

## Boekbesprekings / Book Reviews

**WILHELM GRÜTTER: A name among seafaring men.**<sup>1</sup> (A history of the training ship 'General Botha'). Cape Town, 1973, pp 173. Until recently, the South African Navy could claim the dubious distinction that of all three arms of the Defence Force, its history was the least adequately chronicled. At last the unfavourable balance has been redressed through the publication of two excellent books, that under review being the second to appear.

The first book, **South Africa's Navy: The First Fifty Years**, concentrates primarily upon the evolution and current role of the contemporary Navy. Now Wilhelm Grütter has performed a valuable service by telling the story of the training ship **General Botha**, which between 1922 and 1942 prepared many young men for careers in the merchant marine and the Navy, and of her successor, the 'stone frigate' of the same name.

Originally the cruiser **HMS Thames**, the **General Botha** was presented to the Cape Town Naval Cadet Corps by Mr T.B.F. Davis of Durban. At first Davis intended the ship to be used solely by the Cadet Corps, but costs prohibited this. After consultation between the South African Government and the Admiralty, it was decided that the ship

shall be used as a Training Ship for the purposes of Training Boys of British South Africa for the service in ships sailing under

the British Flag or under the Flag of any of the several parts of the British Empire whether such ships are owned by British Subjects in the United Kingdom or in any of the King's Dominions or Possessions.

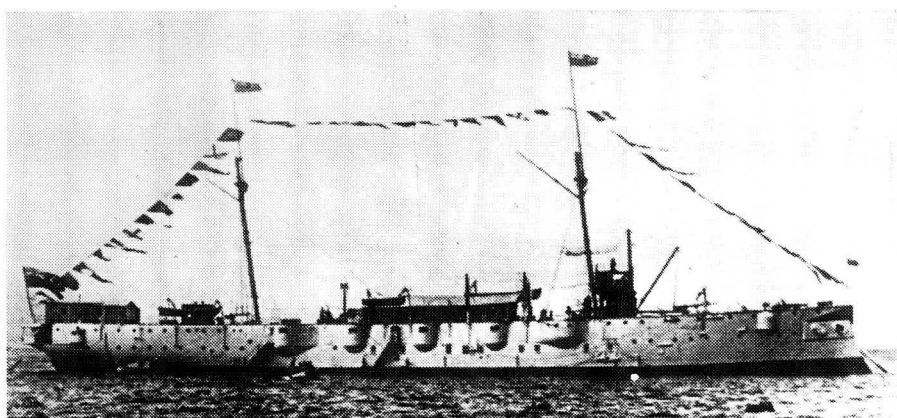
The Cadet Corps would have access to the ship when their training required it, subject to conditions laid down by the Board of Control established to administer the vessel.

Until the outbreak of the Second World War the **General Botha** continued in this role. Unhappily the exigencies of war and the need to cater for the mass of shipping using the facilities of the Cape Peninsula made the continuation of training on board increasingly difficult until it was stopped in July 1942. **SATS General Botha** because a 'stone frigate', housed in premises on Red Hill, above Simonstown.

The ship was handed-over to the Admiralty under her old name of **HMS Thames**, and served as a naval detention ship. After the war it was deemed pointless to restore her, and on 13 May 1947 she was sunk by gunfire in False Bay.

A period of indecision about the future followed the move to Red Hill. The Government took a long while to make up its mind about

1. Also available in Afrikaans under the title: 'n Naam wat Seevaarders eer.



South African naval policy and until something definite was decided, the Board could not know whether or not to acquire another ship. But by 1947 the Board realized that because more facilities were required for sea training than previously, the **General Botha** would have to stay ashore. A further consideration was the success of the shore-based training institutions in England, Dartmouth and Pangbourne. In 1948 the **General Botha** moved to a new site at Gordon's Bay. Henceforth it was designated a Nautical Training College.

Consolidation and change of the South African defence system towards the end of the 1950's brought the greatest changes yet to the **General Botha**. Simonstown was handed-over to the Navy in 1957, and in 1958 the Department of Defence assumed direct control of the College. In its turn this arrangement proved unsatisfactory and impermanent. From 1964 the institution was known as the Naval College **General Botha**, but it still trained cadets for the merchant marine. It was clear too by this stage that South Africa faced a shortage of certificated men for her merchant fleet. The outcome was another move, this time to Granger Bay. There, in 1964, construction began of the new modern premises of the South African Merchant Navy Academy **General Botha**.

This book is wholeheartedly recommended. Well-written and boasting many fine illustrations, it takes the reader through a half-century of fascinating development of great importance for the development of South Africa's seagoing tradition. It is concluded with an account of the part played by 'Botha Boys' in World War II.

— R. J. Bouch

**J. J. VREDENBERG-ALINK: De kaarten van Groningerland. De ontwikkeling van het kaartbeeld van de tegenwoordige provincie Groningen met een lijst van gedrukte kaarten vervaardigd tussen 1545 en 1864, Bakker's Drukkerij, Uithuizermeeden, 1974.**

**Topographische en militaire kaart van het koninkrijk der Nederlanden vervaardigd door de Officiëren van den Generalen Staf, Fibula-Van Dishoeck, Bussum, 1973.**

Reeds op kaarte teruggaande tot de Oudheid was Nederland aangedui, maar op die so-

naamde Peutingerkart (4e eeu na Chr) is dit duidelik waarneembaar dat daar 'n groot verskil tussen die kartografiese weergawe en die werklikheid bestaan het. Hierdie toestand sou nog eeuelank voortduur. Nie alleen was hierdie stand van sake kenmerkend vir die toenmalige landkaarte nie, maar ook die seevaartkundige kaarte het aan dieselfde tekortkoming gely.

Teen die midde van die 16e eeu het die Nederlandse kartografie, op grond van meerdere kennis van die omgewing en verbeterde tegniese hulpmiddels, 'n tydperk van groot ontwikkeling betree. Ongeveer 1½ eeu het die Nederlandse kartografie, sowel ten opsigte van eie land as met betrekking tot die toenmalige bekende wêreld, 'n hoë peil sonder weerga gehandhaaf. Daarna is die Nederlandse kaartmakers deur vakmanne uit ander lande oorvleuel.

Ten opsigte van die huidige Nederlandse provinsie Groningen is hierdie ontwikkelingsgang met 'n groot aantal voortreflike afbeeldings van outydse kaarte toegelig. Ek sal nie verder op hierdie aspek ingaan nie, behalwe as om my bewondering uit te spreek vir die wyse waarop hierdie outydse kaarte deur die drukker van eersgenoemde werk gereproduseer is. Dit geld ook vir die noukeurige wyse waarop agtereenvolgende kaarte, dikwels vergelykenderwys ontleed is, en waar dit die oornam van sekere aspekte deur navolgers van die oudste tekenaars van dergelyke kaarte betref. Onder hierdie kaarte, soos die "Kleine Haubois" bestaan daar 'n aantal wat beslis van militêre-historiese waarde is omrede die reeds genoemde kaart die militêre verdedigingswerke van die vestingstad Groningen in 1652 weergee.

Die eerste eintlike kaart vir militêre doeleindes van die aangrensende provinsies Groningen, Friesland en Drente, bestaande uit tien aaneensluitende kaartblaaië, is tussen 1851 en 1854 deur offisiere van die eertydse Nederlandse Generale Staf verken en op papier geplaas terwyl die reeds genoemde blaaië tussen 1860 en 1864 gegraveer is op 'n skaal van 1:50.000 (steendruk).

Op hierdie stel kaarte en hul aanvullings het latere Nederlandse kartograwe hul werk gebaseer.

Tussen 1850 en 1864 is daar, in die kantore van die "Topographische Dienst" en in die