

JOHN CONRAD GIE

THE THIRD GENERATION

OF THE

GIE FAMILY

IN

SOUTH AFRICA

JOHAN COENRAAD GIE

CHILDHOOD

In the old family bible the following entry appears made by Johan Coenraad Gie, the first settler at the Cape.

(Translated)

JOHAN COENRAAD GIE

BORN

12th December 1791

DIED

8th September 1862

This entry seems to suggest that the old grandfather was proud that his name restored and retained in the family a name which was later perpetuated in numerous descendants and which since then has always been associated with the Gie family.

Michael Coenraad Gie and Antoinette Jacoba le Seze had seven children.

Johan Coenraad	born	12.12.1791
Christina Jacoba Brathdrina	"	2. 7.1793
Jacobus Oloff Gouliet	"	12. 8.1795
Engela Johanna Alexandrina	"	in 1797
Maria Johanna Gysbertha	"	" 1800
Anna Catharina Johanna	"	" 1802
Conrad Johannes Carolus	"	" 1805

This then was the family of brothers and sisters in which the young J.C. Gie grew up in his home in Green Market Square, right in the middle of the old Town.

The old plan of the Town shows a school between Plein Street and Graae (now Parliament Street), called Latyns School, facing the Government

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In the old family bible the following entry appears made by Johan Coenraad Gie, the first settler at the Cape.

(Translated)

" On Monday the 12th December 1791 at
" 5 hours in the morning my grandson,
" son of my second son Michiel Coenraad
" Gie, was born and on Sunday the
" 18th December christened by Eerv.
" Heer Johannes Petrus Serrurier and
" named after me.

In 1791 at the time of the birth of the young Johan Coenraad the old Dutch This entry seems to suggest that the old grandfather was proud that his name restored and retained in the family a name which was later perpetuated in numerous descendants and which since then has always been associated with the Gie family.

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In May 1797 Lord Macartney arrived to act as the first British Governor. This then was the family of brothers and sisters in which the young J.C. Gie grew up in his home in Green Market Square, right in the middle of the old Town.

There were many who were greatly relieved to see the end of the regime. The old plan of the Town shows a school between Plein Street and Graave (now Parliament Street), called Latyns School, facing the Government

Gardens. The Houses of Parliament had not yet been built and the area on which the Parliament Buildings now stands was an open garden. J.C. Gie and his brothers and sisters no doubt attended this school and one can visualise these young scholars, after being confined in their class rooms for some hours, dashing out with their school companions onto the lovely gardens in front of the school.

One cannot help feeling that they were a happy family. Their father held the senior position of Chief of the Lands Department in the Civil Service, having been specially selected for this post at the early age of 37 by Governor Janssens. In addition he had other important appointments and must have been a man of means.

Yet this was a turbulent period in the history of the Cape.

In 1791 at the time of the birth of the young Johan Coenraad the old Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie - V.O.C.) which had retarded progress and whose only aim was to make profits for its shareholders in Holland, was in a sorry state. The farmers were suffering great hardships and there was discontent everywhere.

In Holland too, there were upheavals. A French Army had invaded Holland and set up a new form of Government and the country was now called the Batavian Republic. The Prince of Orange had fled to Britain and asked Britain to protect his possessions in Holland. Britain, fearing that France would capture the Cape, thereby seriously affecting the Trade route to the East Indies, sent an expedition under General Sir Charles Craig to occupy the Cape. After a token resistance at what was known as the Battle of Muizenberg on the 7th August 1795 the Cape was captured.

In May 1797 Lord Macartney arrived to act as the first British Governor at the Cape. With him came his secretary Mr. Barrow and Lady Ann Barnard.

There were many who were greatly relieved to see the end of the regime of the old Dutch East India Company.

The young Johan Coenraad could hardly have understood what was happening.

Eight years later in 1803 the Cape was restored to the Batavian Government under the provisions of the Treaty of Amiens, but again re-occupied in 1806 by a British force under General Sir David Baird after the battle of Blaauwbergstrand.

Johan Coenraad Gie was now fifteen years old and one wonders how his mind reacted to all these changes. However the young do not react to political changes in the way that old people do and no doubt they had little effect on him and hardly caused him any distress or anxiety.

Among these was the following entry -

"1816. On the 12th August I, Johan Coenraad Gie was married by Herv. C.F. Hesse, Lutheran Minister, to Johanna Philippina van Renen - she was born on the 10th July 1795 on the farm Elsenburg, Klapmuts, District Stellenbosch. (A member of the Lutheran Church)".

The spelling of the name van Renen in the old bible is incorrect.

The Van Reenens were a prominent and highly respected family at the Cape and owned extensive farm lands. Sebastian Valentyn van Reenen, the father of Johanna Philippina was born in 1760 and died in 1824. He was the owner of the farm Elsenburg (now Elsenvurg). In 1783 he married Catharina Hurter. The Hurters, too, were a well known and respected Cape family.

Later the Gies and the van Reenens were further connected by the double marriage on the 1st October 1849 when Johan Coenraad Gie, the second son of Johan Coenraad Gie, Senior, married Sebastina Christina van Reenen and on the same day and at the same time his sister, Elsabe Antoinetta Jacobs Gie, married Jan van Reenen, the brother of Sebastina Christina, and then later on the 10th November 1901 Anna Susanna Gie, a grandchild of Johan Coenraad Gie,

married J.F. van Reenen. OF JOHAN COENRAAD GIE

Johan Coenraad Gie and his wife had a sad beginning to their married life, as both their first two children died shortly after birth.

However, thereafter they had seven more children, all of whom survived and married, with the exception of one boy who died at the age of 8 months.

The following item is recorded in the Archives (1819. Vol. 35 R.C.C. p.40) The names of the children are:

Michiel Coenraad Gie	-	born	5.4.1817
Sebastian Valentyn Gie	-	born	29.10.1820
Catherina Johanna Gie	-	born	24.1.1823
Johan Coenraad Gie	-	born	7.1.1825
Johan Coenraad Gie	-	died in infancy	
Johan Coenraad Gie	-	born	19.1.1827
Elsabe Anthoinetta Jacoba Gie	-	born	2.2.1831
Johanna Sophia Aletta Gie	-	born	23.3.1835

The four sons were all baptised in the Dutch Reformed Church and the three daughters in the Lutheran Church.

The van Reenens were members of the Lutheran Church - the marriage of J.C. Gie and Johann van Reenen had been celebrated in the Lutheran Church - the church of the bride. The Gies were members of the Dutch Reformed Church. J.C. Gie was an elder of that church and served for many years on the Kerkraad.

A.V. Bergh

Director

From this it therefore seems that J.C. Gie and his wife must have come to an arrangement whereby it was agreed that the male children of the marriage should be baptised in the Dutch Reformed Church - the church of the father, and the female children should be baptised in the Lutheran Church - the church of the mother.

THE CAREER OF JOHAN COENRAAD GIE

Johan Coenraad Gie had a very successful business career and was undoubtedly highly esteemed in the commercial world.

The most important position held by him was that of 'bookkeeper' in the Lombard and Discount Bank.

The following item is recorded in the Archives (1819. Vol. 35 R.C.C. p.40)

"J.C. Gie, M'son. Lombard and
Discount Bank, 2.7.1819. Bookkeeper.
Appointed by Lord Charles Somerset."

The term "Bookkeeper of a Bank" in those days would correspond to the term "General Manager of a Bank" to-day.

That the position was of importance is confirmed by the fact that it was made by the Governor Sir Charles Somerset himself, that it necessitated a special Resolution of the Government, and that such resolution was duly recorded in the official records which records are now in the Archives.

The following extract from the 1819 Official Gazette also confirms that he was the senior member of the Lombard and District Bank.

"1819. Lombard and District Bank

John Marshall Esq. President

A.V. Bergh Director

C.S. Eckhard Director

G.H. Maasdorp Director

J.C. Gie Bookkeeper

J.C. Frouenfelder Cashier

R.J. Loedolff Clerk."

As J.C. Gie was associated with the bank for over twenty years it may be of interest to say something about it.

(a) In 1793 the Cape, still under the Administration of the old Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.), was in financial difficulties.

The Treasury had no funds and the farmers were unable to pay their debts. To assist them the Commissioners decided to establish a bank known as The Lombard Loan Bank. The object of this bank was to provide loans on mortgage to farmers in financial difficulties.

When two years later the Cape was occupied by the British, there was a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety among the farmers as apparently the British threatened to call up the mortgage bonds. However the retiring Governor Sleuskens appealed to Governor Craig not to do so as this would result in chaos. Governor Craig very wisely decided not to call up the bonds.

The Lombard Loan Bank continued to operate during the first British occupation and also when the Cape was restored to the Batavian Republic from 1803 to 1806. In 1806 the Cape was re-occupied by the British. Two years later in 1808 Lord Caledon established another bank called The Discount Bank and for some years the Lombard Loan Bank and The Discount Bank operated together with the same president and the same three directors. Later, but prior to 1819 the date on which J.C. Gie was appointed bookkeeper, the two banks were amalgamated and the names changed to The Lombard and Discount Bank.

J.C. Gie retired from the Bank on pension in 1841 at the age of 50. Among the names of 1841 pensioners mentioned by J. Centlivres Chase in his "The Cape of Good Hope" the following appears -

It is recorded that this appointment was made at the special request of his "Bookkeeper in Bank. Mr. J.C. Gie M's E62-10-0." farmer Sebastian Valentyn van Rensen.

The duties of the Receiver of Revenue of Lands are described by W. Bird in his "State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822", page 87.

Annexed are photographs of two interesting letter covers written to J.C. Gie.

(a) "To J.C. Gie Esq. Bookkeeper Discount Bank"

This shows the handstruck letter stamp of the Swellendam post office from where it was despatched and the Cape of Good Hope letter stamp dated 1828 where it was received.

(b) "To J.C. Gie Esq. M'z Bookkeeper Lombard Bank Cape Town"

This shows the handstruck letter stamp of the Simonstown post office from where it was sent and two further indorsements, namely 'Post Paid, 7 PK' and the Cape of Good Hope letter stamp dated 1828 where it was received.

In or about 1827 it was decided that the place of payment of postage should be optional. Payment could be made either by the sender at the post office where the letter was posted, in which case it was endorsed "Post Paid" or by the receiver at the post office to which it was sent, in which case it would be endorsed "To Pay".

Although this procedure was only adopted in or about 1827, the Cape Town letter stamp is dated 1823. It is therefore clearly a forgery. Expert philatelists such as the late E. Blum and Mr. Douglas Roth have exposed numerous forgeries of this nature made to deceive stamp collectors.

In addition to being the bookkeeper of the Lombard and Discount Bank, J.C. Gie held the post of "Receiver of Revenue of Lands".

It is recorded that this appointment was made at the special request of his father-in-law, the large land owner and influential farmer Sebastian Valentyn van Reenen.

The duties of the Receiver of Revenue of Lands are described by W. Bird in his "State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822", page 87.

"The chief duty of his department consisted in collecting revenues arising from lands, whether from leases of government farms or lands occupied in freehold, on loan or perpetual quit-rent. This office is an important branch of the revenue department, and appears to be conducted with great attention and regularity."

Johan Coenraad Gie also held other business appointments. He was -

The Wardmaster of Ward 2 of the Town.

A director of The Protector Fire and Life Insurance Company.

The Auditor of the books of the South African Mutual.

A Member of the Agricultural Society, and

A director of the Board of Executors and chairman from 1849 to 1853.

Annexed is a letter, cover addressed to:

"Messrs. Hidding and J.C. Gie M.son. Trustees in the insolvent Estate of P.F. Dusing."

This cover was purchased from Mr. Douglas Roth, the philatelic authority who stated that it was sent from Uitenhage on the 7th June 1844. By then J.C. Gie had retired from the Lombard Bank.

It is known that the affairs of the Hidding family were handled by the Board of Executors and it is probable that he was still a director of the Board at that time. If so, it would seem that W. Hidding and J.C. Gie were the nominated Trustees of the insolvent estate of P.F. Dusing which was being administered by the Board of Executors.

J.C. Gie was a religious man. He was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church and in later years was an ouderling (elder) on the Church Council.

LIFE AT THE CAPE DURING THE
PERIOD OF THE LIFE OF J.C. GIE

This was a turbulent period in the history of South Africa, but a very interesting period.

In his early years the young J.C. Gie must have been confused by the changes in the official language. First we have Dutch; then, when the English arrived in 1795, English; next when the colony was returned to the Batavian Government, again Dutch and finally from 1806 onwards, English, when the Cape was retaken by the British.

Up to 1795 the home language of the Gie family would naturally be Dutch, and during the short occupation of the British from 1795 - 1803 they probably continued to speak Dutch in their home.

On the 5th July 1822 Lord Charles Somerset by Proclamation decreed that English must be used exclusively in all judicial proceedings, as well as in all government and official documents.

Lord Charles Somerset had appointed J.C. Gie as bookkeeper of the Lombard and Discount Bank which was part of the Civil Service. By then J.C. Gie must have gained a knowledge of English and from the little evidence available it would seem that the Gies who resided in Cape Town slowly adopted English as their home language, whereas the members of the family who had moved to country areas such as Worcester continued to use Dutch - later Afrikaans.

Annexed is the cover of a letter written to Mrs. Henry Crowcher, care of John Coenraad Gie, Michele Son Esq., bearing the date 1853.

Who this Mrs. Crowcher was, is not known. She may have been a guest or a servant. However, the letter is of interest in that it clearly reflects the growing influence of English. By this time the British had been in occupation of the Cape for nearly fifty years.

This is, as far as is known, the first record where the name is written "John" in place of Johan. Then too we find the use of the term "Esquire". Lastly the name "Michiel" is spelt "Michele". The "Port Elizabeth" hand stamp is a forgery.

Life was pleasant at the Cape during the early years of the 19th Century.

W. Bird in his "State of the Cape of Good Hope in 1822" gives a picture of the social scene at that time.

"With the restoration of free trade the Colony passed through a period of prosperity. The white population increased from 25 172 in 1806 to 54 561 in 1821. Trade resulting from the advent of the 1820 settlers was a further stimulant as the Cape merchants were called on to supply them with their many requirements. More and more British officials and naval and military personnel from India and the East Indies spent long periods of their leave at the Cape because of its mild climate. In 1815 Napoleon was captured and detained on the island of St. Helena and the Cape merchants received the benefit of supplying that island with provisions, wine and other articles not only for Napoleon and his retinue, but also for the relatively large number of soldiers sent to guard him. Heerengracht, which had been the centre of the residences of the leading Dutch families, now changed its character, the private dwellings being replaced by English shopkeepers and coffee houses. Prosperity was followed by gaiety and pleasure. Well dressed citizens paraded up and down Heerengracht on Sundays and Public Holidays. The theatre was booming and so too amateur acting. Attractive and pink cheeked young ladies were dancing and flirting with the young officers of the army and navy. There were many dinner and other parties, and

DEATH OF J.C. GIE

J.C. Gie, like his grandfather, lived to a ripe old age. He died in his son's house in Hatfield Street on the 8th September 1862, aged 71 years and was buried in the family vault originally belonging to Coenraad Gie, the youngest son of the first settler at the Cape, but was later taken over by J.C. Gie.

According to the records in the archives of the Dutch Reformed Church, Cape Town, he was buried in the vault on the 10th September 1862.

His wife, Johanna Philippina (born van Reenen) died 8 years later on the 19th August 1870 and she too was buried in the old family vault.

Annexed are photographs of J.C. Gie and his wife taken in the later days of their lives.

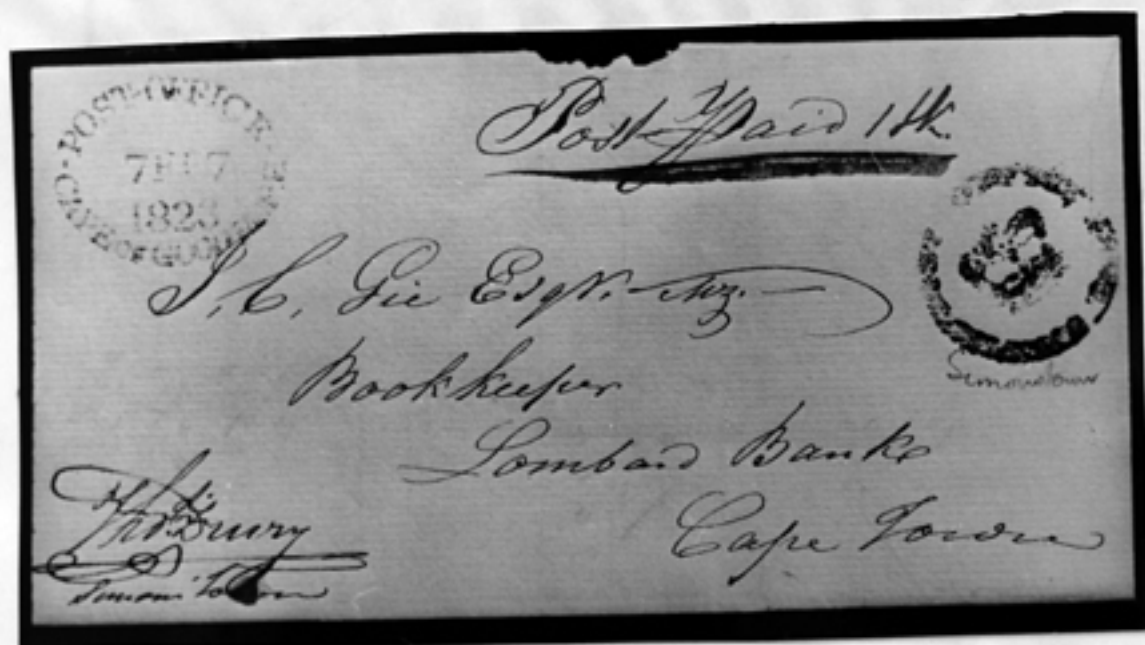
Also buried in the vault was Francis William Reitz, the father of President Reitz.

COPIES OF LETTER TO J.C. GIE (1791 - 1862) FROM-RECTOR
DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH, CAPE TOWN WITH THE HANDWRITTEN LETTER
FROM OF SULLIVAN WHO DIED IN 1862 WHEN IT WAS
DISCOVERED AND THE COPY OF 1791 WAS LETTER SENT
DATED 1826 WHERE IT WAS DISCOVERED.



COVER OF LETTER TO J.C. GIE (1791 - 1862) BOOK-KEEPER
DISCOUNT BANK, CAPE TOWN WITH THE HANDSTRUCK LETTER
STAMP OF SWELLENDAM POST OFFICE FROM WHERE IT WAS
DESPATCHED AND THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE LETTER STAMP
DATED 1828 WHERE IT WAS RECEIVED.

COVER OF LETTER TO J.C. GIE (1791 - 1862) BOOK-KEEPER
DISCOUNT BANK, CAPE TOWN WITH THE HANDSTRUCK LETTER
STAMP OF SWELLENDAM POST OFFICE FROM WHERE IT WAS
SENT, THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE LETTER STAMP DATED 1828 WHERE
IT WAS RECEIVED AND THE POST MARK "POST PAID".



COVER OF LETTER TO J.C. GIE (1791 - 1862) BOOK-KEEPER
LOMBARD BANK, CAPE TOWN WITH THE HANDSTRUCK LETTER
STAMP OF SIMONSTOWN POST OFFICE FROM WHERE IT WAS
SENT, THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE STAMP DATED 1828 WHERE
IT WAS RECEIVED AND THE POST MARK "POST PAID".

Messrs. W. Hidding

and

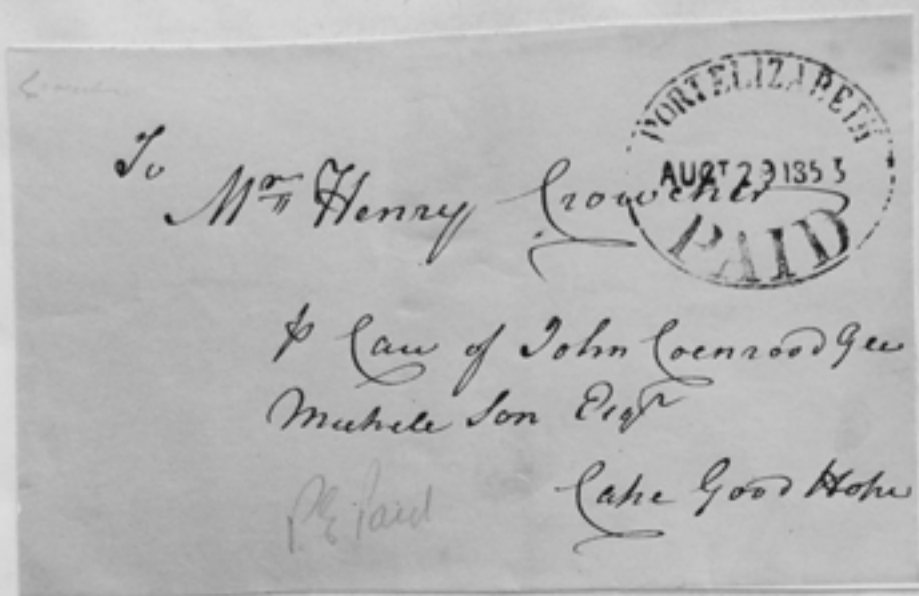
J. C. Gie M. Son

Trustees in the insolvent
Estate of P. F. Dusing

Capetown.

Uitenhage 7 June 1844

COVER OF A LETTER ADDRESSED TO "MESSRS. W. HIDDING
AND J.C. GIE M/SON TRUSTEES IN THE INSOLVENT ESTATE
OF P.F. DUSING. THE LETTER WAS SENT FROM UITENHAGE
ON THE 7th JUNE 1844.



COVER OF A LETTER TO "MRS. HENRY CROWCHER, CARE OF JOHN COENRAAD GIE, MICHELE SON". WHO MRS. CROWCHER WAS IS NOT KNOWN. SHE MAY HAVE BEEN A GUEST OR A SERVANT. THE COVER IS STAMPED WITH THE PORT ELIZABETH HANDSTAMP AND IS DATED 29th AUGUST 1853.

A PHOTOGRAPH OF JOHANNES COENRAAD GIE
(1791 - 1862)



A PHOTOGRAPH OF JOHANNES COENRAAD GIE
(1791 - 1862)



PHOTOGRAPH OF JOHANNA PHILLIPINA GIE (BORN VAN REENEN),
THE WIFE OF J.C. GIE. SHE WAS THE DAUGHTER OF
SEBASTIAN VELENTYN VAN REENEN AND CATHERINE HURTER.
SHE WAS BORN IN 1795 AND DIED IN 1870.