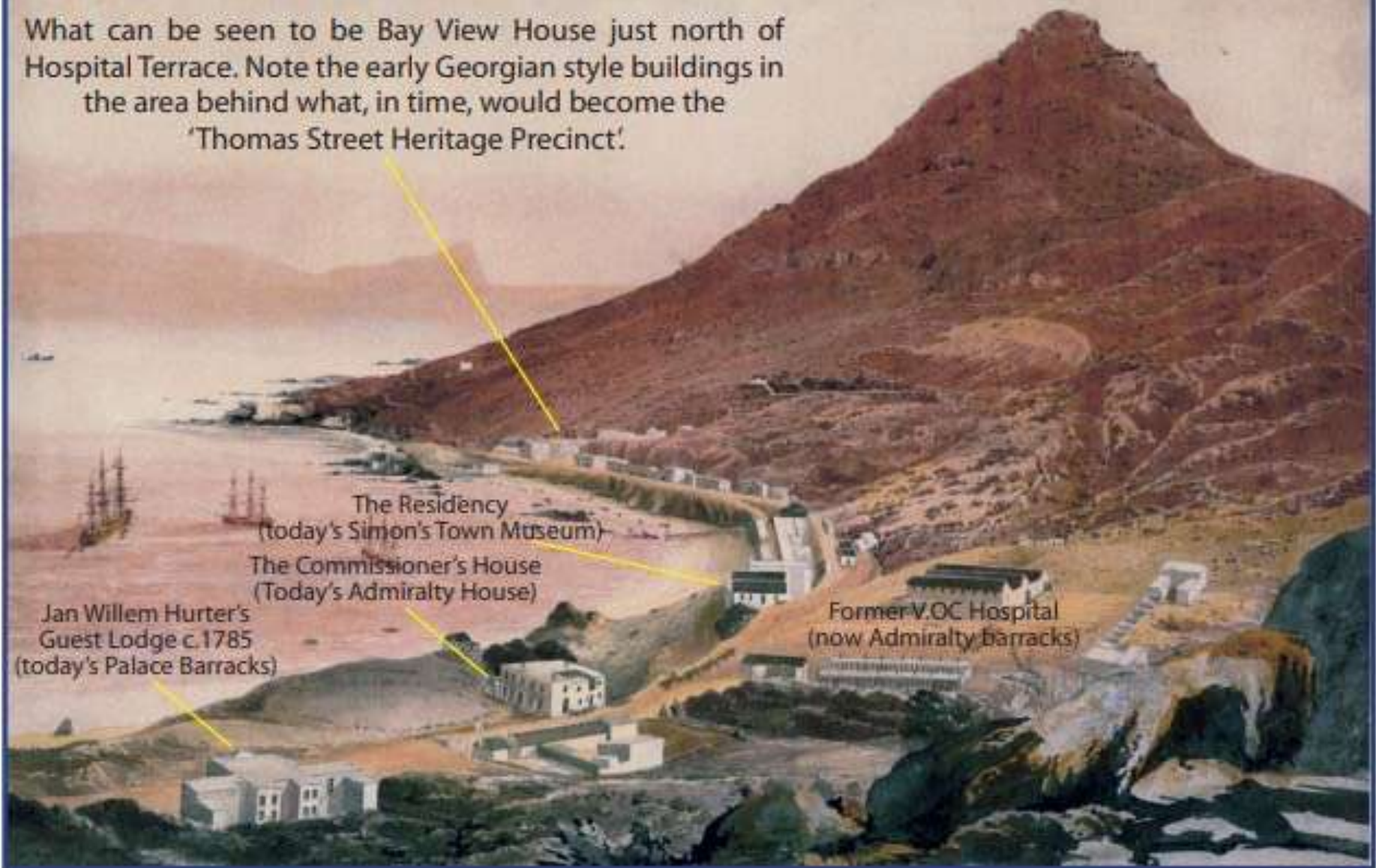
*(Courtesy Simon's Town Museum)*



Auret's boarding house (Today's Runciman House) as conjectured and drawn by Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the University of Cape Town, Owen Pryce-Lewis from his measurements of the still existing building although much altered.



What can be seen to be Bay View House just north of Hospital Terrace. Note the early Georgian style buildings in the area behind what, in time, would become the 'Thomas Street Heritage Precinct'.



The Residency  
(today's Simon's Town Museum)

The Commissioner's House  
(Today's Admiralty House)

Jan Willem Hurter's  
Guest Lodge c.1785  
(today's Palace Barracks)

Former V.O.C Hospital  
(now Admiralty barracks)

Admiral Sir Jahleel Brenton's panorama of Simon's Bay c. 1816

*(Courtesy of Simon's Town Museum)*

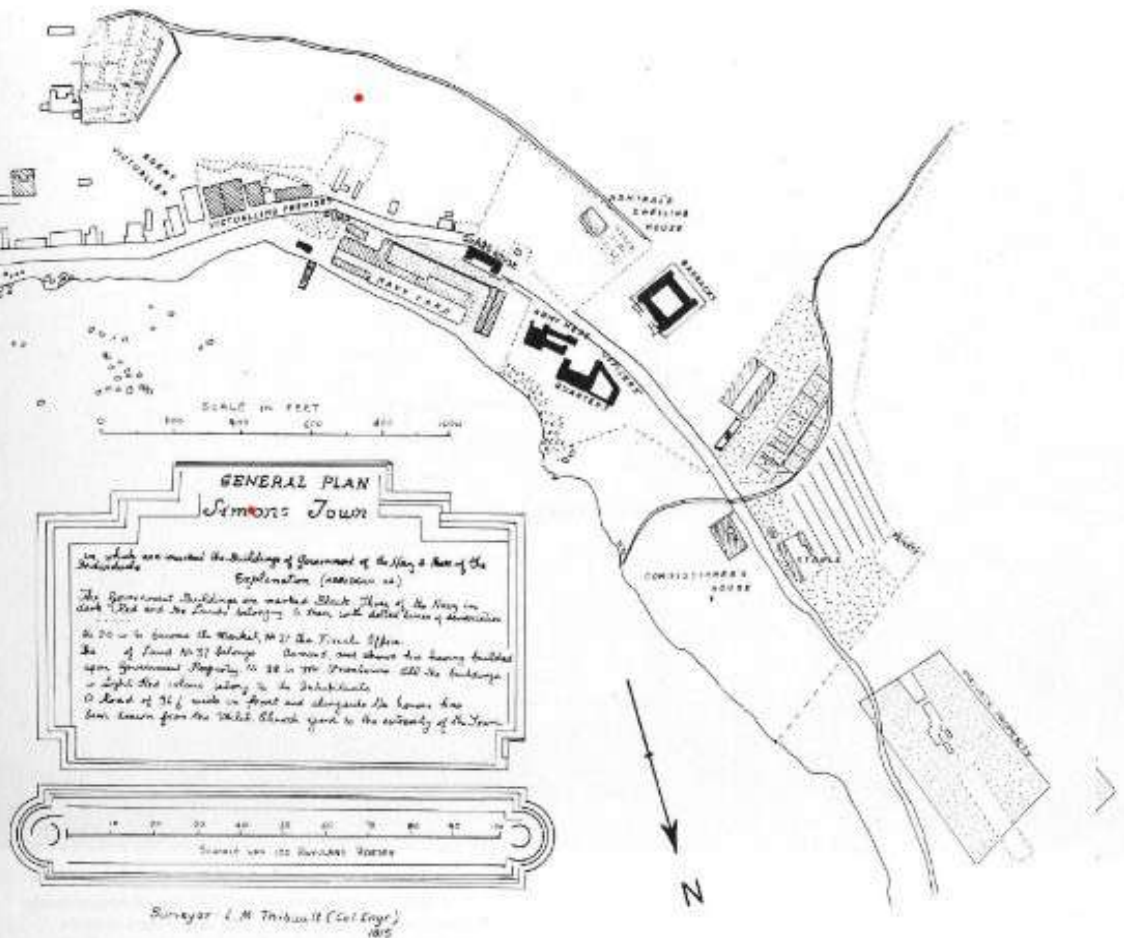
Present day alignment  
of Runciman Drive

SLOPED PRINTING: TRANSCRIPTION  
OF NOTES FROM A PLAN BY  
THOMAS QUATT'S, MASTER OF  
N.M.S. BATHURST JUNE 1814

Hospital Terrace  
built c.1795

Bay View House  
built c.1803

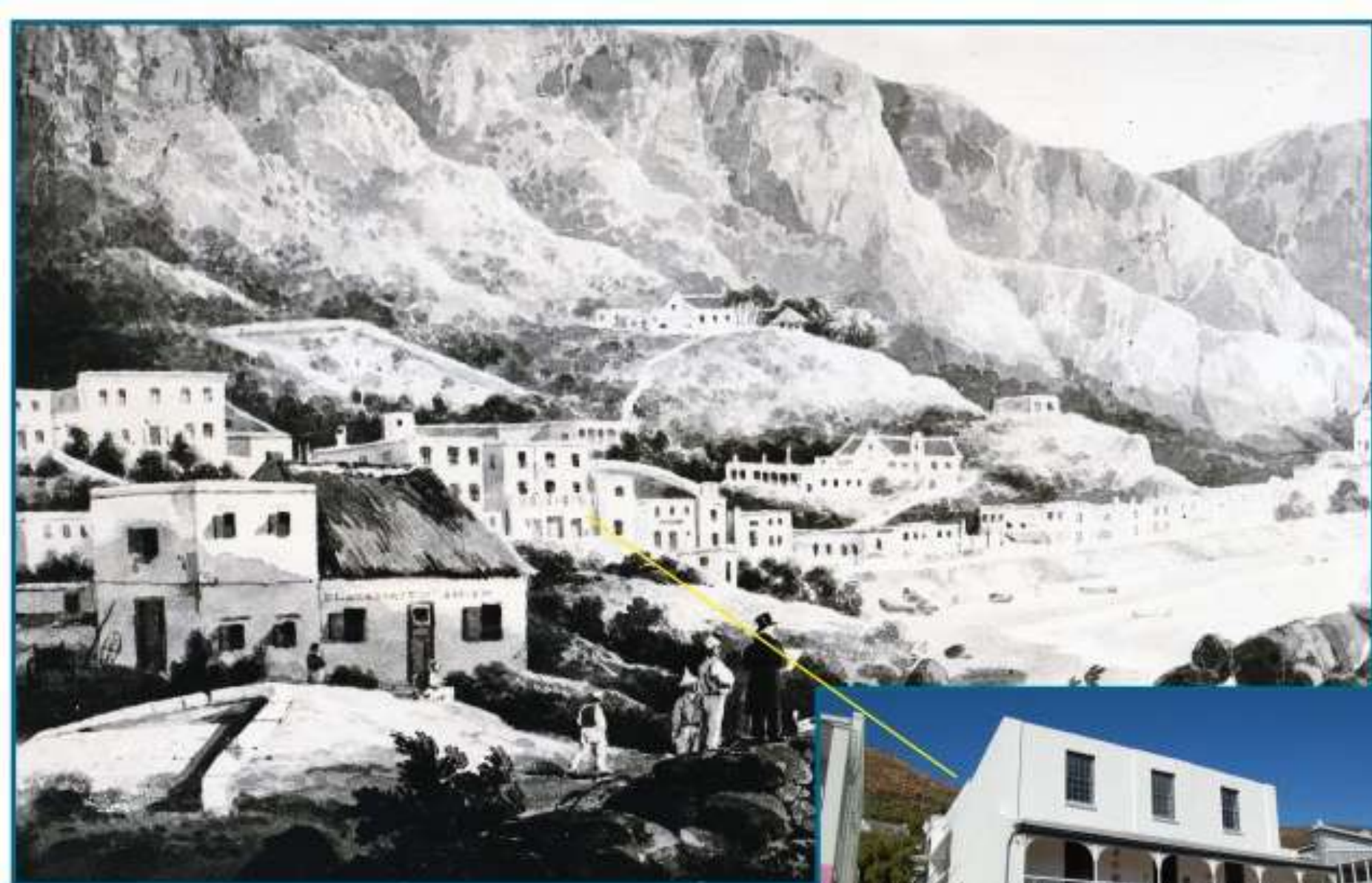
Boundary of the Thomas  
Street Heritage Precinct



Surveyor: L. M. Thibault (Col. Engr)  
1815

The Simon's Town section of Thibault's 1813-1815 General Plan (courtesy of Simon's Town Museum)

*"The little distance that lies between the sea and the lower slopes of the mountains of this bay have forced the inhabitants to cut into the ground in order to level it so as to find a suitable surface on which to build the house. All these excavations have formed a street, which, 30 years ago, was so narrow that a carriage could hardly pass along it without risking falling into the sea". (Brock and Brock: 1976, pg. 32).*



Sir Charles D'Oyly picture from Cole Point looking west (c. 1830). Notice how the trend in architecture at this time remained austere Georgian with a gradual moving away from thatched roofs. To the centre can be seen today's Bay View House - pictured to the right with later addition of a Victorian open balcony and shop-front below.





Admiralty House seen to the left carrying a flat Georgian parapet roof as painted by Christopher Webb Smith c.1838 (courtesy of the Library of Parliament) and above as seen today with its pitched roof, of trussed timber frame and tiles of blue Welsh slate added in 1875.



The Mast House and Sail loft (photographed c.1960) is seen to the left. One of the first Admiralty buildings designed and built by the Royal Engineer in 1815 and who saw no need to take their design inspirations from the past building norms of Simon's Town. Notice rather the employment of new Regency design elements of a shallow pitched roof and rusticated quoining on the corners and around the apertures of the building as well as the curved/arched windows and doors. Some of these innovative features can also be seen on the historic storehouse (behind, to the left) which the Engineers added a floor and other alterations and additions to during this early period of British command in Simon's Town.

To the right is the former guest house of Jeremius Auret (c.1785) displaying the ornate Victorian 'facelift' it received in 1899 with proud triangular pediments over the windows and typical Regency render and ashlar quoining below.

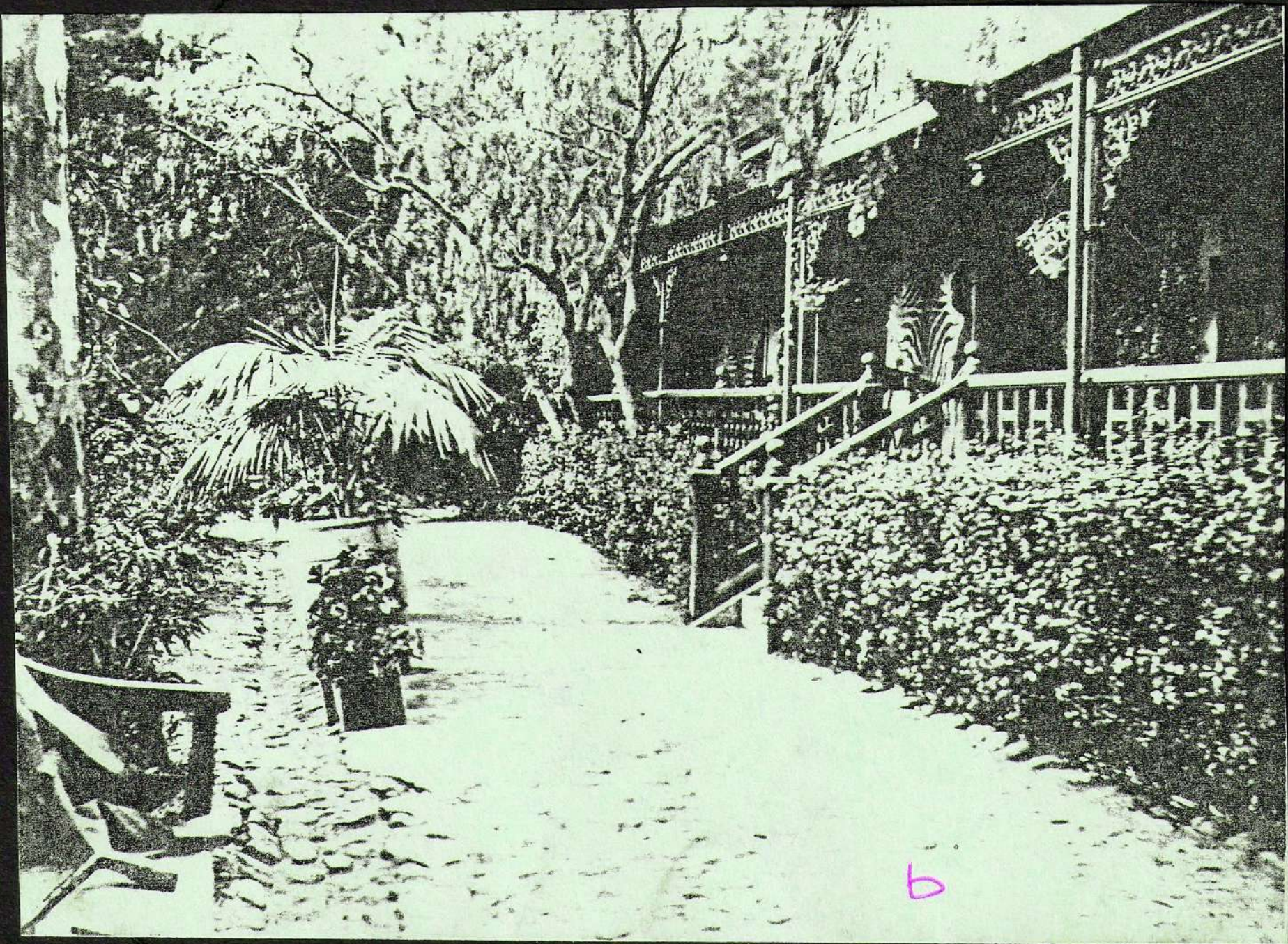


Today's Runciman Building

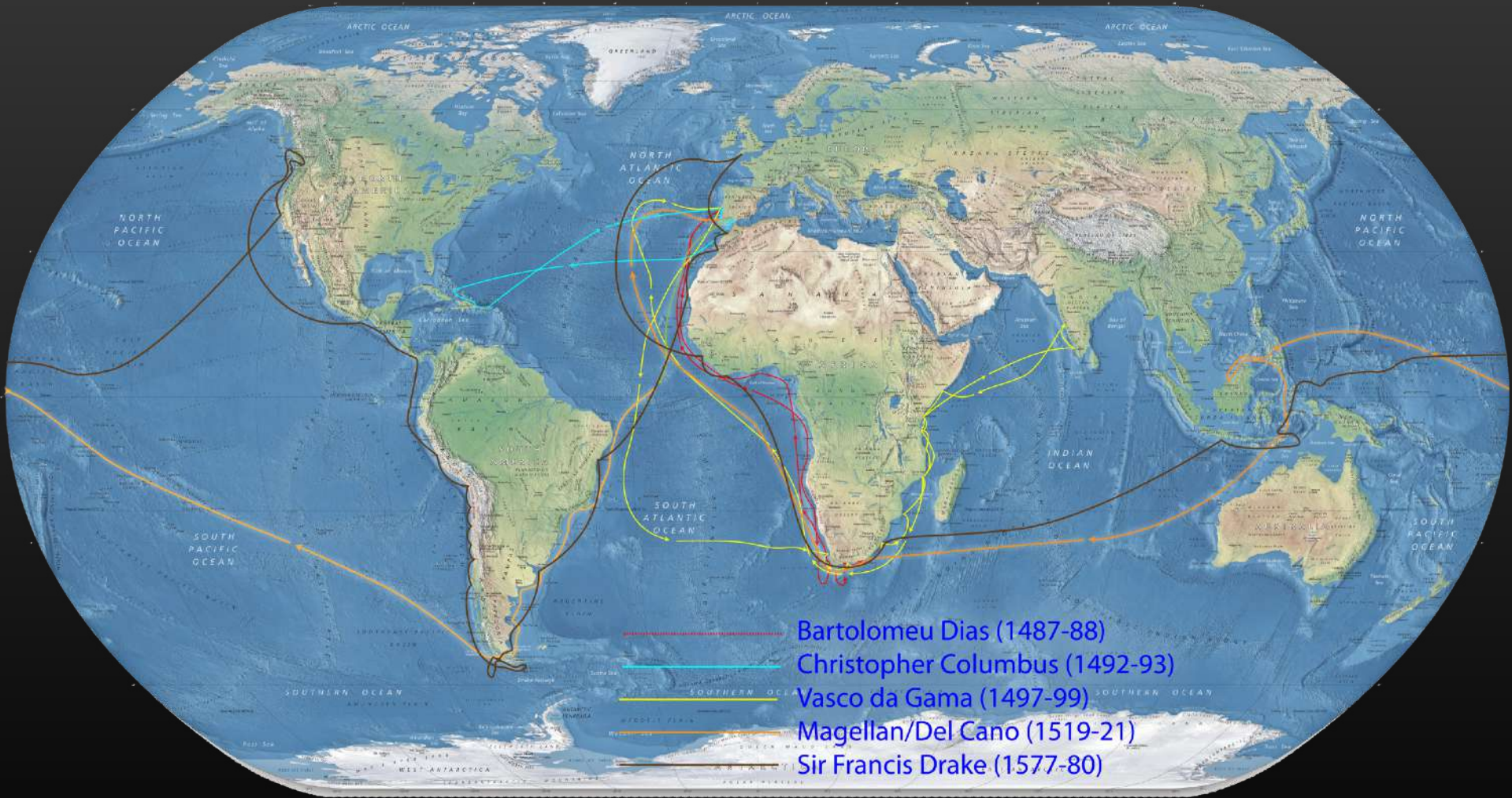


**Simon's Town. Cape of Good Hope. (c.1852)**

**Johan Marthinus Carstens Schonegevel** (1819-1871) was born in Cape Town. He worked for the Government Printer and was a person of some importance in the artistic and cultural life of the Cape. This tinted lithographic print featured on the cover of *Historical Simon's Town* by Brock and Brock



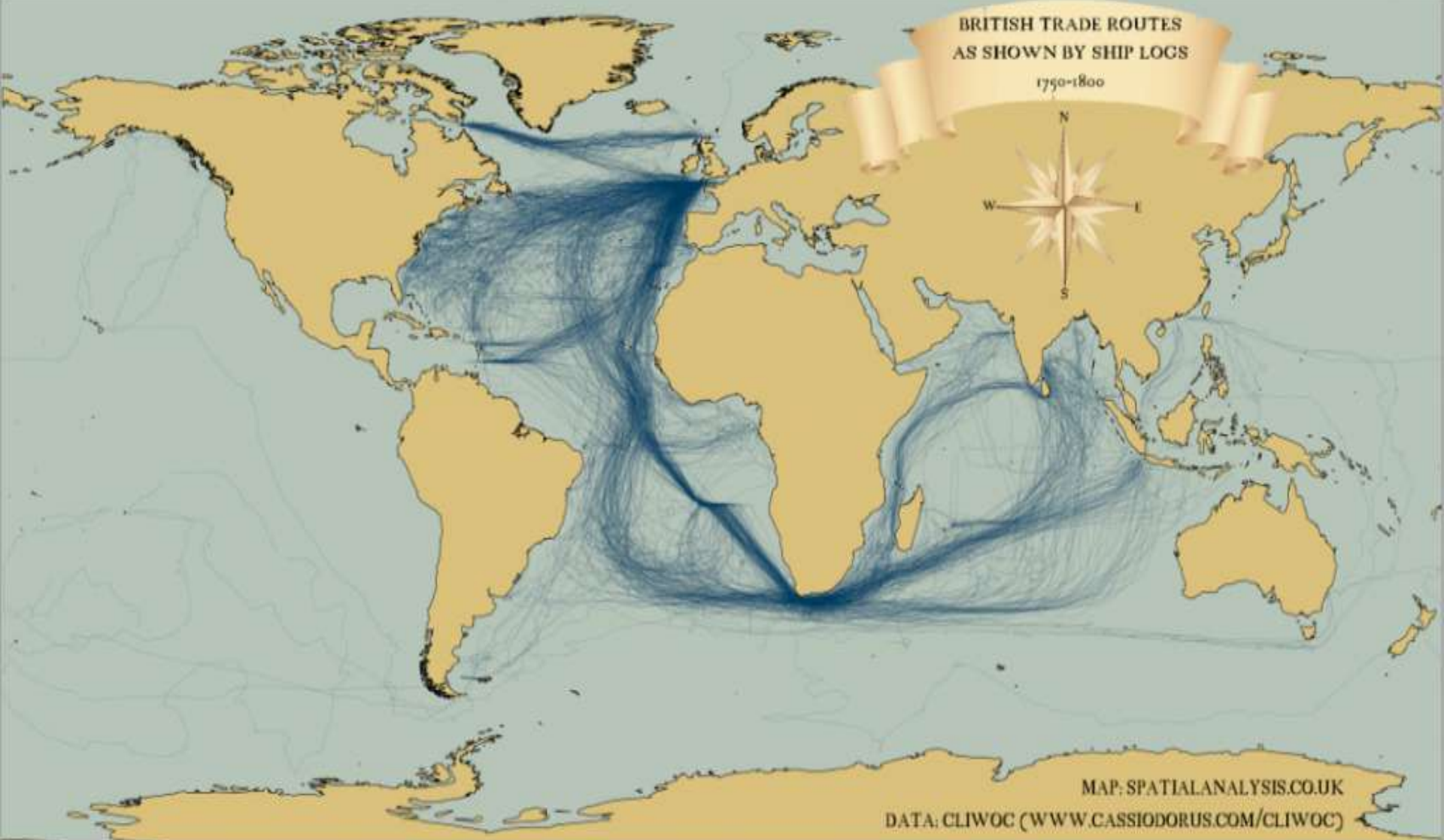




# *The Maritime Crossroads of the World*

**BRITISH TRADE ROUTES  
AS SHOWN BY SHIP LOGS**

1750-1800



MAP: SPATIALANALYSIS.CO.UK

DATA: CLIWOC ([WWW.CASSIODORUS.COM/CLIWOC](http://WWW.CASSIODORUS.COM/CLIWOC))

The renowned South African historian, G.M. Theal, records that during the age of sea power the Cape of Good Hope was,

**“the most commanding point on the surface of the earth“**

The British Royal, “Lord Carnarvon”, Commission on Colonial Defence in 1881 was led to conclude that the,

**"safety of the whole empire might hang one day upon control of the naval base at Simon's Bay and the South African shores".**



**CSS Alabama enters Table Bay at 10:00 AM  
August 5, 1863 and increasing speed in order to capture the Sea Bride  
before she can escape to within one league of South African territorial waters.  
Painting by Peter Bilas**

**“I now threw myself into that perpetual stream of commerce that comes setting round the Cape of Good Hope from the East Indies.**

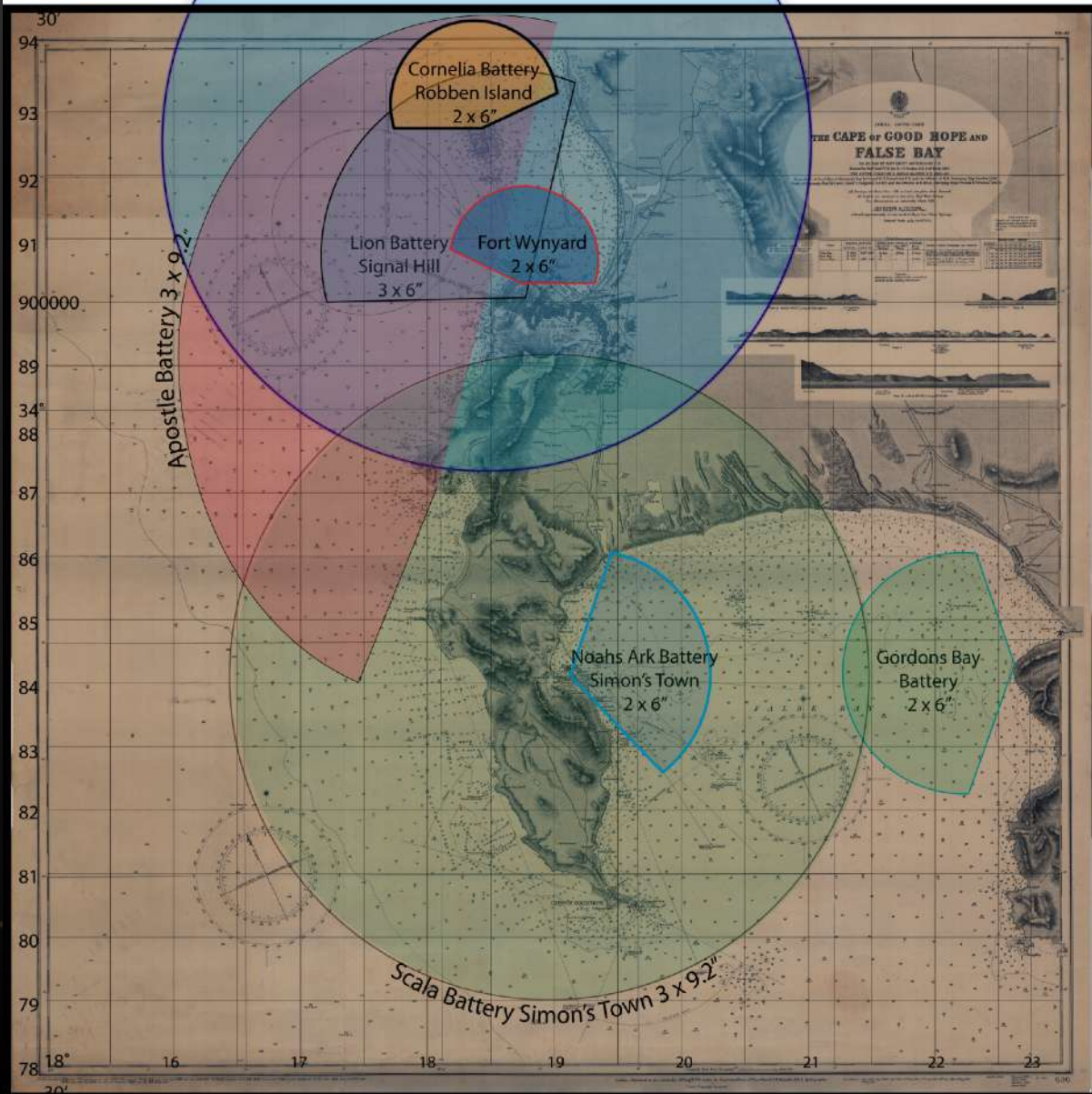


**From daylight until dark, ships are constantly in sight of the lighthouse on the Cape. The road is about twenty miles wide – no more. We kept our station in this road, day in and day out for ten days, during which we chased and overhauled a great number of ships, but there was not a Yankee among them”**

**Capt. Raphael Semmes Memoirs of Service Afloat  
1869 Pg. 665**



Robben Island 3 x 9.2"



30°  
94  
93  
92  
91  
900000  
89  
34°  
88  
87  
86  
85  
84  
83  
82  
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18° 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23  
20°

Cornelia Battery  
Robben Island  
2 x 6"

Lion Battery  
Signal Hill  
3 x 6"

Fort Wynyard  
2 x 6"

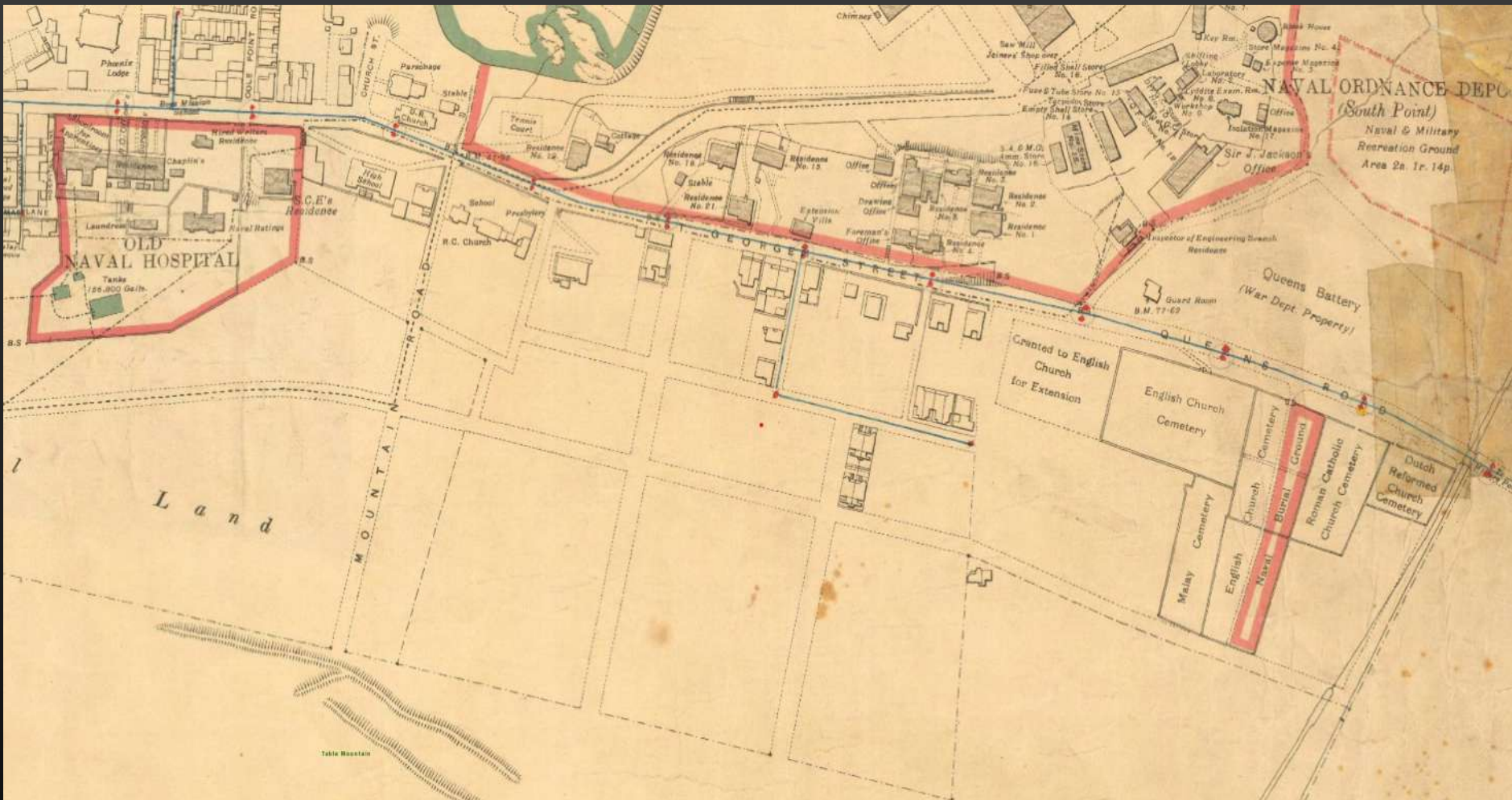
Apostle Battery 3 x 9.2"

Noahs Ark Battery  
Simon's Town  
2 x 6"

Gordons Bay  
Battery  
2 x 6"

Scala Battery Simon's Town 3 x 9.2"

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE AND  
FALSE BAY



*“Wending one’s way to Simon’s Town you come to Klein Tuin - now Seaforth - barely half a dozen houses at that time. The in 1910 the East Dockyard came along and replaced all the houses and land on the right [seaward] side of the road as far as the Dutch Reformed Church but on the left side was a walled-in space for occupation of coloured people and was called ‘Black Town’ . That space is now occupied by the Municipal Offices and by Belmont House, residence of the Captain in charge of the Dockyard”. Lifelong Simon’s Town resident Hadjie Bakaar Manual as quoted by Brock and Brock: 1976, pg. 124).*









R. C. Church, Simonstown

Sts. Simon and Jude Church (above c 1890) and as it appear from St. Georges Street, today.













Wikboom Lane

↑ 3-25



A photograph of the same area taken c.1950. The Kalidas shop now carries a Georgian parapet roof and enclosed balcony overlooking St Georges Street. Above this can be seen the minaret of the Simon's Town Noorul Islam Mosque (c1888). Top right is the collection of row houses that came to be known as Rickett's Terrace and which, unlike Bo-Kaap, were demolished in the early 1970's following the declaration of Simon's Town as a White Group Area in 1967 and the ensuing forced removal of over half its population.

(Courtesy of Simon's Town Museum)



A photograph of the area in question taken from Cole Point (c. 1880). Notice the building in the centre of this picture which was the original Anglican rectory. Today (minus its pitched roof and with the addition of an enclosed balcony) this building serves as the much altered local landmark - Kalidas clothing shop.  
(Courtesy of Simon's Town Museum)

*“Significant changes were introduced by the departure of the British Royal Navy, and the Forced Removals. These led to a decline in customers for local shops and businesses, which has been only partly offset by tourism. As a result, there is now a curious mix of shops and businesses in the town: a large number of estate agents, some good restaurants, a sprinkling of spaza shops - but no key ‘anchor’ businesses such as banks, no quality supermarkets. The tailors and outfitters, ladies’ couture, even do-it-yourself shops have long since departed, unable to survive the high business rates demanded by the City of Cape Town, and the possibly higher rentals demanded by property landlords. Collectively, this has had an adverse impact upon the look of the Town Centre. Unsuitable advertising screams to attract custom; shop windows are painted over - the days of attractive window displays appear to be over, replaced by serried rows of property adverts. Gradually, the streetscape has dwindled down market. If these trends are not reversed, the attractiveness of Simon’s Town as a tourist destination will decline”.*

*Anonymous author of an article that appeared in the Department of Arts and Culture Newsletter, Heritage Portal, for October 1st, 2017*

*In an interview with Nicole McCain of the Peoples Post (Dec. 6, 2017) then vice-chairperson of the Simon's Town Architectural Advisory Committee David Erickson explained that the envisaged heritage management plan for Simon's Town being developed was intended to achieve consistency in the design of new buildings and during the additions and alterations to existing ones. However, he also emphasized that;*

*“This does not mean uniformity; some of the great attractions of Simon's Town are the idiosyncrasies: Cape Dutch buildings side by side with Victoriana, here and there a naval structure that has clearly been designed by the Admiralty Works Department in London. The heritage management plan ensures that the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act are recognized in the day-to-day management of our historical buildings and artefacts. Without that framework as a reference, the appearance of Simon's Town would surely deteriorate, and its appeal would be lost”.*







GRAY

2-712

*“Full many a gem or purest ray serene the dark unfathom’d caves of ocean bear:  
full many a flower was born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air.”*



*Thomas Gray (1716-71)*

*Elegy written in a country church-yard*

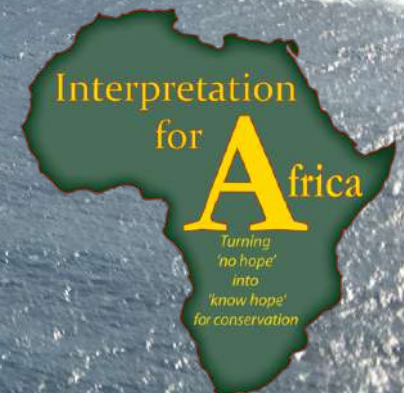


*“We ran hard aboard the Cape, finding the report of the “Portugals” to be most false, who affirm that it is the most dangerous cape in the world, never without intolerable storms and present dangers to travellers, which come near the same. This Cape is a most stately thing, and the fairest cape we saw in the whole circumference of the earth, and we passed by it the 18 of June.”*

*Ascribed to Sir Francis Drake from the Log of the Golden Hind, 1580*

*“For in the end we will conserve only the things we love,  
we will love only the things we understand”*

*Senegalese environmentalist  
Baba Dioum*



*“But where will this mania for entertainment end? What will people do when they get tired of television? When they get tired of movies? We already know the answer—they go into participatory activities: sports, theme parks, amusement rides, roller coasters. Structured fun, planned thrills. And what will they do when they tire of theme parks and planned thrills? Sooner or later, the artifice becomes too noticeable. They begin to realize that an amusement park is really a kind of jail, in which you pay to be an inmate.*

*‘This artifice will drive them to seek authenticity. Authenticity will be the buzzword of the twenty-first century. And what is authentic? Anything that is not devised and structured to make a profit. Anything that is not controlled by corporations. Anything that exists for its own sake and assumes its own shape. But of course, nothing in the modern world is allowed to assume its own shape. The modern world is the corporate equivalent of a formal garden, where everything is planted and arranged for effect. Where nothing is untouched, where nothing is authentic.’”*

*Author Michael Crichton: Timeline*