

# Jane Cameron National Archives Newsletter



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Welcome to this, the second issue of our annual newsletter. I hope that you enjoy reading it and please feel free to contact me if you have any queries or comments.

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## This Issue

It has been another very busy year for the Archives with a large number of local and overseas researchers taking advantage of the Reading Room to research our holdings on a wide number of subjects. As always there has been a steady influx of e-mail queries and requests for family trees to deal with as well as the ongoing processing of the FIC accession. As can be expected with 2014 being the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Falklands the majority of this year's newsletter reports on those events and the people involved.

## Snippets from the Past

**To our Boys in Blue.**  
Sailor, what of the debt we owe you?  
Day or night is the peril more?  
Who so dull that he fails to know you  
Sleepless guard of our island shore.  
Safe the harvest to the farmyard taken,  
Grain Ships safe upon all the Seas,  
Homes in peace and a faith unshaken.  
Sailor what do we owe for these.  
Safe the clerk at his desk the trader,  
Counts unruined his honest gain,  
Safe though yonder the Cursed invader,  
Pours red death over hill and plain.  
Sailor, what of the debt we owe you,  
Now in the peril at last to show,  
Now in the sticken field to show you,  
What is the spirit you guard to-day. W.W.

FIM October 1915

**BITTEN BY A SEA LION.**  
W. C. McDAID went on January 2nd to Teal Inlet station to kill beef. There is a small seal rookery on the Island. At a short distance from the rookery a sea-lion lay to all appearance dead. W. McDaid went to get his whiskers for pipe cleaners, he pulled two hairs out of the side next to him and then reached over the head to pull out those on the far side. The animal just then snapped its mouth and caught the third finger of W. McDaid's right hand and took the top of the finger clean off. The seal is supposed to have been a "piner," which having been turned out of the rookery retires to a short distance and lies there dying of a broken heart. They are said often to live in a comatose state for many weeks before they die. The next time one wants pipe cleaners, better make sure that the seal is really dead.

FIM January 1896

**Messrs R. & A. Hardy.**  
The Kelper Store, Stanley.  
Special new selection of Stock just arrived by this Mail.  
Shy, (2 Bags Dairy Fat) by 5/6, 2/6. Choice Perfume from all.  
Joseph's African Soap, 1/6. Best Soap from 1/4.  
Best Hair Oil from 1/6.  
"Dign" Washes 1/6, Hair Cream 1/6, Hair Pomade 1/6.  
Cigarettes 1/6.  
The largest Selection of East, Hindostani, and Florida Pipe Goods  
in the Falklands.  
All the best, Strongest, Standard, Superior, by post, that  
arrived in your shop, I send without delay.  
Every Article Marked at fixed prices.  
Cash Orders promptly attended to.  
**G. Haroomal & Co.**  
Grand Oriental Bazaar.  
2000 Road, Port Stanley.  
Direct Importers of all kinds of  
SILK DEPARTMENT  
Largest Stock of Manufactures for Domestic Use, 1/6. Best quality from 1/6.  
From Paris from 1/6. 1/6. Best quality from 1/6.  
SILVER WARE & CHINA DEPARTMENT.  
Watches and other articles from 1/6. Silver Watches, watches, etc.  
Stamps for East India Office, from 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6.  
Head Office: London, India Office, 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6.  
1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6. 1/6.  
**BE FIRST TO SEE**  
Come and inspect our Goods, you will not be pressed to buy.

FIM November 1915

## Early Falklands' People

**W**hen researching individuals it can be very confusing if they are semi-literate, illiterate or English wasn't their native language as there can be many variations in the spelling of their names which can lead to a bit of detective work trying to find out if various individuals are actually the same person or not.

After years of researching I have now learnt, especially with people who were here in the very early days to investigate every possible spelling of a surname. The following men, George ERRINGTON and William Edward JOHNSTONE are prime examples. The variations in the spelling of their names through the articles are as they were spelt at the time.

### George Errington

**G**eorge ARRINGTON first shows in the records in the census taken by Governor MOODY January 1842, soon after Moody's arrival at Port Louis. George is recorded as being age 22, a labourer from England who arrived in the Islands 15 January 1842 and was previously in the merchant service. His religion is recorded as protestant and he is living in PERRY's hut (*Francis PERRY had been in the Islands since at least 1837 and was a part-owner along with Charles MELVILLE, Joseph LEE and Richard PENNY in the sealing schooner "Montgomery" - the last three first came to the Islands in 1832 and returned to settle in January 1834*).

By the March 1843 census he is still shown as George ARRINGTON and is a servant living in the stone house on No 1 allotment, Port Louis.

In 1847 and 1848 George shows up as a private in the Militia Force of the Falkland Islands.

In August 1848 in a petition to the Governor re conditions he is recorded as George CARRINGTON.

A man of many talents George ERINGTON was employed in boring for water from October 1848 to January 1849.

In the census taken 22 February 1851 he is recorded as George HARRINGTON age 31 and a seaman.

George HARRINGTON later worked for the Falkland Islands Company Ltd in their Camp establishment. On 1 October 1858 he had a balance due to him in the Store Ledger D from the previous ledger (*not held*) of £18-19-0 and was on a monthly wage of £4-11-8. His monthly wage increased in July 1860 to £5 and in August he was at Ruggles Bay (*he was possibly working the American ship Sea Ranger which was wrecked at Ruggles Bay as the FIC schooners Fairy and Victoria were involved in the salvage*). In March 1861 his wage reverted to £4-11-8. He continued working for the FIC until 20 August 1866 when he was recorded as having "left employ of FIC".

There is a gap in the FIC Camp wage books from 1 July 1873 to 31 December 1880 but he must have returned to work for the FIC at some point during this period as at 1 January 1881 he had a balance brought forward from the missing ledger of £31-16-4½ and was receiving a monthly wage of £4-3-4. At his death in January 1889 his account had a balance owing to him of £19-14-6.

George HARRINGTON, a butcher of unknown age, died 3 January 1889 from "affection of the lungs and heart" at Darwin and was buried 4 January 1889 at Darwin. His grave is unmarked but easily identifiable in the cemetery as he is buried to the right hand side of William Edward JOHNSTONE and there is an obvious mound.



FIC albums—probably circa 1887





# William Edward Johnstone

**A** real mystery man is William Edward JOHNSTONE. According to the FIC Ltd archives in a report "Sheep outside Lafonia" dated 14 October 1870 JOHNSON is "a black man worked for Company for 18 years" and lives at Black Rock. [FIC/D2, pg 650] This would put his date of first employment with the FIC as being circa 1852. According to JCNA records there was a William JOHNSON, a seaman from the *Alcete* who along with a Thomas SPARKS was sentenced to 12 months prison with hard labour on 25 April 1851 for stealing one cask containing 20 gallons of porter of the value of £4 on the high seas. Both men were seamen on board the *Alcete* which left England for California December 1850. [H13, pg 104] The *Alcete* left Stanley 21 April 1851. Then in a letter dated 26 August 1851 William JOHNSTON was to be released from jail and placed on board the brig *Hamlet*.

[D5, pg 263]

The dates match but is this the same man? Was he allowed to stay or is this William JOHNSTONE another person altogether?

On 1 October 1858 Edward JOHNSON had a balance due to him in the Store Ledger D from the previous ledger (*not held*) of £4-11-1 and was on a monthly wage of £3-15-0. His monthly wage increased in December 1859 to £4; £4-3-4 January 1861; December 1864 £4-11-8. He was still on this wage in September 1890 when he appears to have retired as he then received a monthly payment of £1-5-0 from October 1890 until his death.



FIC albums—circa 1887

From the death registers: *Edward JOHNSON, a shepherd (Negro) from Nova Scotia, age about 75, died 8 August 1891 from bronchitis at Darwin Harbour.*

The FI Magazine of September 1891 reported:

**JOHNSON. Darwin Harbour, August 8, H W Johnson. Aged about 65 years. He had been for many years in the employment of the Falkland Islands Company, from whom he received a liberal pension during the latter years of his life.**

The inscription on his grave reads:

IN  
MEMORY  
OF  
WILLIAM EDWARD JOHNSTONE  
WHO DIED AT DARWIN HARBOUR  
ON THE 8<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST 1891  
  
UPWARDS OF 35 YEARS AGO HE ENTERED THE  
SERVICE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY  
AND REMAINED WITH THEM THE REST OF HIS LIFE  
  
KINDLY IN HIS DISPOSITION AND OF A GENIAL TEMPER  
HIS PRESENCE IN THE SETTLEMENT WILL LONG BE  
REMEMBERED WITH REGRET BY THE INHABITANTS

Rather unfortunate wording in the last line, I am sure they didn't quite mean it like that...



# Shipping—Bidston Hill

**T**he *Bidston Hill* was a four-masted iron ship built in 1886 by T Royden & Sons, Liverpool, England for W Price & Co of Liverpool. She measured 91.89 × 12.82 × 7.48 metres with a Gross Registered Tonnage of 2519 and a Net Registered Tonnage of 2434 and was rigged with royal sails over double top and topgallant sails. She was launched from the shipyard November 1886.

According to the Shipping Registers, the 2433 ton English ship *Bidston Hill*, port of registry Liverpool, called into Stanley 28 April 1887 for repairs. The *Bidston Hill* was en route to Wilmington, California from Cardiff and had a crew of 38 under Captain LAMBERT. In a despatch to London Office dated 22 May 1887 Frederick Cobb, Colonial Manager of the FIC Ltd, wrote "*The Bidston Hill, a new four masted ship on her first voyage has put in with the loss of nearly all her spars, that is to say she has lost the topmasts and most of her yards with sails and rigging. This a remarkable smash; I send you a photograph of her from the deck of the Great Britain. The expense of refitting will be enormous, and the Captain has put himself in Dean's hands under circumstances that I hope will be the subject of enquiry...I contented myself with selling the four sticks, as they lay, without guaranteeing their soundness, for £500. Then they wanted one of the Great Britain's iron topsail yards and her mizzen lower topsail yard, wood, for these I asked £100 and £60 respectively, at which they drew off for some days, but returned eventually for the wooden one, and unless I am much mistaken, they will take the other in time...It is a large affair, probably over £6000...It is a curious coincidence that the Aphrodite belonging to the managing owners of the Bidston Hill came in a few days later with their plates carried away and rigging damaged.*"

The *Bidston Hill* finally cleared Stanley 5 December 1887. Frederick Cobb wrote to London Office 19 December 1887 "*The Bidston Hill has left, after advertising for £9500, of course on Bottomy, the Company's supplies to her exceeded £830, a very small proportion of this enormous sum. It is necessary to be cautious in speaking to outsiders of such affairs; but I may say to you, unreservedly, that when a Captain comes in here absolutely devoid of the scruples that usually accompany honesty his business is one that the Company cannot touch.*" [FIC/D7 P553]

There is no record of her calling into the Falkland Islands again however she appears to have continued working the South American route, eventually coming to her demise off Staten Island. Referring to the FIC Archives and a Letter received by Mr Harding, Colonial Manager, Falkland Islands Company Ltd (NB: as written):

Weddell Island

Oct 28 05

Mr Harden

Dear Sir

On October 2nd there was a life buoy picked up here with the name Pitlochry Hamburg and another i picked up on Oct 13th with the name Bidstonhill Liverpool.

There iss a lot of other wood coming up but brook very small but no sine of any cargo nor pieces of boxes of eny sort.

It was on the 26 of July the first sines we seen of it here.

I do no know if i orto report the life buoys to you or who i orto but you been the insurance agent so i thought it would be you.

I am ever yours  
James Stewart

*NB: The Pitlochry was a four-masted steel barque built in 1894. On 24-25 September 1905 she lost main topmast, and mizzen topgallant mast in a hurricane off Cape Horn and sailed under jury rig back to Montevideo.*

The *Bidston Hill* was wrecked 31 July 1905 at Cape Furneaux, Staten Island. The chief officer, steward, four younger apprentices, an ordinary seaman, four sailors and the master, who had been injured by a fall from the deckhouse, went in the starboard boat. The second officer and the remainder of the crew were lost when the topmast yards and rigging came down on them when they were attempting to launch the port boat. According to the finding of a Naval Court held at the British consulate at Buenos Aires 20 and 21 September 1905 the immediate cause of the wreck was the failing of the wind when the ship was in a critical position on a lee shore. The captain, Captain Kendall was suspended for three calendar months for not having sufficient charts on board.



*Dean's Jetty with Bidston Hill, Talisman & Gem.*

December 1887—FIC Archives, JCNA

The vessel loaded with cargo moored at the jetty is most likely the *Gem*; *Bidston Hill* will be the four masted ship second from the left. I am unsure which vessel is the *Talisman*. Other vessels which were in at same time and may also be in the photograph are the yacht *Nyarza*, the *Ascalon*, the *Ocean Rover*, and possibly the *Cambrian* and HMS *Swallow* and the hulk *Great Britain*.

**T**he *Talisman*, a 1199 ton English ship, port of registry Liverpool, arrived at Stanley 3 November 1887 for repairs to her main mast etc. The *Talisman* had a crew of 25 under Captain PUTT and was bound for San Francisco from Liverpool. Frederick Cobb recorded in his despatch to London “*The Talisman’s repairs will be heavy, probably £2000 or more...*” The *Talisman* finally cleared 25 January 1888.

**T**he *Gem*, a 459 ton English ship, port of registry London, arrived at Stanley 5 December 1887 from London with general cargo for J M Dean & Sons. The *Gem* had a crew of 12 under Captain BURGELL and cleared 4 April 1888



# Falkland Islands Company Limited Accession

Last year the Archives holdings were substantially increased by the welcome donation of the remaining Falkland Islands Company Limited archives held in their attics in Crozier Place (see last year's newsletter for details). This was a substantial accession and the work of processing and cataloguing is ongoing. I can certainly say that this is the most enjoyable accession that I have been involved in to date. Working with the correspondence in particular has been fascinating, especially the less formal general letters which are filled with local news, gossip and personal observations of life at the time. Some of the correspondents write so vividly that their personalities come through and instead of just being a name you can get a sense of the person and what they were like.

## F I C Clients Correspondence

Life in the Falkland Islands in the early days was hard, more so for those living on the West and even more so on the islands. The work was hard, conditions could be harsh and the isolation often got too much for some but most managed to keep their sense of humour. Following is a letter from the Falkland Islands Company Ltd Archives from W Seccombe Williams to W A Harding which gives a taste of life during the start of the 20th Century (the letter has been transcribed for ease of reading and abbreviations expanded in violet):

Weddell Island, WF  
July 8th 1904

My dear William

No "Fortuna" - no mail—we are all in the dark & our blessed state of isolation from the wicked world remains perfect—we hear nothing, see nothing, & our minds are simple & free from guile as of a little child—Can't do wrong—got no chance to—can't get drunk, got no wine. Thank God I am going away for a change next winter—my mental balance is endangered, it is time I got a freshen up, ere I get quite "balmy", if I aint that now.

I wish I knew what really was the wisest course for me to follow, whether I should quit the cursed country and make a bold strike out in newer wider fields—or having given the best part of my life to the rotten concern, its just well to throw in the remainder. What would you do old chap in my case? If I make a hole into the bit of cash I've saved by tripping to England & putting two sons to school then I'm a fixture here, come weal or woe.

Going home after 14 years penal servitude will be an event in our lives. I shall continue without fail to have all produce ready so as to get home by the May mail, - you will send "Fortuna" for us won't you? and as its once in a life time I rely on your goodness to make things right for use—particularly my little Wife, who is such a bad sailor, & who requires a pleasant restful holiday very badly—You see I am beginning to pester you in lots of time—but you'll keep us in mind, like a dear, won't you? & fit the May business in, as I'll guarantee all produce ready, a full load with Spring Point, viz—230 Bales Wed (Weddell Island) (skin & wool) 160 Spring Point: 380, or 390 is a full load for "F" (Fortuna) I think?

Hennah wrote me a note recently telling me that there was a rumour afloat of a small Pacific coasting steamer being put in commission to do the Falkland work for F IsCo &c—Were this true how happy should I be, but past experience teaches me to believe nothing, sale by ocular proof. Loss of old "FR" (Fair Rosamond) will now show whether "The Monarch" regards steam as a possibility.

Walton wont send me youngsters clothing without cash, so even if mail is late, try & get it by P. Post to Fox Bay—Nov 1 before I get locked up with shearing & stock work: many thanks.

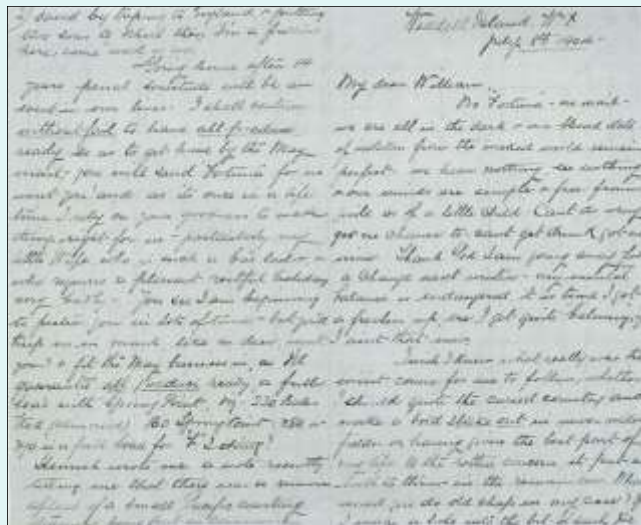
About sending you the Typewriter, we come to the conclusion that it isn't in as satisfactory a condition as I should wish it to be if I sold it to the F IsCo, its never had hard work or any much, for that matter, but it got knocked about a little coming out, through bad packing, and it has always had one or two little irregularities, & plays the fool in the tape & spool part at times—I am going to take it to London – have it thoroughly cleaned, overhauled, & set up generally & shall bring it out—Don't buy one for yourself meanwhile, if you don't mind hanging on, for I'll let you have

mine in A1 working order, cheaper than it is probably you could pick one up elsewhere of such a good class, for "The Barlock" takes the teacake, in my opinion, of all the machines in use.

Chin chin—& very kind regards. I hope Mrs Harding & son are well & hearty.

Yours most sincerely

W Seccombe Williams



Front of the original letter

## F I C Archives Released this Year

- Correspondence: Clients to Stanley Office—1901 to 1925  
*Listed numbered original letters bound in folders and filed under farms—a rich social history written by farm owners/managers*
- Correspondence: Sundry Local Letters to Stanley Office—1902 to 1917  
*Listed numbered original letters bound in folders and filed alphabetically under years written—a rich social history written by residents and visitors to the Falkland Islands*
- Correspondence: Camp Managers to/from Stanley Office & London Office—1891 to 1939  
*Listed numbered copies/originals of letters bound in books and folders; gap from Oct 1926 to Sep 1930—day to day running of FIC farms*
- Correspondence: Camp Bookkeepers to Stanley Office & London Office—1900 to 1917  
*Listed numbered originals of letters bound in folders—Darwin bookkeeper and schoolmaster*
- Correspondence: Camp Doctors to Stanley Office—1902 to 1917  
*Listed numbered originals of letters bound in folders; gaps in records—Darwin doctor*
- Correspondence: Camp Managers to Stanley Office—1902 to 1917  
*Listed numbered originals of letters bound in folders—day to day running of FIC farms*
- Correspondence: Camp Miscellaneous to Stanley Office—1900 to 1917  
*Listed numbered originals of letters bound in folders—various, from FIC farm employees; Darwin Harbour sports results; building repairs; imported livestock, etc*
- Correspondence: Camp Overseers to Stanley Office—1900 to 1914  
*Listed numbered originals of letters bound in folders—day to day running of FIC farms from overseers at Darwin, North Arm, Walker Creek, Goose Green*
- Correspondence: Diaries—Darwin—1898 to 1967  
*Work diaries of Camp Managers, Camp Overseers, Carpenter's Shop, Doctor, Engineer, Mason, boats, etc; gaps in records—day to day running of FIC farms*
- Correspondence: Diaries—Goose Green—1913 to 1948  
*Work diaries of Camp Overseers; gaps in records—day to day running of FIC farms*

# Battle of the Falklands - Personal Accounts

The following is a transcription of the Battle of the Falklands by Signalman G Kimbell of HMS *Carnarvon* and dated 8 December 1914 from the Dean Collection in the JCNA. Spelling is as the original.

We have completed with coal at 4am and *Invincible* and *Inflexible* had prepared to coal. *Glasgow* in the inner harbour was coaling. *Bristol* in the inner harbour has her engines disconnected and fires out. *Kent* and *Cornwall* in the outer harbour had not coaled although all were pretty short after our long trip here from Albrohos Rocks. I awoke at 4am having the morning watch and at 6.20 I heard a remark that hostile cruisers had been sighted approaching from the southward, so I looked around to see if there was anything doing in the flagship, and I happened to catch sight of a signal being made to the *Kent* for the collier alongside her, which read as follows "Prepare to cast off and raise steam for full speed". When I read this I said to my opposite number on watch "Here kid, I believe there is something doing as the Flag has made a signal to *Kent's* Collier, telling her to cast off and proceed to the inner harbour".

Then the Flagship made the following signal general, "A strange M of W sighted to the south of the Island; raise steam for full speed". We thought perhaps this ship or ships sighted might be the Japanese fleet. It being 8am I was relieved of my watch. When the Flagship started to "Flap" by hoisting the signal to "weigh" and all necessary signals under the circumstances and I managed to get down to my breakfast about 8.30. After I had had my breakfast and had a wash, also had a smoke, things were beginning to look up a bit. The *Kent* being under weigh and proceeding to the entrance to the harbour, also with *Glasgow*. In the meantime all the other ships were weighing, as the ships sighted were now steering toward the Island and were reported to be the German squadron who we were patiently waiting for. I went up in the rigging to see these hostile ships, but I could only see two ships and the smoke of the remainder. The two visible were the *Gneisnau* and *Nurnberg* approaching the lighthouse on Pembroke Point with their guns trained on the W/T Station. The battleship *Canopus* which was moored in the inner harbour at once opened fire with her 4 twelve inch guns.

At the sound of firing, all ships sounded off "Action" and decks were cleared and everyone at his post. When the Germans heard it also, they altered course to the eastward, no doubt thinking the Island was fortified. During this time we were ordered to open fire on the enemy as they came round the point where the lighthouse was situated, but sheared off to the join the Flagship *Scharnhorst*, *Leipzig* and *Dresden*, who were some distance away to the southward.

At 9.20 all other ships were under weigh and proceeding out of harbour and the *Glasgow* not forgetting the encounter with them in the Pacific steamed away after them at full speed like an express train, followed at once by the *Kent*. We (or rather the *Carnarvon*) were handicapped for speed as our after stokehold was all taken to pieces, to overhaul the main parts. We were followed by the *Inflexible* and the Flagship *Invincible*. It was a good sight to see those two large ships team by us, one each side, with decks all cleared and their heavy 12" guns swung out for action and not a man to be seen above armour. The *Macedonia* up to the time the Squadron got under weigh was anchored outside the mine field keeping a lookout to the westward, so after we had all got clear of the harbour she went inside the harbour to look after the colliers and Transports.

The *Cornwall* followed the Battle Cruisers out of harbour and was ordered to take station on our starboard quarter. During the time the *Bristol* had been ordered to proceed with the *Macedonia* and destroy the enemy's transports. They succeeded in sinking two colliers. They were new ships with 600 tons coal on board, and it was a pity to destroy them, but the Admiralty order had to be obeyed, which was to sink all German ships "Davy Jones Locker" being the best place for them. One Transport managed to get away. I believe she was an armed Merchant Cruiser. Now to return to the main event of the day.

After passing us the Flag ordered speed for 24 knots so we thought we were going to be out of it altogether, but our Stokers were working like Trojans down in the Stokeholds and the after stokehold and boilers were soon put together in a record time, this being a very creditable performance to the Engineer Staff of the *Carnarvon*. The vice Admiral asked if we could get a move on faster, but we were going the limit now with out the after stokehold, her speed being now 20 knots and as the *Cornwall* could go another couple of knots faster, she was ordered to go ahead. The German squadron, who by this time had reformed, now lay in formation Light Cruiser, *Gneisnau*, *Scharnhorst* (Flagships of Vice Admiral Graf von Spee) *Leipzig*, *Nurnberg*. The signal was made for all ships to have a meal, so dinner was piped, but as all mess tables and stools were on the upper deck, and the mess deck flooded, it was not comfortable enough to eat anything, for all was excitement, everything screwed up top notch. I heard rather a good



remark from one AB who was on the forecandle munching bread and cheese watching the Germans. Someone asked him if he was eating all the messes bread and cheese and he quickly remarked, we might be dead presently, and as we shall be dead a long time, we should probably get hungry in that time, so was having a good feed before he went.

At 1-2pm the *Invincible* opened fire on the Rear Cruiser of the line but shooting was a bit erratic as it was such a long range.

The *Inflexible* now opened fire, and firing common shell, probably to find the range, after about 20 minutes of this firing, the light cruisers of the enemy had altered course 6 to 8 points to starboard and dispersed. The Rear Cruiser had probably been hit by one of the Battle Cruisers as she seemed to drop astern before she altered course. The *Glasgow*, *Kent* and *Cornwall* were then ordered to chase these Light Cruisers whilst we who had worked up to full speed, in fact exceeded our limit, continued to follow the battle cruisers, who were now hotly engaged with the 2 big German Ships. The enemy now altered his course, more to the southward, but our Cruisers closed in and started to execute terrible damage on the enemy, whose fire though pretty active was not very effective on account of the long range. The German Admiral altered course again to port to try to close the range, but our Admiral knowing that by keeping them at long range was saving his ships from material damage, also loss of life, altered course to the northward together and gave stern action to the enemy, this offering a smaller target to the enemy, who were also showing a smaller target to our ships.

It was just before our ships altered course that I could see the effect of the fire from our ships and saw one shell hit the *Scharnhorst* just before her main-mast when there was a burst of flame and smoke and we could see that she was on fire; in fact she seemed to drop for a minute and we thought she was a doomed ship. Then after about an hour of this action, the enemy seeing that our ships could keep them at their distance,, altered course to starboard again and ran out of range of our guns, but the battle cruisers quickly altered course again and closed them again, but on sighting a large sailing ship who would have undoubtedly come into the zone of fire as the action was now general again on both sides. The enemy must also have seen this sailing ship, and on our Admiral altering course to port and circling round, the enemy done the same. I noticed now that the 3rd Funnel of *Scharnhorst* was gone, also the top of the foremast funnel of the *Gneisnau*. This circling movement of our ships brought us who had been thumping along all the time into the firing line. I noticed too the Flagship was making a tremendous lot of smoke and the paint being burnt off her funnel and the red lead showing it looked at times as if she had been on fire, the pipe from the oil supply being shot away in her sick bay, but this was got under after some difficulty. The *Canarvon* was now ordered to station on the beam of the flagship to take our place in the line, should one of the battle cruisers fall out, but this not coming off we were ordered to take station astern of flag as at this point, on account of the circling maneuver the *Inflexible* was leading. We were now at our extreme range, and the fire of the *Scharnhorst* was easing up as we continued to circle around them, the *Scharnhorst* having a list to port had practically stopped. We had now opened fire and one shell striking her under the foremost funnel an explosion occurred and the foremost funnel was literally blown out. Another caught her in the stern and she by this time having heeled well over to port, her propellers coming up still going slowly round, and going down by the bow she sank beneath the foam at 4.16pm. A number of people were observed to jump over from her Q Deck as she was going down, but when arrived at the spot where she sank, there was not a vestige of anything to be seen. Those who had not been killed must have perished in the water. This I observed from the bridge by means of the long distance telescope. Our attention was drawn on the *Gneisnau* who still continued the action, and as we were now within range with our 7.5 guns, we were given a position between the Flagship and the *Inflexible*.

I don't know whether we were meant for the victim of the *Gneisnau* or what signs she had on us, not being able to sink the Battle Cruisers, but she now started to give us our share of Steel Pills, which came whistling through our masts, over the forecandle, ahead and astern of us and sometimes a little short, but only by luck we were not damaged in any way. These shots were anywhere in the ocean, bar in the *Canarvon*. After about 30 circling around, the enemy, her foremost funnel suddenly leant aft and propped up by the second one. She was making a brave stand against three ships and it must be said of them that they fought like heroes everyone against terrible odds. You



**Continued from page 9:**

could see by this time she was gradually slowing down, and her guns being silenced as well, as it was getting very misty and her death warrant was signed. She was listing to starboard bodily and after she had all but ceased fire, in fact she had ceased fire altogether when a flash of flame was observed about the place where her centre 5.9" gun was situated. We thought she was still firing, but really it was one of our shells bursting on her armour. We also ceased fire, but did not venture too close to her on account of such things as letting slip a Tin Fish, or rather a Torpedo at us at close range, although she had hauled her colours.

A signal was now made for all boats to be lowered to save life, and at 5.59pm she rolled over and sank. Now was witnessed a scene of misery, which will remain engraved on the minds of many, for many a long day.

There were a number of survivors in the water clinging to the wreckage of all sorts and the work of humanity was begun as soon as possible, every available boat being used to rescue them, but a good many perished in the water, the temperature of which was only 38° or 40°, and even those that the boats did not reach but had enough strength to get to the ships side, were hauled upon board, but were so far done that their strength failed them and they dropped back into the water. It must be understood this is about 60 miles from the Falklands, and the depth of the water here is about 240 fathoms.

Whilst the boats were picking up survivors I heard the sound of rifle fire and found that they were trying to sink a torpedo that had slipped out the *Gneisnau* tube when she listed, although the people we saved say they had fired 7 at us during the action. We had 42 in our Boats, 9 died as soon as we got them on board, including 1 officer. We slung them over the side into the water. The treatment of the others soon brought them round to life again, and we dressed them in our own suits. They were well built fellows and quite nice to talk to, but they seemed quite happy although prisoners of war, and they were treated well on board us. They say they don't want to meet any more of the *Carnarvon* class again, as they assure us our guns done more internal damage than the Battle Cruisers whose heavy shells were going right through them, their armour not being of enough resistance to give full play to the penetrating power of our 12" shell. They say our first salvo smashed 3 of their guns, another ripped her side out at the water line and when they burst in board, arms, heads and legs were flying all directions. They had a sentiment that we should not save them but would steam right through them. They had been instructed before they left Kiachow, China, if they met an enemy ship they were to kill every man on board. But England and English are nothing if not human and put out a hand to help a beaten enemy at all times. Better Christianity than German Kultur. although the reports we have read of the outrages committed by the Kaiser's Army in Belgium is enough to turn anyone, but we are fighting Sailors not Soldiers, or perhaps we might act different, altho' we have not forgotten the *Good Hope* and *Monmouth* yet. During our part of the engagement the *Glasgow* and *Cornwall* had come up with *Leipzig*, and engaged. Here it might be said the *Glasgow* got her own back, as she had an old grudge against the *Leipzig* in the Pacific Battle. Anyway towards the close of our action a W/T message was received saying the *Leipzig* was on fire Fore and Aft, *Cornwall* standing by her. Nothing was heard of the *Kent* who, it now appears came up with the *Nurnberg*, and during the action her aerials were dismantled on account of her foremast being shot away, but later we heard she had sunk the *Nurnberg*, the *Dresden* escaping to the South, leaving the *Nurnberg* to her fate.

1 Officer and 14 men were saved from the *Leipzig* and 7 men from the *Nurnberg*. Our losses were *Invincible* and *Inflexible* and *Carnarvon* none. *Kent* 6 marines killed by a shell exploding in a casemate, one of them a Leicester man, *Glasgow* 1 stoker PO 5 wounded, altho' we were not hit, some of the others were, *Cornwall* being hit below the waterline in 2 bunkers. We picked up a lifebuoy from *Gneisnau*.

After all survivors were on board, speed was ordered for full speed, and at 8pm we were ordered to proceed to the *Orama* who was escorting the Colliers from Abrolhos Rocks.

The day had been an ideal day, calm and sunny, but changed to rough and windy as we got under weigh again, and ends my version as I saw it myself from the signal deck of HMS *Carnarvon*.

Decr 8th, 1914.

God save the King and Empire.

G Kimbell

Signalman



L-R: Excavating for the Memorial Wall commemorating 100 years since the Battle of Coronel & the Battle of the Falklands; one of the 3 plaques; the finished wall





# Battle of the Falklands - And from on shore

**T**he 8 December 1914 was a clear sunny day and as the battle unfolded many of the inhabitants of Stanley had a clear view of events from the Lookout Rocks above the town and from Sapper Hill. The following is an account by W A Harding the Colonial Manager of the Falkland Islands Company Ltd, Stanley to the Company's London Office.

479

December 13th 14.

Sir,

I concluded my last despatch on the 6th instant by reporting that as the "Canopus" had asked for a large supply of fresh meat other cruisers might be expected. Next morning (7th inst.) about 10 a.m. the following H.M. Ships arrived "Invincible", Vice-Admiral Sturdee, "Garnarvon", Rear-Admiral Stoddart, "Inflexible", "Kent", "Gormwall", "Glasgow" and "Bristol", the last two coming into the inner Harbour. Late in the day the armed merchantman "Macedonia" (F. & O.) also arrived. Colliers were placed alongside, and provisions supplied during the day. I was asked to provide for the following day anything up to 15,000 pounds of mutton as five of the fleet would leave on the 8th inst. We managed to have 9,000 pounds all ready, but had no opportunity of delivering it.

About 7 a.m. on the 8th instant the outposts at Sappers Hill and Lake Point reported that a fleet of 5 cruisers was approaching from the South, and just before 7.30 a warning gun was fired from H.M.S. "Bristol" - all crews were recalled and steam raised as quickly as possible. At 9 a.m. two cruisers, which we afterwards learned were the "Gneissau" and "Munsterburg" approached within about a couple of miles of the wireless, and the officer at the observation hut on Engineer Point saw that they were training guns on the buildings with crews all stationed at quarters. H.M.S. "Canopus" then fired 5 rounds of 12" shell over the hill, the 3rd shot (we believe) striking one of the vessels. They ported helm immediately, and steamed quickly out of range to E.S.E. to meet

The Secretary,

London.

No. 479 per

(10.12.14.)

the other three Germans which were about 9 miles to the South steering N.East. The first two steamed slowly after getting out of range to enable the three to come up with them. Meanwhile all our fleet which was quite invisible to the enemy were raising steam and getting under way with the utmost speed. H.M.S. "Kent" was out first, and stood off for a while to attract the attention of the Germans, by 11 a.m. all the others, except the "Bristol", were outside. As soon as the Germans saw the number that were here, they made off as fast as they possibly could towards E.S.E. At 12.30 the "Bristol" and "Macedonia" went to W.S.W. towards Pitcairney as we learned by telephone that three colliers had anchored off there in the morning. Soon after 2 p.m. heavy firing was heard to E.S.E. and this continued until 5.45. At 6.30 we learned by wireless that the "Scharnhorst" and "Gneissau" had been sunk and a little later that the "Leipzig" was on fire, she subsequently turned turtle and sank. About midnight a message was received that the "Bristol" and "Macedonia" had caught up the colliers "Bates" and "Santa Isabel" with 14,000 tons of coal between them. A wireless was sent to the Admiralty asking whether they were to be brought into port, but the reply was that the orders were to sink them, and that they should be carried out. The "Macedonia" thereupon took off the crews (20 officers and 86 men) and sent the ships with the 14,000 tons of coal to the bottom. The "Bristol" then went in chase of the third vessel, which I learn is the (V. armed) merchantman "Bayliffe" with a large number of reservists on board. December 8th. 7 a.m. "Macedonia" arrived with the crews. At 8.30 p.m. H.M.S. "Kent" arrived with news that she had sunk the "Munsterburg". Her own foretopmast had been shot away carrying away the aerial of her wireless, hence she had been unable to report before. She had been hit about 50 times, one shell exploded in the Commander's cabin destroying everything. She



View from Sapper Hill in 2014



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(19.12.14.)

Had 2 killed and about a dozen wounded. Two of those died in the Hospital the same night. H.M.S. "Cornwall" arrived about 6 p.m. with considerable damage but ~~no~~ casualties. December 10th. H.M.S. "Glasgow" arrived about 1 a.m. with one man killed and several wounded. She had picked up about 7 survivors from the Leipzig including the Navigating Officer. December 11th. 4 a.m. H.M.S. "Bristol" arrived - but had not been able to catch up the "Boydlets". The "Dresden" and "Boydlets" are therefore still at large. At 7 a.m. "Invincible" and "Inflexible" returned the former having severe damage, one shell holed her at the water line. One man killed buried at sea. Store ship "Crown of Aragon" arrived. 8 a.m. "Orion" arrived. In the afternoon the funeral of 7 men took place; many hundreds of men were landed from the fleet to attend it. Later H.M.S. "Carnarvon" returned - had gone north to convey the "Crown", "Crown of Aragon" and various colliers. December 12th. The Officers of the colliers corroborate that the Germans must have had a terrible surprise. They thought that the "Glasgow" and the "Defence" would be here, and their plan of campaign was first to demolish the wireless then for 5 to destroy the "Glasgow" and "Defence". After that they intended to occupy the town and bring in their colliers from Fitzroy and coal. What else they would have done can be better imagined than described, - there is no question that Stanley would have been burned to the ground.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the narrowness of our escape, - 48 hours either way would have made all the difference. If the Germans had come before the arrival of our fleet there would have been only the "Onopus" against 5, and if they had arrived after five of our fleet had left there would have been only the "Onopus" and two light cruisers against them, - that is to say against the heavily armed Scharshorst and Gueiden the Leipzig, Dresden and Nurnberg. In either case the place would have been bombarded, and must have been pretty well wiped

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out. It would seem to have been almost a direct intervention of Providence that they chose to visit this place on one of the two days when 6 of H.M. Ships were concentrated here. It happened to be a really beautiful morning and from the hill we had the experience of a lifetime. A hostile fleet of five comparatively close in to the shore on the South, and our own fleet of 7 on the other side of the hill feverishly getting under way. The Germans had not the remotest idea of the surprise awaiting them, and the sight of six of our vessels tearing out at full speed was one never to be forgotten.

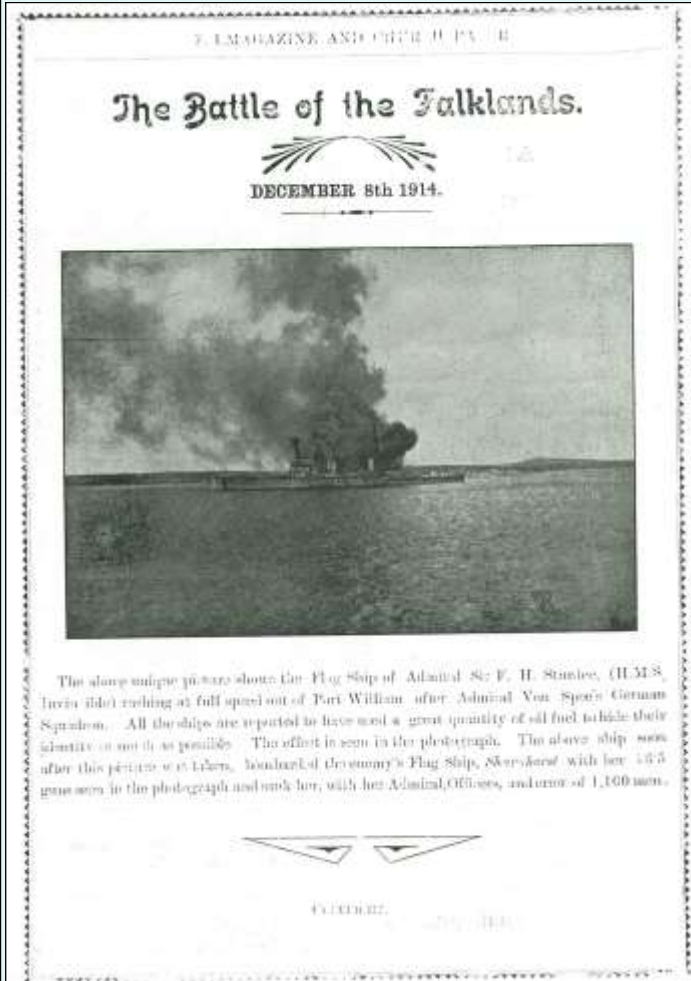
3. I have to refer back to my 477/94 on the subject of the engagement of Mr Allen as extra clerk for the Stanley Office and Store. Mr Allen wanted Allen back at Darwin whilst so many Stanley people were taking refuge there, and we proposed to let him remain until stock had been taken at Darwin; the arrival of the fleet increased our work here so much that I have him back in Stanley again. After being here for a week or so he tells me he cannot get suitable lodging for less than £7.10.0. per month; with the increased price of mutton and other stores, people cannot do it for less, and if his salary is £15 per month only, he would only just be able to exist on it, and would not be in a position to save anything. As he is 38 years of age he does not care to contemplate remaining here without saving something, or without some prospect of betterment. He would, I understand, engage for a couple of years at £16 per month for the first year increasing to £15 for the second, and I should be glad to know whether the Directors would sanction this. He asks whether, in the event of Mr Blair leaving, he would have a chance of succeeding him. The only other teacher Stephens, I think, looks forward to the Darwin post eventually, but Allen has a prior claim as he has already served the Company 5 years, and when Mr Blair has been ill or on leave has carried out the duties of bookkeeper very satisfactorily. I have told Mr Allen that no doubt he would be considered for the post, but that we cannot give any guarantee.



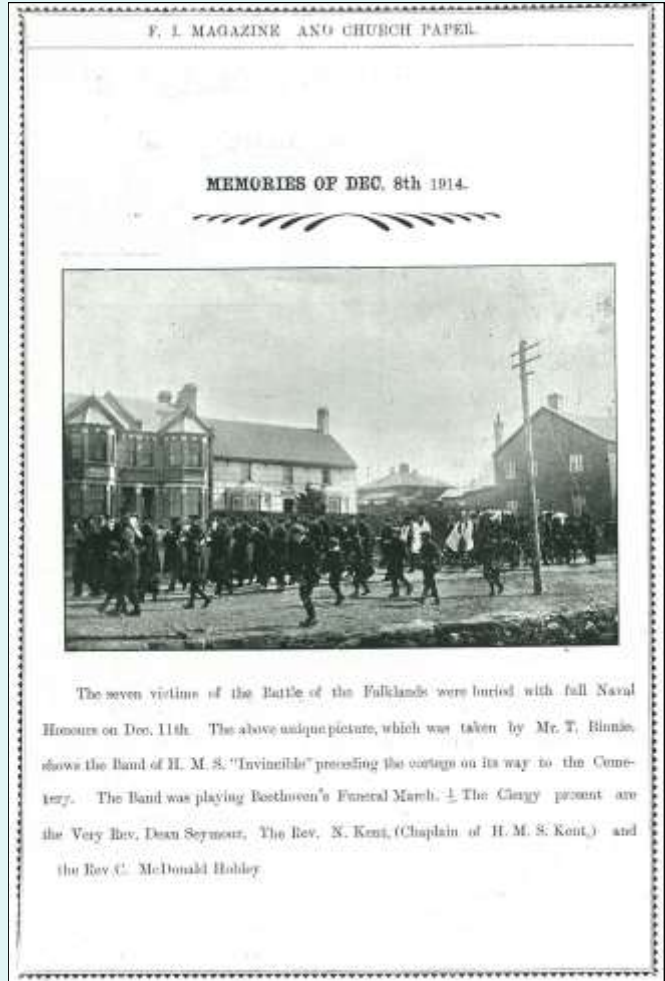
Falkland Islands Battle Memorial, Completed 1927.

Battle Memorial circa 1927—FIC Collection

# The Battle According to the Local Periodical



FIM April 1915



FIM June 1915



Battle of the Falklands graves & cross Stanley Cemetery



FIM November 1915

# A German Spy?

**W**ith the attempted invasion of the Falkland Islands anyone with German connections came under suspicion. The following is a transcription of a letter to the Secretary of State from the Governor, William Allardyce [G17, folio 80]:

Falkland Islands  
Secret

Government House, Stanley  
15th December 1914

Sir

In my Secret dispatch of the 10 December I reported that the German cruisers *Gneisenau* and *Nurnberg* were off the Wolf Rock at about 9 am on the 8th instant.

2. The assured manner of their approach struck me forcibly at the time and I commented on it to those about me and remarked that I was confident that there must be someone on board with considerable knowledge of the coast, suggesting a German named Maatz who had been in this Colony from 1907 to 1911. I attach a copy of this man's record here as given by his late employers, the Falkland Islands Company.

3. Yesterday I sent Major Turner and a non-commissioned officer on board the ships which were about to convey to England the prisoners of war, in order that he might identify Maatz if he were among the survivors from the *Gneisenau* of whom there were many.

4. As a result of his inspection and investigation Major Turner was informed that a man Maatz who had been a Master of a schooner in this Colony a few years ago and knew the waters well had gone down on the *Gneisenau*. It appears that he was a well known character on board.

5. There is no doubt in my mind that Maatz was sent to this Colony for the express purpose of spying out the land and obtaining all available information. By the irony of fate he was unable to reciprocate the hospitality, courtesy and kindness which was extended to him during his residence here.

6. I may add that judging by the statements made by German prisoners (officers and men) it would seem that it was the intention of Admiral von Spee to destroy the wireless station, then send a demand to the Governor for the surrender of the Colony, and in the event of this being refused to take and destroy the town. It is alleged that there was a large number of reservists on the steamer *Seidlitz* which was off Fitzroy with two colliers. The former escaped but the others were sunk.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient

Humble servant

WLA

Governor



Governor Allardyce



HM Stanley Turner on the right



# Christopher Maatz

**C**hristopher MAATZ arrived in the Falkland Islands from Punta Arenas 20 January 1907 as mate on board the yawl *Margaret*, owned by Messrs F F Brinckman & Co of Hamburg and captained by Captain KROEGER. After about a year MAATZ was given command of the *Margaret* as Captain KROEGER went to Punta Arenas to take charge of a steamer. About the beginning of 1908 Messrs Brinckman & Co ceased operations in the Falklands and the *Margaret* was taken to Punta Arenas to be sold.

Captain Christopher MAATZ returned from Punta Arenas 19 May 1909 on board the *Orcoma* and took charge of the *Hattie L M* which had recently been acquired by two men working on Pebble Island and was engaged in trading around the Islands and carried the West Falkland mails.

After the captain of the schooner *Malvina*, Edward INDRIKSEN, drowned in Stanley Harbour 31 March 1909 MAATZ applied for the post of master and was given command. On 9 May 1910 the *Malvina* was returning to Stanley with a full cargo of wool from Roy Cove and Chartres when she was wrecked at 10am in Reef Channel.

Later that year Christopher MAATZ then took charge of the *Gwendolin* where he remained until the arrival of the ss *Columbus* when schooners were put out of use.

In a letter from North Arm to W A HARDING, the Colonial Manager of the Falkland Islands Company Ltd, dated 26 April 1911 MAATZ wrote

*"Sir, As I hear you are going away to Pta Arenas next mail and it is not likely that I am back in Stanley by then and therefore won't see you anymore, I would be very much obliged to you, Sir, if you would write me out some kind of recommendation and sign it as German Consul as well as Manager of the FIC. As a German I should report myself whenever I change my address; which I have not done since 1906, so I am liable to punishment, if ever I should happen to come to Germany again.*

*I intend to go to Buenos Aires as soon as I have finished with the "Gwendolin", where perhaps I will be able to get a place as Officer on one of the HSADG coasting steamers.*

*You will remember, Sir, the shepherd I didn't care to take on board? He got quarrelsome again before we passed the Narrows and proper mad, when I took his whisky away from him. So I had to do what you suggested, lashed his hands and feet and put him on the hatch till he sobered up a little; I am very sorry this happened, but it could not be helped.*

*I only arrived here yesterday at about 6 o'clock in the afternoon. It has been blowing nearly every day, even today we have half a gale from the ENE and are not able to work. The Cattle Point people have a fair amount of furniture and it is not an extra good beach to take it off. I suppose I'll have to take it to Darwin?*

*I was going to enquire about it by telephone just before I left Darwin but I could not get a reply.*

*Thanking you for all your kindness and wishing you a very pleasant trip.*

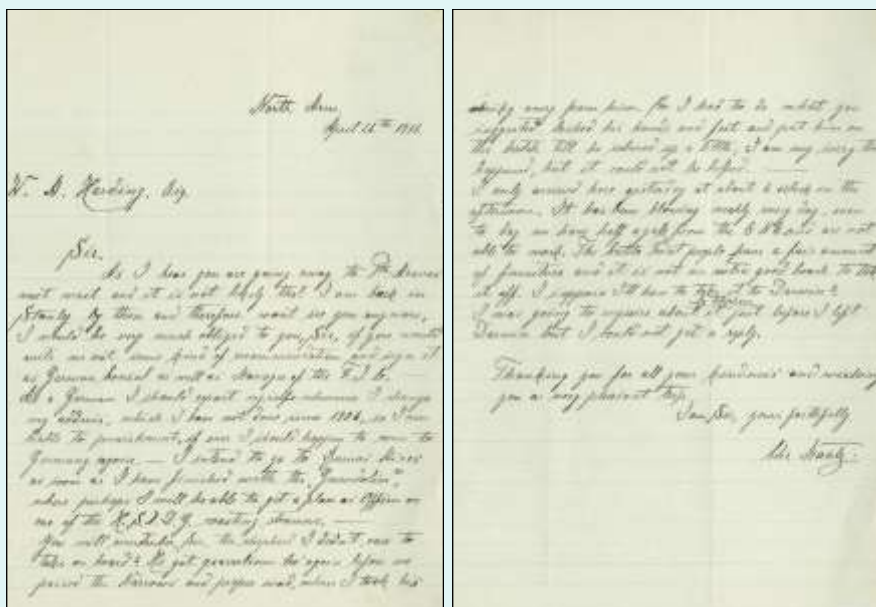
*I am, Sir, yours faithfully*

*Chr Maatz.*

Captain Christopher MAATZ finally left Stanley for Buenos Aires on board the *Orcoma* 11 July 1911 and subsequent letters received from him said that he was employed by the Hamburg South American Company as an officer in charge of one of their steamers.

On 14 December 1914 Major TURNER was informed that MAATZ had gone down on the *Gneisenau*.

[G17, f80; F I Magazine; Shipping Registers; FIC Archives]



Christopher MAATZ to W A HARDING [FIC/ES/LOC/4#14-a,b]

# And Times Were Tough...

**P**ost World War I labour and money were short in the Falkland Islands but people still kept their sense of humour as evidenced by the following undated and unsigned satirical letter circa 1921 from the FIC Archives.

Dear Sir,

For the following reasons I am unable to send you the cheque for which you ask.

I have been held up, held down, sandbagged, walked on, sat upon, flattened out and squeezed.

First by our Income Tax, the Super-Tax, the Excess Profits Tax, War Loans, War Bonds, War Savings Certificates, the Automobile Tax and every Society and Organization that the inventive mind of man can invent to extract what I may or may not have in my possession.

Also the Red Cross, St. Dunstons., the Children's Homes, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., the Salvation Army, the Belgian Relief, the Austrian Relief, the Black Cross, the Double Cross, and every hospital in the town or country.

The Government has governed my business so that I don't know who owns it. I am inspected, suspected, examined, re-examined, informed, required and commanded, so that I don't know who I am, where I am, or why I am here at all. All that I know is that I am supposed to be an inexhaustible supply of money for every known need, desire or hope of the human race, and because I will not sell all that I have and go out and beg, borrow or steal money to give away I am cussed, discussed, boycotted, talked to, talked about, lied to, lied about, held up, hung up, robbed and damn near ruined and the only reason why I am clinging to life now is to see what the H... will happen next.

Yours sincerely,