

PEBBLE ISLAND, WEST PEBBLE ISLAND, GOLDING ISLAND, BROKEN ISLAND, EAST ISLAND, NARROW ISLAND AND MIDDLE ISLAND, ETC

Pebble Island, to the north of West Falkland, is the third largest offshore island with a varied landscape of large ponds, sandy beaches and rocky cliffs.

In October 1845 the US ship *Mary Grey* was a total loss on Pebble Island.

In February 1857 Governor MOORE visited Keppel Island and Pebble Sound on board HMS *Siren* on a tour of inspection. [SHI/REG/1]

John Markham DEAN departed Stanley 27 September 1861 in the 15 ton cutter *Fanny* under Captain SMYLEY, which was on a cruise to collect mollymawk eggs. He went for the cruise and to inspect Pebble Island. [SHI/REG/1]

In a letter dated 2 November 1861 Governor MOORE wrote to J M DEAN acknowledging his letter of 23 October 1861 “...I fully coincide in your opinion that it is impossible for any capitalist to occupy an Island such as Pebble Island, and to invest a large sum in importing sheep, unless he can either purchase the land or obtain a perpetual Lease of it. It is equally out of the question that any intending settler should purchase sufficient grazing land for his stock at the present upset price of 8/- per acre.

3. It would appear that Pebble Island contains from 14 to 15 thousand acres of Land after allowing for the large freshwater lagoons on the north shore. I will recommend Her Majesty's Government to sanction my granting to you a Lease of the Island including Pebble Island, West Pebble Island, Golding Island, Broken Island, East Island, Narrow Island and Middle Island for 20 years at the annual rent of £20 a year, with the privilege at the end of that time of purchasing the entire Island (subject to the reservation mentioned below) for 20 years purchase or £400. The lease and the right of purchasing the Island to be conditional on your importing one thousand sheep within such reasonable time as you may name and that the Island shall be actually occupied. The lease and right of purchase to be transferable. I shall reserve for the use of the Government (not for sale or lease to other parties) a block of 100 acres in case of its being required for purposed of defence or public utility...If in the meantime you wish to commence operations I will grant a Licence to occupy the island for 12 months under the proclamation of 4 April on payment of £10.” [D10; 228]

On 13 November 1862 Special Lease No 21 being a Memorandum of Agreement for the Lease of Pebble and other Islands to John Markham Dean Esq was signed.

“It is this day mutually agreed between His Excellency Governor Moore, on the behalf of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, of the one part and John Markham Dean, Merchant of Stanley in the Falkland Islands of the other part as follows.

1. The Governor agrees to allow the said John Markham Dean the Occupation of Pebble Island, West Pebble Island, Golding Island, Broken Island, East Island, Narrow Island, and Middle Island, and other small Islets as delineated by a line of demarcation inscribed on a chart recorded in the Office of the Surveyor General, for the term of twenty Years, at an annual rental of Twenty Pounds, payable annually in advance from the day of the date of this Lease with the privilege at the expiration of this Lease of purchasing the above mentioned lands for £400 or twenty Years purchase, on the following Conditions.
2. That the said John Markham Dean shall import 1000 sheep before the 31st December 1864, unless it should seem desirable to the Governor for the time being to extend such period in consequence of any unforeseen difficulties in which case the sheep to be imported within such extended time, as may be named by the said Governor,

3. *That during the continuance of this Lease the Lands hereby leased shall be actually occupied and stocked, in accordance with the existing Regulations*
4. *That the Lease together with right of purchasing, at the expiration of the Lease be transferable, subject only to the condition of giving notice of such transfer to the Colonial Secretary.*
5. *Provided always, and it is hereby understood, that the Government possess as a reserve, a plot of land not exceeding 160 acres in extent, to be Surveyed and Selected by the Surveyor General, on any part of the Islands hereby Leased (not built upon or occupied, as Garden or Farm enclosures), as soon as it may be practicable and convenient to Complete Such Survey.*

[BUG/REG/2; 120]

The *Fanny* left Stanley 20 November 1861 to take a house to Pebble Island. The cutter returned 8 December 1861 after erecting the house and visiting Keppel Island. [SHI/REG/1]

On 13 May 1862 John DEAN wrote to Governor MOORE stating that *“upon my people arriving at Pebble Island to take possession of it they found it on fire and from my Sons account who has just returned states that the greater part of the N East portion is burnt & that with the lakes (which occupy a much greater space than I thought) makes one third of the Island completely useless.*

To make the Island of value it would be necessary to go to considerable expense in draining the lakes which I should not like to undertake having the land only on lease therefore I beg to propose to your Excellency that you will permit me to pay the purchase money £400 upon the importation of the Sheep as agreed, and secure the Deeds without waiting the 20 years which would extend any improvements.

The Rental of course will be paid while the arrangement respecting the Sheep is fulfilled.” [H18; 353]

In October 1862 the 115 ton schooner *David Ewan* brought 360 sheep to Pebble Island from Rio Negro. [SHI/REG/1]

William McDAID was manager of Pebble Island for approximately eight years from 1862 to 1870. William was born in Ireland circa 1835 and was one of the crew of the *Colonsay* which was wrecked on Speedwell Island 16 August 1860. He stayed and was married to Mary Ann ELMER in 1862.

John BETTS, another shipwrecked sailor, moved to Pebble Island from Keppel Island in 1862 and was manager after William. John moved into Stanley in 1872.

In January 1863 the *David Ewan* brought sheep to Pebble Island from Rio Negro and in October 1863 from Port Belgrano. [SHI/REG/1]

Crown Grant 174 was granted in fee simple to John Markham DEAN on 7 December 1869. The reserve of 160 acres at Elephant Bay were excepted. [CG 174]

In a letter dated 14 December 1869 to J M DEAN Governor ROBINSON wrote *“...I have now the honour to inform you that I have issued to you a Crown Grant of Pebble Island Station, and exchanged it with your son Mr George M DEAN for a Bill on yourself for £400 at 30 days sight, which I send to the Crown Agents by this mail for collection.”*

Charles Montague DEAN, second son of John Markham DEAN, appears to have managed Pebble Island from 1872 until 1890 when he and his family moved to England.

John Hall DEAN, the youngest son of John M DEAN, took over from his brother as resident

manager. [BUG/REG/5; 26]

John Cranmer BETTS, eldest son of John BETTS, moved to Pebble Island in 1885 and worked as manager for John H DEAN. He retired as manager in 1927.

The 99 ton schooner *Genesta* stuck a rock about a mile off the Port Egmont Cays 24 May 1888 and was a total loss.

On 27 June 1889 there were 4 houses on Pebble Island. House 1 occupied by **J H DEAN**, farmer; House 2 **M MURPHY**, foreman; House 3 **J BETTS**, shepherd; Cookhouse occupied by labourers. House 1 was valued at £20 and the remainder at £12 each. [H44; 235]

On 25 May 1893 John Markham DEAN transferred one equal half of "*Pebble Island West Pebble Island, Golding Island Broken Island East Island Narrow Island Middle Island and other small Islets as delineated by a line of demarcation inserted on a Chart recorded in the office of the Surveyor General of the Falkland Islands and their Dependencies*" to his son John Hall DEAN.. On 9 February 1899 John M DEAN transferred the other half to his son. [BUG/REG/5; 26, 262]

The *Richard Williams*, ex *Allen Gardiner II*, was driven on shore in Pebble Island harbour 3 November 1911. [FIM Dec 1911]

The 61 ton *Karina Kirsten* arrived in Stanley 11 October 1912 from Cardiff for Pebble Island. She was turned into a hulk circa 1929.



Karina Kirsten, Pebble Island – Clement family albums

After the death of John Hall DEAN in 1920, his sons, George Thomas “Bill” and John Wycombe “Jack” DEAN, jointly managed Pebble Island. George engaged Arthur Grenfell BARTON to take over as manager from John C BETTS in 1927. Arthur left in 1943 to manage Teal Inlet farm.

William David Noah “Willie” BETTS, the second son of John Cranmer BETTS, was the next manager and stayed there until the early 1950s.

Bob WALMSLEY was manager from the early 1950s until 1959 and Adrian MONK was the manager of Pebble Island from 1959 to 1968.



Loading wool and skins at Pebble Island – photo FIC Collection

Golding Island, Middle Island, East Island, Narrow Island, Sunday Island, High Island, October, November and December Islands were sold to F HIRTLE 1 May 1977.
[DEAN BROS MINUTE BOOK]

In July 1995 “All that piece or parcel of land situate in the Marble Camp area of Pebble Island comprising approximately 225 square yards of land and known as the Argentine Cemetery at Pebble Island” was conveyed to the Falkland Islands Government.
[DEAN BROS MINUTE BOOK]

In January 1999 the Registrar General confirmed verbally that Government Islet belonged to Dean Brother Ltd and on 22 January 1999 it was agreed that it would become a nature reserve.
[DEAN BROS MINUTE BOOK]