Hi Frank

My researcher in Zimbabwe has come up trumps on Harry Gaffney!!  Below you will find his report on Gaffney, and I will follow this with two other e-mails forwarded with his Death Notice and Will.  I imagine you will send these e-mails to your co-ordinator and I suggest you also forward them to the son that wrote about his life in your magazine, in case he has not got them.

Enjoy

Rod

HARRY CECIL GAFFNEY

From your email I got the impression that he came here in the late 1940s, so I searched the applications of Commonwealth citizens who wished to become registered as Southern Rhodesian citizens when this facility became possible in 1950. I reasoned that Gaffney as a Rhodesian patriot would have wanted to be classed as Rhodesian rather than British. So it was a surprise and a disappointment to find that there was no such application from him.

I then checked the “Farmers and Ranchers” section of the 1952 *Rhodesia Directory* to find out what his farm was called and where it was located, so it was another surprise not to find his name there. Nor did he appear in the 1940s-1960s dockets of farmers listed in the records of the Lands Dept.

I was unable to find any publications by or information on the Independence League. Nor does Gaffney appear in the index to the National Historical Photographic Collection held by the Archives.

It was only when I identified his deceased estate file that I finally found him. I accessed and studied it (Archives reference S 3278/431/67). His Death Notice (which I had copied) was compiled by his Executrix, LM Gaffney. According to her he was born at Otley (Wharfedale), Yorkshire, the son of Henry Thomas William Gaffney and Charlotte Gaffney (formerly French). His age was 73 and his occupation was Naval Officer (retd), Hotelier, and Hon. Sec. of the Independence League. He was married; he married his wife Grace in England in about 1925 or 1927 and his children (now all married) were:

Denys

Desmond

Patricia.

It was noted that he had no relatives alive apart from his children.

Gaffney died at Salisbury General Hospital on 7 March 1967. His usual place of residence was 2 Oakdale Court, Wakefield Road, Avondale, Salisbury.

His Will (which I had copied) was made at Kitwe, Northern Rhodesia, on 8 March 1956. He left everything to Lilian Maud Gaffney, “my beloved partner since 1928.” If she should predecease him, everything was to go to his son Denys Henry Gaffney of Surrey, England.

The value of the estate came to £3,501.6.5 including the value of 2,500 shares in Rhodesian Breweries Ltd. Apparently he also left estate in the UK. His account book with the Standard Bank, Salisbury, is in the file: it was opened on 3 August 1964.

The above explained why I was unable to find any record of Gaffney here in the 1940s and 50s: evidently he hadn’t come here yet.

One mystery was how he could be married to Grace Gaffney, yet she didn’t appear in his Will while a Lilian Gaffney did. The latter was described as “Mrs Gaffney” in one or more documents in the file. Also, your friend’s name is Patrick Gaffney yet he doesn’t appear in the list of Gaffney’s children.

Now that I knew his date of death I searched for an obituary in the *Rhodesia Herald* and was pleased to find one in the issue of Thursday 9 March 1967:

“The secretary of the Independence League, Lieutenant-Commander Harry Cecil Gaffney (74), who died of a heart attack in Salisbury on Tuesday night, came to Rhodesia from Zambia in 1964.

He was born in Yorkshire and served as a naval lieutenant in the First World War and as a lieutenant-commander in the Second World War. After retiring from the navy he emigrated to Kenya and ran a hotel before moving to the Copperbelt and managing the Chingola Hotel. Three years ago Commander Gaffney managed the Marandellas Hotel for a short while before coming to Salisbury.

Commander Gaffney started the Independence League in Salisbury which opened its offices on February 7, 1966.

He leaves two sons living in England.

Arrangements for the cremation are being made by the Independence League. It will probably take place tomorrow.”

I checked later issues and found that the cremation service was scheduled for2pm on Friday 10 March at Warren Hills.

In the “Deaths” column I found notices from the Independence League, someone called Anne, and others; but strangely not from Lilian. There was also one stating “Always remembered at home by his wife Grace and children.”

I found that there was a deceased estate file for Lilian Maud Gaffney so I accessed and studied it (Archives ref. S 3505/1716/71). The Death Notice was compiled by her step-sister, SM Minnaar, who recorded that Lilian was born in London to Robert Frederic Allen and Minnie Maud Allen. She was married, her husband being Edgar Charles Layton whom she’d married in London on 27 August 1927. They had one child, Robert Mervyn Layton. Lilian died on 27 November 1971 in Salisbury at the age of 69.

The beneficiaries in her Will included “Dennis H Gaffney”, his wife Patricia and daughter Miss M Gaffney. They lived in Surrey.

Other documents in the file show that she was born on 4 October 1904 and that her son lived in New Zealand. He wrote to the attorneys saying “My mother may have in her possessions a large white ensign, this is apart from historical value of little intrinsic value. This ensign was formerly the battle ensign of HMS Marmion and was flown dureing [sic] the last war and was the ensign flown in several historic actions dureing world war II. I would like to keep this ensign in the family as my uncle commanded this ship, it haveing the distinction of being the last vessel to leave Dunkirk.

The other item I wish to keep is a silver serviette ring of octagonal shape haveing engraved on it the names of numerous ships.

I am unsure if my mother kept either of these items after the death of my Uncle, however if She did then I would like to have these retained. They were formerly kept in a large sea chest of wood.”

But all he signed for in 1973 was a locket/chain, and two wedding rings.

Lilian had inherited from Gaffney 200 shares of a Tanganyika company, issued in June 1955 [this may not mean that they actually lived in Tanganyika at one stage, though I suppose it’s a possibility].

So it looks as though Lilian had been Gaffney’s common-law wife, even though he may have given her a wedding ring.

I identified another Gaffney deceased estate file so accessed it, just in case. But it turned out to be for a Mrs Harriet Gaffney of Lancashire, who’d died there on 21 August 1971. The only reason a file was opened for her in this country was that she owned some Rhodesian assets, in the form of Rhodesian share certificates.