

JANE CAMERON NATIONAL ARCHIVES

NEWSLETTER



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Jane Cameron National Archives

Welcome to the February 2026 issue of the JCNA Newsletter.

In this issue we provide our regular update on our advocacy and outreach activities, engaging with community and individuals to promote and get more people involved in local heritage. Along with a summary of the documents we have made available on the website, we also share some initial data on how the website is being used by researchers following the revamp over three months ago.

The 'Falklands On Record' section includes articles exploring our records relating to the letters of Thomas Gilruth, and visiting Royal Navy ships.

We hope that you enjoy reading and get in touch to provide feedback or want to arrange a research appointment.



#Beauty

Ellaline Terriss, was an actress and singer (13 April 1871-16 June 1971) who was born at the Ship Hotel (later known as the Upland Goose Hotel) in Stanley. Whilst her family left the Falkland Islands shortly after her birth, several albums in our photographic collection contain postcards and autographed items which document Ellaline's theatrical career.

You can read more about Ellaline and her father, William Terriss on the 'Dictionary of Falklands Biography' website: <https://falklandsbiographies.org/>



Archives & Records
Association
UK & Ireland



#ExploreYourArchives
ARCHI'VE FOUND

Service Update - February 2026

Over the last few months of 2025, the team have continued outreach and engagement activities, taking part in Explore Your Archive Week for a second time as well as hosting students for a Careers Day event. Whilst these are the more fun parts of our role, we have also made great progress developing further internal policies and procedures for the Archives.

The level of queries has remained high, staying at the same level as last year. Leading up to Christmas there were more queries received from local organisations and FIG-based employees than from overseas researchers.

The Archives have also been pleased to see developments on the building itself, with new windows being recently installed, and the loading bay reorganised so that we can make best use of space internally. The building maintenance and upkeep is an important part of managing an Archival facility.

Looking ahead at the rest of 2026, the service will be focusing on efforts to catalogue and purchase equipment to support the management of our audio-visual collections, particularly focusing on our oral history collection and items from FIBS (FIRS) to make these voices from the past accessible and usable.

Research Statistics for 01 July - 31 December 2025:

Local Organisations or People: 57

Students: 1

Government Departments: 20

Overseas Researchers: 57

Total: 135

Research Appointments: 11

Emma-Jayne Burston, reflects on her continued experience with the Archives

In my second year at University studying Geography, I decided to undertake work experience at the archives, as the opportunity to be involved in preserving local records for future generations really interested me.

During my time there, I was fortunate to be involved in a wide range of tasks. These included helping to digitise records, including some natural history, sealing and geography materials which developed my digital and organisational skills by working with technology like the CZUR scanner. I also assisted with some condition grading and cleaning letter books, giving me a deeper understanding of the conservation and preservation processes.

One of my highlights was contributing to the Peaty Pals presentation, where I assisted with research, information collation and delivery, building both my confidence and my knowledge of an important part of Falkland Islands history.

The support and trust from Chloe and Helen played a huge role in my development throughout my time there, and the experience has had a lasting impact on my studies, skills and personal confidence.

Although I knew about the JCNA and, like many others, had used the service for my own Jane and Alastair Cameron Memorial History Project, I was genuinely surprised by the sheer scale, diversity and richness of the collections held there. It is a truly incredible resource for such a young community.

Emma-Jayne is now back in the UK, completing her final year at University of Exeter studying Geography.



Online Collections

The website and our online collections are one of the most popular services that the Archives facilitates and updates frequently. It offers researchers anywhere in the world the opportunity to access and download our digitised records without having to visit the archives physically or make an appointment.

A reminder that all records are digitised with OCR (Optical Character Recognition) so you can search by key words throughout any records that you download or open.

Between September 2025 and the end of December 2025, we have made the following available in our 'Online Collections' area:

- Defence & War – Naval & Admiralty – Visiting Ships (for the period 1957 to 1971):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/defence-and-war/naval-and-admiralty>
- Defence & War – Naval & Admiralty – Navy Staff:
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/defence-and-war/naval-and-admiralty>
- Minerals – Oil (for the period 1916-1976):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/natural-history-and-mineral-resources/minerals-peat-and-oil>
- Natural History – Geography (for the period 1958-1972):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/natural-history-and-mineral-resources/natural-history>
- People – Culture & Early History – Broadcasting (for the period 1920-1978):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/people/culture-and-early-history/culture-broadcasting>
- Periodicals - *The Falklands Listener* (1949):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/periodicals/fi-weekly-news>
- Periodicals - *The Falkland Islands Times* (issue 3/78 of 1978):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/periodicals/fi-times-fi-monthly-review>

We have also updated the following lists and information:

- Defence & War – Naval Graves List:
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/defence-and-war/memorials-and-graves>
- Periodicals – *The Falkland Islands Times* (issue 3/78 of 1978):
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/people/medals-and-honours>

We are grateful to our volunteers and work experience students who have contributed to digitising these files and making them available.

Website Statistics

With the redeveloped website, we have introduced analytics to our webpage to help us understand how users are accessing our online collections and which pages are the most popular. This information will also give us useful data that we can use to improve our website.

The below information provides website data for the period **11 Sep to 31 Dec 2025 (inclusive)**:

Total Views: 14,306

Total File Downloads (of one document): 5,616

Top 5 Countries: USA, UK, Falkland Islands, Chile, Argentina

Total Searches (with new function): 1,234

Most Popular Pages:

1. People – 19th and early 20th Century Families
2. Photographic Collections
3. Government
4. Buildings & Land



Countries (in blue) that have had users view the JCNA website
Source: Analytics Platform

To receive a detailed list of items digitised to our website, email us to be added to our mailing list or complete the sign up form here: [Sign Up Form Link](#)

You can access our online collections, along with copyright guidance, at:
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections>

Physical Collections

The Archives have been fortunate to be gifted documents by individuals and organisations to expand our archival collections and add to the history we preserve and make accessible.

Since the end of August 2025, we have received 3 new accessions, which have included both private donations and a transfer from a government department.

These records will be part of the ongoing cataloguing work undertaken by the service.

As part of our continuing work to develop our internal policies and procedures, we have also created a Collections Care and Conservation Policy. It outlines how we care for items once they are accessioned into our collection, for example, re-packaging into archival standard boxes and the standards we follow for environmental controls in our storage area. This Policy will soon be available on our website.

All Archives policies, including the one that covers the collections remit and development, are available at:

<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/about-archives/policies-and-procedures>

Collections Care - Condition Surveys

As part of the ongoing work to enhance the information about our collections and support our routine care and conservation procedures, staff at the JCNA have been carrying out condition surveys on some of our oldest and most vulnerable records: the government despatch and letter books. The physical condition of these records varies greatly due to: time; the materials they are made from; the amount of handling; or poor storage over time (prior to reaching their final destination in our purpose-built archival facility in 1998).

With the guidance from the National Conservation Service in the UK, the team have been learning how to better identify and describe the condition of these records, which is a key part of our collections management work. 'Condition surveys' enable us to use a set criterion to categorise - and grade - the physical condition and functionality of individual items within our collection. Grading the items by their condition also highlights which items require bespoke archival packaging, or 'rehousing' from their current storage.

If a record is considered to be in poor condition, or in a vulnerable state, it will be closed and restrictions will be imposed for physical access (where appropriate to do so, a digital surrogate will be created to allow continued access and limit the potential for further handling damage).

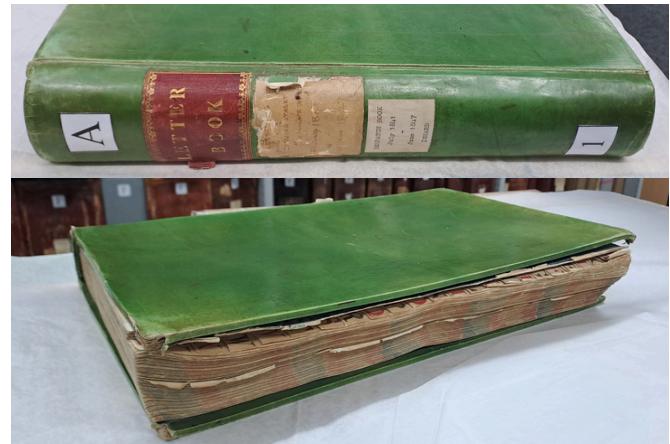
Below is an example of the four condition categories we benchmark collections against whilst assessing and grading the physical condition of a record:

Grade 1- Good Condition

Material requires only minimal cleaning and is in a stable, usable condition. Packaging desirable but not essential.



USABLE



Grade 2- Fair Condition

Material retains functionality and requires only **one** minor repair. Conditions requiring minor repair can include:

- splitting internal and external joint hinges and shoulder joints;
- damaged head and tail caps including end-bands;
- distorted corners and boards;
- loose text block pages and sections;
- scuffing to board covering.

Materials need to be handled carefully to avoid further damage. Archival boxing/packaging is recommended for items with loose elements.



USABLE WITH SOME CAUTION



While undertaking the process of condition surveys on letter books or ledgers, staff also take the opportunity to use the low-suction vacuum cleaner to clean the books covers, pages, and text block. It also allows staff to identify any further repairs that might be required.

Grade 3- Fair to Poor Condition

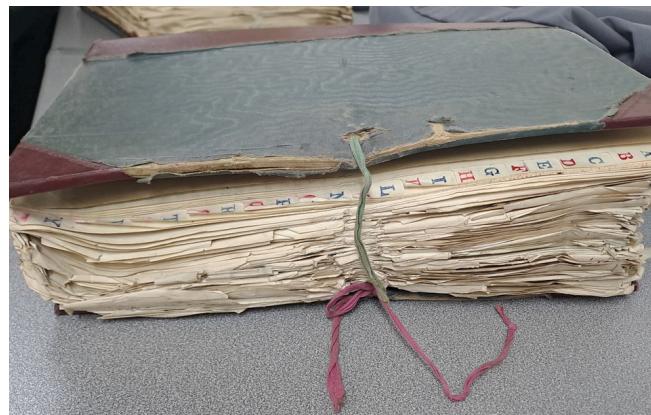
Material is losing functionality and requires **multiple** minor repairs and/or major repair. These items would benefit from future conservation treatment and require protective archival boxing and packaging to limit further damage or loss.

Conditions requiring multiple minor or major repairs include:

- missing or loose spine piece;
- one or both boards are loose;
- board and corner distortion and delamination;
- extensive text block tears and loose sections;
- weakened sewing structure;
- splitting and tearing to board coverings.



USABILITY IS QUESTIONABLE



Grade 4- Poor Condition

Material is unusable in its current state and requires immediate storage in a protective archival box or housing and would benefit from major conservation treatment.

Conditions requiring major repair include:

- broken sewing structure;
- extensive text block damage and loss;
- heavily distorted or missing board(s);
- missing spine piece;
- large areas of damage or loss to board coverings.



NOT USABLE



When staff and volunteers carry condition surveying, we use this framework to help us compare items and grade accordingly. We can then develop the most appropriate packaging to store and preserve our more fragile or deteriorating records.

We are very grateful for the support received from the National Conservation Service team, and are continuing to develop and apply our document conservation knowledge and skills to the JCNA collection.

Outreach & Engagement

The Archives have been taking part in a few outreach activities to help promote the service and advocate for the Archives. This is important work to raise the profile of the service both locally and internationally and support the accessibility of the records through engaging with people and encouraging them to get involved.

ARA Annual Conference and Awards – August 2025

The team virtually attended the annual UK & Ireland Archives & Records Association (ARA) Conference at the end of August 2025. The physical event was held in Bristol but there was virtual attendance available, offering the chance to watch the presentations and sessions live, and catch up with the recordings for two months after. The JCNA team were joined on one of the days by volunteer Marcy Bonner, who was keen to learn more about the sector and hear the talks for herself.

The theme of the Conference was 'Next Generation: Imagination and Innovation in Recordkeeping', with Archivists, Records Managers and Conservators all coming together to speak on related topics, with professionals speaking about: their experience implementing new electronic records management systems, developing purpose built-digital catalogues and making information available online.

It was an enjoyable and informative three days, with the team seeing familiar faces from the Archives sector. The interactive platform allowed the team to message and catch up with other professionals across the UK and Ireland, (and further afield, including Australia) and submit questions to the speakers.

The ARA Excellence Awards were also announced at the Conference on 28 August, celebrating and raising the profile of archivists, conservators and records managers across the UK and Ireland. There are four special awards including Record Keeper of the Year, for which our Corporate Records & National Archives Manager, Chloe Anderson-Wheatley, was nominated by ARA Head of Communications Deborah Mason. Chloe was announced as Record Keeper of the Year 2025, accepting the award online after receiving 74% of the public vote. Chloe had been nominated for her contribution to the JCNA and record keeping service for the Falkland Islands Government, as well as her ongoing volunteer work with ARA and the wider sector.



FICS Careers Day – 9 October 2025

On Thursday 9 October, the JCNA hosted a small group of students from FICS for their Careers Day experience as Archive Assistants for a two-hour session. After a quick tour of the facilities, the students helped to clean and carry out condition surveys on some Letterbooks, before testing their palaeography skills out by transcribing some of the letters in the Thomas Gilruth Collection. Below are photos of the students working together to measure the Letterbooks, carrying out the cleaning and typing up transcriptions.

Thank you to Ali Ford and Sally Heathman in the Careers Department for supporting this, and to the teachers who accompanied the students on the day.



The National Archives UK – A Year in Archives 2025

We are pleased to share that the JCNA has been featured in The National Archives (TNA) UK publication, 'A Year in Archives', as part of their 'Highlights' section: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/our-archives-sector-role/celebrating-archives/a-year-in-archives/a-year-in-archives-2025/highlights>

'A Year in Archives' is the TNA's annual publication about and for the UK archives sector. It brings together stories and case studies from across the sector, showcasing and celebrating archives and their work. This is the first time the Falkland Islands has been included.

Along with our entry, it features ten themed case studies showcasing organisations that have demonstrated outstanding archival practice, and almost fifty more highlights from organisations across the sector, categorised by region.

Highlights

Greater London

Midlands and East of England

North East England and Yorkshire

North West England

Scotland, Wales and the Falklands

Southern England

The Falkland Islands entry focuses on the outreach activities and community engagement undertaken over 2025, including social media content, student placements and community presentations.

You can access the full publication here: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/our-archives-sector-role/celebrating-archives/a-year-in-archives/a-year-in-archives-2025/>

Explore Your Archives Week 2025 – November 2025

The JCNA once again took part in Explore Your Archives Week, which this year ran between Saturday 29 November to Sunday 7 December 2025. The Archives offered tours to the public and government departments, with 2 dedicated public drop-in sessions and 9 additional sessions for private and public sector, with 29 people visiting the Archives and more engaging online on social media.

Included in the physical visits were the senior management team from the FIC Ltd, offering them an opportunity to learn more about their company's history and involvement with the Falklands, and to view photographs and other records relating to the administration of the FIC Ltd.

You can view all of the social media posters here: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.fk/about-archives/advocacy-and-outreach/advocacy-material>



Visit of Elena Lewendon, CEO FMHT – January 2026

In January 2026, Elena Lewendon, the Chief Operating Officer of the Falkland Islands Maritime Heritage Trust (FMHT) visited the Islands for the first time and came to the Archives. Elena has been corresponding with the team since she first started her role, learning about the Archives, and sharing useful information from her previous role as CEO of the historic Frogmore Paper Mill, and curator at the of the London Fire Brigade Museum.

During Elena's trip, the staff were able to show her documents relating to Shackleton's time in the Islands, including copies of the telegrams sent requesting assistance for his men at Elephant Island. The team also showed her some of the earliest shipping registers and log books from the collection, with one detailing the arrival of Governor Moody in January 1842. It was a pleasure to host Elena, sharing our experiences of managing historic collections and discussing future opportunities for collaboration between our services.



Visit the Falkland Islands Maritime Heritage Trust website: <https://fmht.co.uk> Or view their social media posts on Instagram: [@falklands_maritime_heritage](#) Facebook: [@Falkland Islands Maritime Heritage Trust](#)

Upcoming Events :

The JCNA have the following events scheduled in our calendar and are excited to share with you later:

- MOD and IJS & CE School Visits
- Archive30 Campaign in April 2026



Volunteer Programme

Here at the JCNA, the team have been excited to see the soft launch of the Archives Volunteer Programme. We are now able to offer interested individuals the option to volunteer with our service, either through in-person sessions or taking part in remote online activities.

Volunteering in-person

Activities that our volunteers can currently participate with in-person include:

- Cataloguing and digitising photograph albums: measuring, scanning and labelling photographs, and adding metadata to the archives catalogue.
- Digitising documents: scanning documents to create a digital surrogate, which can be uploaded to our website or more easily shared with researchers.
- Digitising, then transcribing farm diaries and correspondence: creating digital scans of documents, developing palaeography skills to create a typed transcription.
- Cleaning Letterbooks and carrying out condition surveys: using basic conservation equipment to dust volumes, assisting to measure and give volumes a condition grade (levels ranging between Good to Poor) - this helps us to decide if records require additional conservation work to prevent further deterioration.

Volunteering remotely

Activities available to undertake remotely include:

- Transcribing schedules of despatches and Letterbooks: helping to create an index of contents and topics that can be added to the JCNA catalogue and create finding aids. This enables staff to quickly locate information to assist research queries.
- Transcribing diaries and correspondence

To facilitate remote volunteering, we have created electronic shared folders, where individuals can easily access the documents that they are working on, and share completed or ongoing work with the archives team. Staff will check in with volunteers regularly to see how they are progressing, but this method of volunteering can be flexible.

Whilst having a regular group of volunteers to assist us enhances our service delivery, at the JCNA we see the arrangement as having reciprocal benefit, enabling individuals to try something new and learn different skills, (such as palaeography). It also offers the opportunity to engage directly with unique and fascinating historical records of the Falkland Islands.

All volunteers receive an induction and relevant training to carry out their chosen activities. The team have created procedural documents to support volunteers to carry out different projects but are available (in person or virtually) to answer questions or offer further guidance if required.

In-person sessions take place at the JCNA weekly (though attendance can be flexible to accommodate and individual's availability). Currently, our volunteer projects include digitising and transcribing a collection of FIC Ltd Farm diaries from Douglas Station, and Fitzroy, and digitising and cataloguing a photographic album (from the Gerald Roberts Collection).


Shirley:

“History has always been an interest of mine and to be given the opportunity to explore aspects of the history of the Falklands, while helping support the work of the National Archives was too good to miss. I started my volunteer work in November 2025.

My current project is transcribing the Douglas Farm Diaries and I can work at home, in the Archives. The time flies by and I would recommend getting involved in the volunteer programme to support the National Archives team, you never know what you’re going to find out next!”

Alison:

“After a visit to an Archives open event that I found there was an opportunity for volunteering. I have always been interested in history and thought this would be a nice way to keep the “old grey matter” active!

So far I have been transcribing old farm diaries from Fitzroy Farm for 1917-1919. It is interesting to read about the day to day activities on the farm, like fencing, moving sheep, sending someone into Stanley with the mail etc but also to come across an intriguing comment that you want to find out more about e.g. a reference to seeing H.M.S. ‘Southampton’ off the coast and then finding from an online naval diary that it did visit the Falklands in October 1919.

Chloe and Helen have been very welcoming and helpful showing me around the Archives, setting me up to transcribe the documents either in person or online, and also making time for a short break.

It is nice to be able to help bring the original, written accounts of life in the Falklands to a wider audience.”


Eadaoin:

“Volunteering at the Archives has given me a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the community I’ve moved to with my husband and son.

Helen and Chloe have been incredibly welcoming and supportive, making me feel part of the team from the very start.

Being self-employed often means working independently, so volunteering provides a valued sense of teamwork. The Archives themselves are fascinating—a rich treasure trove that brings the remarkable history of the Falkland Islands to life, making the volunteer work both engaging and deeply rewarding.”

If you are keen to learn more about upcoming volunteer projects, or would like to register your interest in volunteering, please contact us directly via email at: national.archives@sec.gov.fk

Our volunteer policy is also available to download from the JCNA website:
<https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/about-archives/volunteer-opportunities>

Falklands On Record

The Letters of Thomas Gilruth

By Helen McShane

In 2025, the Jane Cameron National Archives were very fortunate to receive an accession of a collection of letters, written diligently by a young man named Thomas Gilruth, to his mother Mary Steele Gilruth (née Meikle). Preserved carefully by his family, these letters written between 1930 to 1938, document Gilruth's initial journey to the Falkland Islands and provide a detailed social commentary and a personal perspective on rural life in the Falkland Islands during the 1930s. The JCNA are currently in the process of cataloguing, digitising and transcribing each letter, with the aim of making them accessible later this year physically at the Archives and on our website.

Thomas Andrew Gilruth

Thomas Andrew Gilruth (1910-2001) was born into a farming family in Auchmithie, Angus, Scotland. In 1930, aged 20, he was offered employment as a farm cadet for the Falkland Islands Company Ltd at Fitzroy Farm in the Falkland Islands. This opportunity came about from an introduction to a Mr Fred Langdon, [Frederick Glover Langdon] who was the Farm Manager for Fitzroy at the time. In Gilruth's letters, Mr Langdon and his family are regularly referred to, and the collection even includes a piece of correspondence from Langdon to Mrs Gilruth, reporting back on 'Tom's' progress.

Gilruth later went on to become Assistant to the Camp Manager, George Goddard, at Darwin and was subsequently promoted to Manager following Goddard's retirement in 1945. For the purposes of this article, the focus will remain on Gilruth's earlier farming career, as documented through these letters. For details about his later career and a full biographical entry, see Gilruth's profile on The Dictionary of Falklands Biography (see link in the references at the end of this article).

"Tom is a real good- chap & is a great help to me & is getting on very well & I think he likes the life. The products from sheep farming are fetching very low prices just at present & this of course goes very much against his going ahead very quickly. Things may alter by the time he is fit for a better position he has still a lot to learn & being a persevering chap as he is, I have not the least doubt of him getting on. He has certainly done very well considering this is quite new work altogether to him, He is well liked among the men & I am pleased to say keeps his position with them."

[COL/002/01/016. Mr Langdon writing to Mrs Gilruth. 21 June 1931]



ABOVE: JCNA. COL/002/01. EXAMPLE OF PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE OF THOMAS A GILRUTH, INCLUDING PAMPHLET FROM VOYAGE ABOARD THE ORITA [SEPTEMBER- OCTOBER 1930].



ABOVE: JCNA. FC-008-0088. L-R: THOMAS A GILRUTH, ANTHONY HURD, ROBERT BLAKE, L W H YOUNG, A G BARTON. FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY LTD COLLECTION.

Travel

Gilruth departed Liverpool aboard the Orita on 20 September 1930. He wrote several letters during the voyage (very likely to help pass the time on the long journey) describing the ship, other passengers on board, and the sights he observed during stops or when passing islands and coastal ports.

These observations have been particularly helpful to the JCNA team, allowing us to match place names for locations of photographs across other JCNA collections, such as the A. G. Bennett albums. These images provide additional context to the letters, and confirm place names for locations, corresponding with stops made during the journey. From Liverpool to the Falkland Islands via Montevideo, Gilruth visited or passed the following locations on his voyage including: La Rochelle (France); A Coruña; Santander and Vigo (cities along the coast of Spain); Tenerife, St Vincent (Caribbean); and Rio de Janeiro.

"We passed Tenerife on Saturday, it looked a very beautiful place, we hope to reach St Vincent about 10 p.m. to-night. We are going at a fair speed yesterday we did 355 miles not bad for a thousand-ton liner, they say that if the slight breeze which is striking her aft, was hitting her on the bows we would go faster since the engine would be cooled[?] better. They do not burn coal on this boat, but crude oil, we will get a fresh supply of that at Rio de Janeiro. I never knew before that there was phosphorus in the sea around the equator, last night I saw it bursting away like little stars from the bows of the ship, they tell me there is much more of that nearer the equator."

[COL/002/01/004. Written aboard the Orita. 28 September 1930]



TOP LEFT: JCNA. PC-061-0091. SANTANDER, SPAIN. C.1930.
AG BENNETT ALBUM V.

Whilst documenting the voyage, several of the letters comment on current affairs, referring to events which are now of historical note. Gilruth talks of hearing about a "terrible tragedy" on the wireless, the R101 British airship crash, which occurred over France during its maiden voyage on 5 October 1930. Towards the end of his journey to the Falklands, Gilruth landed in Rio de Janeiro and makes short observations about the political unrest unfolding around them, the Brazilian Revolution of 1930, before moving on to describing the weather conditions at sea.

"I went ashore at Rio, and I must say it is a lovely place, there are beautiful gardens, with palm trees, fountains, and whatnot. All the banks were closed, and printing offices shut, owing to the revolution, and everybody seemed to be very excited, people were standing in little groups discussing the rebels who were not very far from the town. The rebels we were told had thirty, bombing aeroplanes and I forgot how many men, there were 70,000 troops scattered around the country trying to cope with them. In Rio there were policemen on every tramcar bus, and many of them went along the street on motorcycles. When we left, there were 21 Third class passengers left behind, mostly Spaniards, they had gone ashore and did not come back in time to catch the boat. The day after we left Rio, we got very rough weather, and many people were sick, Mr and Mrs Langdon were both sick, but I was all right. We reach Monte Video this afternoon, and the next stop will be Stanley. The sea is quite calm to-day, and we had a touch of frost in the early morning. In the storm the other day, the spray was coming over the top of the ship so that it was almost impossible to get outside. I am still having a good time."

[COL/002/01/006. Written aboard the Orita. 10 October 1930]

The Orita reached Stanley just short of a month later from its departure from Liverpool, on 14 October 1930. Gilruth and the Langdon's then boarded the ss Falkland to take them across to Fitzroy.

Farming

On their arrival in Fitzroy, they discovered that the Cookhouse which accommodated the farm workers had burnt down, so the men had temporarily moved into the house where Gilruth was supposed to be living. Initially, he lived with the Langdon's in their home [the Farm Manager's house] and judging by the comments in his first letter from Fitzroy, he was very well fed whilst living there!

were shot they were given to the pig. All the men here are very polite they always say "good morning" or whatever it may be, to each other. Mr. Langdon insists that they call me Mr. Gilruth and I must say they all do it. When we get up in the morning we get coffee, which is put in a thermos flask the night before and biscuits we work from [6 to 8] and stop for breakfast [from 8-40 till 10-40] then we have tea an something to eat, from [11 till 1] then we have dinner from [2 till 3-4] then we have another 'smoko' as they call it which is tea and something to eat, then from [4 till 5-30] we have supper at 7 o'clock. We do nothing but eat, I am getting heavier 13 stone 5 lbs. not bad. I got your paper and two



ABOVE: JCNA. PC-017-0068. LANGDON'S HOUSE FITZROY. "THE RAILINGS ARE NOT TO PROTECT THE GARDEN WHICH IS IN A VALLEY AWAY FROM THE HOUSE BUT TO KEEP HORSES & COWS OFF THE WINDOWS"- FREDERICK G LANGDON. J E HAMILTON COLLECTION.

"The Cookhouse was as big as Mr. Langdon's and there will be no time to build a new one until after the seasons work is done, so I will stay here till next winter any way, I have done quite a bit of riding since I came here, I was away with the Boss for three days last week, and we will be away all day tomorrow and next day, looking round. This place is about 200,000 acres so you can't see it all in one day

[...] All the men here are very polite they always say "good morning" or whatever it may be, to each other. Mr. Langdon insists that they call me Mr. Gilruth and I must say they all do it. When we get up in the morning we get coffee, which is put in a thermos flask the night before and biscuits we work from 6 to 8 [am] and stop for breakfast from 8-40 till 10-40 [am] then we have tea an something to eat, from 11 [am] till 1[pm] then we have dinner from 2-3-40 [pm] then we have another 'smoko' as they call it, which is tea and something to eat, then from 4 till 5-30, [pm] we have supper at 7 o'clock. We do nothing but eat, I am getting heavier 13 stone 6 lbs, not bad."

[COL/002/01/008b. Fitzroy Settlement.
8 November 1930]

Throughout his letters, Gilruth describes routine and seasonal activities carried out around the farm, going into detail about the gathering (rounding up the sheep to be shorn) and shearing of sheep, and taming young horses to prepare them for riding. These descriptions emphasise just how physical and labour-intensive the work was, justifying the need for regular 'smokos' as described in the first letter from Fitzroy.

"We started shearing on the last day of November and have now about 10,000 sheep shorn. We have over 100 bales of wool, from 4 to 7 cwt in weight, one day we had a bale over 8 cwt. but it was a bale of Bellies and they are always heavier. Two of us roll a fleece of wool after it has been shorn, we take off the wool which has been on the bellies, the matted wool which is round the neck, and trim all shit off the fleece. These are all pressed in bales, - Bellie, Neck, Skirts (stained fleeces) 2nd Pieces (dirty pieces of wool) and of course fleeces. When we have cleaned the fleece on the rolling table, we make a band, (by twisting the neck part) then roll the fleece up and tie it. I have been looking after the Oil Engines and Hydraulic pumps, when we have been pressing wool. The Boss was up at Darwin last week-end, he went up to see Mr Goddard about some accounts. In Darwin they have machine shears (not unlike horse clippers) they are driven by an Oil Engine. They have 36 men shearing all day, 8 men rolling wool & carrying wool from the shearer's to the wool tables, 5 men pressing & men filling pens and keeping the shed full, 6 men picking wool, (cleaning bellies, skirts, necks, etc) 2 men looking after the two oil engines, sharpening shears etc. Altogether about 70 men in the shed, quite a lot. I see in the Gov. Gazette that there is over 600,000 sheep in the Falklands and 207,000 are those belonging to the Falkland I. Co. The weather up till now has been fine and I hope it stays till after Xmas. Willie Morrison went to Stanley yesterday, he said he went in soon to get his mail sent.

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[COL/002/01/022d. 22 December 1931]

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TOP RIGHT: JCNA. COL/002/01/022d.

BOTTOM RIGHT: JCNA. FC-007-0135. SHEARING WITH MACHINE SHEARS AT GOOSE GREEN. FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY LTD COLLECTION.

In these earlier letters, Gilruth also identifies and explains Spanish terminology used to identify different types of horses and pieces of horse gear used when riding (many of the terms referenced in his letters also appear in the publication, 'Diddle Dee to Wire Gates- A Dictionary of Falklands Vocabulary').

"There is a horse here called Packador, which means stubborn, he sometimes stops and rears in the air if he is in a bad mood. Some of the horses have Spanish names but most of them are English. Nobody speaks of a Brown, Black, or Grey, horse but an Alasan, a Sino, a Moro and so on, they all call them by Spanish names when they refer to their Colour. A Mancho is a brown horse with a white splash on his side a Sino-malacara is a black horse with a white face, but there are dozens of names, some of which I am not very sure of yet."

[COL/002/01/009. 8 January 1931]

"You ask what sort of work I have been doing this winter well, the Boss and I have done a good lot of writing they take stock of everything on the Station every year and that has all to be typed out and sent to England. We also have a lot of writing in the store. All the men's store bills have to be counted up every month and all the books squared. However, we are more or less finished just now, all the book-work falls behind in the Summer because we are outside all day.

I have also been making 'gear' bridles, reins, cinches, halters, etc. Mr Langdon let me see how to make it, so most of the 'gear' is my own now- bar the Saddle, that belongs to the Station. It is all made out of raw-hide, we have a bullock hide with a sharp knife then stretch it till it is dry, this is what we make all the 'gear' out of, also lasso's etc. We shave and stretch a horse hide, then cut it into 'Tientos' (thin strips of hide) this is what we sew with. The horse gear is made entirely of raw-hide except for the saddle-pads and stirrups they are made out of leather. I must get a photo' of horse and gear and send it to you."

[COL/002/01/018. 8 August 1931]



LEFT: JCNA. PC-017-0048. CAPE DOLPHIN HOUSE TO LEFT. CLARO WITH BASTOS. HORSE. GEAR. MANARES. J E HAMILTON COLLECTION.

RIGHT: JCNA. PC-017-0074. TAMING COLTS FITZROY. THREE MEN HOLDING A COLT DOWN IN THE CORRAL; FOUR HORSES IN BACKGROUND. J E HAMILTON COLLECTION.



He also describes in detail the practices of horse taming. Whilst it must have been a fascinating event to witness, Gilruth admits that it was a rather rough exercise, and mentions on several occasions when things went badly wrong and unfortunately resulted in the death of the horse being tamed.

"Mr Langdon catches the colts in a Corral with a lasso, and after he is caught he is tied to a post in the middle of the Corral called a Palinkey (Spanish). After the horse chokes and falls down, Peck [Percy] puts a Bosal (Spanish for halter) on him. The horse is then led out of the Corral and tied to another Palinkey, where, with a long piece of hide about an inch broad called a Maneador (Spanish, this is like a long rain) [rein] the horse is thrown to the ground and his feet tied so he cannot kick or get up. Peck then puts a piece of this thin hide in his mouth and round his lower jaw tying it very tight, he fixes his rains [reins] to this and pulls the horses head back until he tries to kick and gives in. He then lets the horse get up and puts his saddle on, this is usually a Ticklish[?] job because the horse is in a bad temper by this time, he throws it off, rolls on the ground and does everything to keep the man from getting it on. After he gets his Gear on someone holds the horses head and he gets aboard and once he is on he stays on unless the horse throws himself down, this happened once today, the horse threw himself down after he had been run, with a heave the horse threw himself down sideways but the horse did not hurt the rider for Peck jumped as the horse fell and was shooting along the ground yards away. Peck is a very good horseman and he tames all the horses."

[COL/002/01/010 c-d. 24 February 1931]

What was particularly notable in Gilruth's letters was the amount of travel undertaken (all on horseback) between farming settlements and Stanley. He often mentions riding across to Bluff Cove, or breaking up longer journeys there overnight, but he also talks about crossing the "mountains" [Mt Harriet, etc] to visit settlements in the North Camp including Estancia, Long Island, and Port Louis, and riding into Stanley and back on a regular basis.

"I went to Long Island, (over the mountains) on Friday, went to Port Louis, on Sat. and went to Estancia, on Sunday and came back to Fitzroy to-day. There are three of the Shepherds houses on the north side of the mountain, and I was over there taking stock of fencing material etc. They [FIC Ltd] take stock of everything on the Station every year.

[COL/002/01/017. 6 July 1931]

cinch tighter I again got aboard - more jumping but this time I did not come off, my whip round my wrist but after I got it in my hand there was no more jumping. Percy Peck, who is the married man at Island Harbor is the man who tames the colts, he started taming to-day. Mr Langdon catches the colts in a Corral with a lasso and after he is caught he is tied to a post in the middle of the Corral called a Palinkey (Spanish). After the horse chokes and falls down, Peck puts a Bosal Bosal (Spanish for halter) on him. The horse is then led out of the Corral and tied to another Palinkey, where, with a long piece of hide about an inch broad called a Maneador (Spanish, this is like a long rain) the horse is thrown to the ground and his feet tied so he cannot kick or get up. Peck then puts a piece of this hide in his mouth and round his lower jaw tying it very tight, he fixes his rains to this and pulls the horses head back until he tries to kick and gives in. He then lets the horse get up and puts his saddle on, this is usually a Ticklish job because the horse is in a bad temper by this time, he throws it off, rolls on the ground and does everything to keep the man from getting it on. After he gets his

Gear on someone holds the horses head and he gets aboard and once he is on he stays on unless the horse throws it off him self down, this happened once today, the horse threw himself down after he had been run, with a heave the horse threw himself down sideways but the horse did not hurt the rider for Peck jumped as the horse fell and was shooting along the ground yards away. Peck is a very good horseman and he tames all the horses. I am enclosing a photo the girls were out from Stanley for a walk and we were all away one Sunday looking for goslings. I am not going to write much more just now
Hoping you are all well
Yours ever,
Tom.

Mr. and Mrs. Langdon send their kind regards.

In 1935, Gilruth journeys between Fitzroy and Darwin to assist with farming at Darwin for several weeks, a distance of approximately 37 miles [roughly an hour by vehicle today] which would have taken some considerable time by horseback. On longer journeys people in the Falklands would often travel with two horses, for one to rest whilst the other was being ridden. Travelling in all weathers whilst keeping control of several horses was not without its challenges, and Gilruth mentions one riding incident not long after his arrival.

"I was thrown off a horse the other day, that is the first time but it will not likely be the last. I was going out to Island Harbour (a place where three shepherds live, one of them is married.) one night, so that I might stay the night and be away gathering early next morning. I was taking two horses for I was not coming home for three days, and as I got on my horse the one I was leading, acted the fool, and scared the one I was on. Before I could get right on, the horse started to buck, the other one was pulling, and after about half a dozen bucks I lost my balance and landed on the ground."

[COL/002/01/010. 24 February 1931]

Social Life

Gilruth would often ask his mother about friends and family at home in Scotland, and regularly described the new friends and acquaintances he was making both in Camp and in Stanley. He discussed upcoming visitors to the settlement and provided narrative on activities taking place on the farm. Whilst most descriptions are of the more day-to-day nature, others note seasonal events or holidays celebrated in the Falklands at that time. Visiting ships are frequently mentioned, as these would provide opportunities to send and receive correspondence and other mail; a vital lifeline for a remote rural community.



LEFT: JCNA. FC-004-0029. ALICE FELTON AND MATTIE FELTON COLLECTING PENGUIN EGGS AT THE DEVIL'S NOSE, WEST POINT ISLAND. FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY LTD COLLECTON [EXAMPLE OF 'EGGING'].

"Mrs Langdon has some visitors coming out from Stanley the first week in October, Mrs Hoare the head Schoolmaster's wife, Betty Felton (the girl who came out from School with us, she is now teaching in Stanley) and Mr Hamilton and his wife (Miss Purdie). They have a week's holiday in Stanley, what is called the 'Egging holiday', so they are all coming to Fitzroy. The 'Falkland' is coming here on Wednesday, she is bringing some stores and we are going on to Pleasant Island to-morrow to kill three bullock to send into Stanley. Then about the end of the week the 'Falkland' is going up to Montevideo so she will take the mail with her. The Whaling Boats are not going down South this year, they are not getting a good price for their oil so they are not going to catch any whales for a year - that will make the price of whale oil go up, (if only farmers could do that) By the way, that is why you have not got many letters, there have been very few boats calling here."

[COL/002/01/018. 08 August 1931]

Gilruth provides an interesting insight into the lives of people whose names are already familiar, from photographs and other records contained within the JCNA collection. One such individual mentioned was James Erik Hamilton, the Government Naturalist 1929- 1949. Gilruth mentions 'Ham' and his bride-to-be Miss Purdie [Rose Hamilton] and in one letter describes a visit to Hamilton's office whilst in Stanley.

"Mr Hamilton is unable to come he is away on the West studying birds I think. I was in Mr Hamilton's office when I was in Stanley, it is a small Museum, he has stuffed birds and even a stuffed Seal, he also has an Albatross, I never thought they were so big, it was like a bag of potatoes with wings on, something the same colour as a seagull. He was boiling down seal's heads and fitting the skulls together again ready to be sent home to the British Museum"

[COL/002/01/019. 19 September 1931]



LEFT: JCNA. PC-017-0132. INSIDE OF NATURALIST'S DEPARTMENT WITH BOTTLES ON SHELVES & TABLE TO FRONT. C.1930. J E HAMILTON COLLECTION.



RIGHT: JCNA. PC-006-0250. ROSE AND ERIK HAMILTON WITH JANE CAMERON. PORT SAN CARLOS 1952. CAMERON COLLECTION.

As Gilruth lived with the "Boss" Mr Langdon and his wife [Kate Sutherland Langdon, née Wright] for a few months after his arrival, both feature often in the letters. From reading, it is clear that the Langdon's acted as a surrogate family to Gilruth, and he often passes on their compliments or best wishes to his mother. One particularly amusing story shared in Gilruth's letters is that of the 'missing' Christmas present from his mother to Mr and Mrs Langdon.

"You remember, last Xmas (1930 I mean) you sent me a parcel with some socks and things in it, and as far as I can remember, in the same parcel you sent a box of Bridge cards and markers. Well, when I got the parcel last

year, I saw this fancy box and had a look inside, and I thought that you had sent it as a present to me. I thought, at the time that it was rather funny that I should get such a present from you, however I put it into a suitcase which I keep below my bed, with some writing material etc. Now on Sat. Mrs Langdon was spring cleaning my room and when I came in at dinner time, she said that she had upset the case and hoped nothing had got broken. Well, the only thing that was breakable was an ink bottle, so I had a look in to see that it was all right, (it was) and when I was putting the things in again, I saw, written on top of the Bridge box, To Mr &

Mrs Langdon, wishing them the Season's Compliments. Well, there you are, I had kept it for a whole year thinking all along it was mine. I called to Mrs Langdon and gave her the present, (a year late) we had a good laugh about it. But they say, all's well that ends well. Mrs. Langdon was worried, she said that you would maybe think her very rude, not writing and thanking you, but I said, she could not write and thank you for a present she did not get. Mrs Langdon has written this mail, to you so it is all right."

[COL/002/01/022. 22 December 1931]



LEFT: JCNA. PC-017-0069. MRS LANGDON SITTING ON THE GROUND WITH THREE SHEEP DOGS OUTSIDE THE CONSERVATORY FITZROY. J E HAMILTON COLLECTION.

RIGHT: JCNA. PC-003-0202. FREDERICK & KATE LANGDON & TOM BEATY IN FITZROY HOUSE CONSERVATORY. C.1940S. BEATY COLLECTION.

Willie Morrison (presumably William McCall Morrison) a farmer at Bluff Cove seemed to be a particular friend of Gilruth's in the early days, and he often broke up journeys to Stanley with an overnight stay there. Other friends who are regularly mentioned in the early letters include:

- James and Leah Coutts (Langdon's son in law and daughter respectively). James was the Colonial Dentist, before moving to Singapore to take up a post there in 1931
- Ernesto Rowe (owner of the Globe Store)
- Mr and Mrs Hoare (Head Schoolmaster)
- Betty Felton (who later married Sydney Miller. Sydney was, Farm Manager at Roy Cove, and later an elected member of Legislative Council).

"I was in Stanley about three weeks ago, I went in with a Mr Creece, [possibly Martin George Creece, FIC Ltd. clerk] he is one of the staff in the Company's office and he was sent round all the Stations to look over the books. (someone is sent round every year) Fitzroy was the last place he called at and I was sent into Stanley with him as guide. I went in on a Wednesday and meant to come out again on the Friday, giving the horses and day's rest, but there was a concert and dance held on the Friday night and the Boss said I could stay in if I wanted to. I did and came out on the Sat. I had quite a good time when I was in there, Willie Morrison was in Stanley at the time. On the Thurs. I had to see to my horses, go to the office for papers with letters etc, Willie asked me to come and have lunch and tea with him, which I did. We then went down to Badminton which is in the Town Hall, then Mrs Creamer (Betty Felton's mother I think I have mentioned her before) asked me to go for Dinner in the evening - again I did. On Friday morning I played Golf with Willie Morrison, had Tea with Mr. Turner in the afternoon, and went to the spree that night. Willie was staying with a Mr Rowe [Ernesto Rowe] (a German I think) he is the manager of a big Store in Stanley and would not go to the concert, so he gave me his ticket. Rowe is between 30 & 40 I would say, unmarried, and he has a lovely house. I don't think some of the people in Stanley like Rowe very well, but he has been good enough to me - German or no German."

[COL/002/01/019. 19 September 1931]

From his letters, it seems that Gilruth was a sociable fellow, and was never short of an invite to a social event when he went into Stanley, particularly over the festive period. In one letter he recalls being invited to some many functions that he cannot remember them all!

"Well, I had a very jolly Xmas, [Christmas] Stanley is quite a gay place then. On Xmas day I went to Mrs Vincent's to lunch, to Mrs Hoare's to tea and to Malvina (Mrs. Creamers) to dinner at night. Willie Morrison was staying with Mr Rowe when he was in town, and he and Mr Rowe had a small dance after their Xmas dinner. After our Xmas dinner at Malvina, Betty Felton and I went along to the dance, there was only about twelve people there and I quite enjoyed it, Mr Rowe is a perfect host. On Boxing Day there was the Races, and the weather being fine I think everybody enjoyed themselves. The foot sports were held on the Monday, then they had the Sports Dance at night, I was never keen on dancing, but I rather liked that one. On Tuesday night there was the Sports Concert and prize giving. At the races 'Bluebell' (now Mrs Langdon's) [horse that previously belonged to her daughter Mrs Leah Beatrice Coutts] won the Milk race, and Mrs Langdon was very pleased. I cannot remember all the parties, teas, etc. that I was at, but everybody was very nice."

[COL/002/01/023. 9 February 1932]

Gilruth often refers to his continued correspondence with an Ella Bell in his letters. Ella would later follow him out the Falklands. She arrived aboard the *Lafonia* on 23 December 1937, and they were married the next day at Christ Church Cathedral, Stanley.

"On the 24th we were married. We were married in the Cathedral in Stanley at 11am and Mr and Mrs Young kindly gave a reception for us at their house at 11-45 [FIC Manager's house, now Stanley House]. This lasted until about one o'clock when Ella and I left for Fitzroy. What a day it was, it swiftly poured with rain and continued to do so until we were about halfway to Fitzroy, then it cleared up a bit. But to go back to the wedding. We had no bridesmaids but of course had to have a best man, I think I told you before Jim Clement was to be best man, Mr Langdon gave the bride away. Poor Mr Langdon, he was quite pleased with himself, and was getting quite anxious lest I be late for the wedding. It was very kind of the Young's to have the reception for us at their house, and besides, it must have seen them into quite a bit of expense. There were about fifty people there, and needless to say they drank quite a lot of champagne."

[COL/002/01/083. 6 January 1938]

Gilruth compliments his bride's efforts to adapt to Camp life, notably, learning to cook and bake on a peat fire. He writes very fondly about Ella, particularly when delivering a particular piece of good news to his mother.

"We are terribly happy together, happier than I should have thought it possible to be, and the prospect of a baby coming along makes us, if possible, even happier still. Ella is a Dear."

[COL/002/01/084. 25 February 1938]

The Gilruth's went on to have three children: Peter, Janet and John. Ella sadly died thirteen years later in the Falklands, (1951) but Gilruth remarried (Helen Chisholm) and had two more daughters, Jean and Sheila.

Work continues to transcribe these fascinating letters and later parts of his life and employment...



BOTTOM RIGHT: JCNA. FC-004-0070. WEDDING OF THOMAS GILRUTH AND ELLA BELL. OUTSIDE STANLEY HOUSE. L-R: J T CLEMENT; M G CREECE; MRS L W H YOUNG; BUD YOUNG; T A GILRUTH & BRIDE; F G LANGDON. 1937-12-24. FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY LTD COLLECTION.

Related Units in the JCNA Catalogue

The JCNA collection has a number of materials relating to a range of topics and individuals referenced in Gilruth's letters. Below are highlights, as listed below:

- 'Buildings and Land- Fitzroy, Island Harbour, Kelp Lagoon, Port Pleasant, Mare Harbour and Swan Inlet': <https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/jdownloads/Buildings%20and%20Land/East%20Falkland/Fitzroy%20Island%20Harbour%20Kelp%20Lagoon%20Port%20Pleasant%20Mare%20Harbour%20and%20Swan%20Inlet.pdf>
- Shipping News: <https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/jdownloads/Shipping%20News/Shipping%20News%20-%20May%201889%20to%20December%201946.pdf>

Falkland Islands Company Ltd Collection:

Correspondence and Farm Diaries

- FIC/D15. Despatch Book 11. Stanley Office to London Office – copies. 1930-04-29 to 1938-12-12. <https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/online-collections/falkland-islands-company-ltd-collection/correspondence-general>
- FIC/FD/FIT/1#08. Fitzroy Farm Diaries, 1932. T A Gilruth.
- FIC/FD/FIT/1#09. Fitzroy Farm Diaries, 1933. T A Gilruth.
- FIC/FB/14#05. Correspondence to Camp Manager from London Office – originals & copies (a-ae). 1939-04 to 06.
- FIC/FB/14#06. Correspondence to Camp Manager from London Office – originals & copies (a-ak). 1939-06 to 08.
- FIC/IC1 #10-G2. Contract- GILRUTH, Thomas Andrew. 1930-09-04 to 1961-10-16.

Photographic Collection

- FC-004-0070. Wedding of Thomas GILRUTH and Ella BELL. Outside Stanley House L-R: Jim T CLEMENT; ?; Martin G CREECE; Mrs L W H YOUNG; Bud YOUNG; T A GILRUTH & bride; F G LANGDON. 24 December 1937.
- FC-007-0041. Opening of Darwin Boarding School. A G BARTON, J P OLIVER, Governor ARTHUR, Dr J H ASMORE, Arthur WARD, T A GILRUTH, R TOMLINSON, D M HONEYMAN, Mrs BARTON, Mrs GILRUTH, Mrs WARD, Mrs HONEYMAN, Mrs ASMORE, Miss P GEE, Mrs Rose HAMILTON.
- FC-007-0145. Result of passage of Mr II sod-seeder with Mr GILRUTH and Mrs AINSLIE.
- FC-007-0146. Difference between furrows drawn by Mk II sod-seeder and local adaptation of the MkI. Mr GILRUTH.
- FC-004-0157-0211. Construction of Paterson's Point Bridge at Fitzroy, 1934. Falkland Islands Company Limited Collection [Referred to in letter, COL/002/01/053]
- FC-007-0152. Mr YORATH, Mr GILRUTH and Mr ROBERTSON at Fox Bay West. Settlement and Fox Bay East in background.
- FC-008-0085. Outside the Brompton Oratory - Thomas A GILRUTH wedding 1950s. Miss Vicky BONNER, Mrs E V C BONNER, Mrs G E YOUNG, G C R BONNER, W H YOUNG, Mrs K DEAN, Mrs R BLAKE, R BLAKE, K W LUXTON. c.1950s.
- FC-008-0086. John MATHEWS, Thomas A GILRUTH and three children (not in the Falkland Islands). c.1950s.
- FC-008-0087-0089. Thomas A GILRUTH, Anthony HURD, Robert BLAKE, L W H YOUNG, A G BARTON outside.

Digitised versions of the letters, and their accompanying transcriptions will soon be available to view on our website.

References

- Dictionary of the Falklands Biography Article, Gilruth, Thomas Andrew: https://falklandsbiographies.org/biographies/gilruth_thomas
- Diddle Dee to Wire Gates- A Dictionary of Falklands Vocabulary (2011) Sally Blake, Jane Cameron and Joan Spruce. Jane & Alastair Cameron Memorial Trust.
- JCNA. COL/002/01/001-089. Private Collections- Gilruth, Thomas- Personal Correspondence. 1930-09-29 to 1938-08-06.

Local News in the Falkland Islands Magazine & Church Paper

A strong wind was blowing right down the range with frequent gusts of terrific violence from the right or the left which made accurate shooting extremely difficult. The cold was very keen and although the hardy members of the Defence Force wore no overcoats His Excellency was seen to be wearing two!

Before the match tea was given to the teams by kindness of His Excellency and was much appreciated by all.

ABOVE: P/FIM/18/64. December 1927- Account of a rifle match held in November 1927.

BELOW: P/FIM/02/1. January 1896.

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 sealion 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 comotose state for many weeks before they die. The next time one wants pipe cleaners, better make sure that the seal is really dead.

Man Wants But "LITTLE" Here Below

"Ye men in camp with unclean sheep,
Who've tried most dips, both dear and cheap,
If you would truly dip, and well,
And have fine sheep and wool to sell,
Pray list to me, this is the tip,
Be sure you use just "LITTLE's Dip"

PRICE 2/6 PER GALLON AT

C. Williams' Store.

ABOVE: P/FIM/05/1. November 1906.

P/FIM/19/01. January 1928.

"WIDOW MARRIES LONELY MAN.

Life on Island with Post Twice a Year.

Married 8/10.27. Hunter.

This cryptic radiogram sent from Port Stanley, in the Falkland Islands, to Mr. L.S. Montgomery, bookseller and shipping agent, of High-street, Dumfries, is key to a delightful romance.

It announced that Mr. Robert Hunter, of Sea Lion Island, has married Mrs. Lizzie Murdoch, a widow, formerly of Dumfries, who was chosen from the host of applicants who responded to Mr. Hunter's advertisement for a wife.

Mr. Hunter wrote and asked Mr. Montgomery to find him a wife and sent £50 for her passage, as proof of good faith.

"This island is very lonely at first," added Mr. Hunter, "but she will get used to it."

A notice was put in the local Press and in Mr. Montgomery's shop window.

Mrs. Murdoch was put in touch with Mr. Hunter, letters and photographs were exchanged, and an agreement reached. The courtship was prolonged by the fact that Mr. Hunter only gets his letters about twice a year.

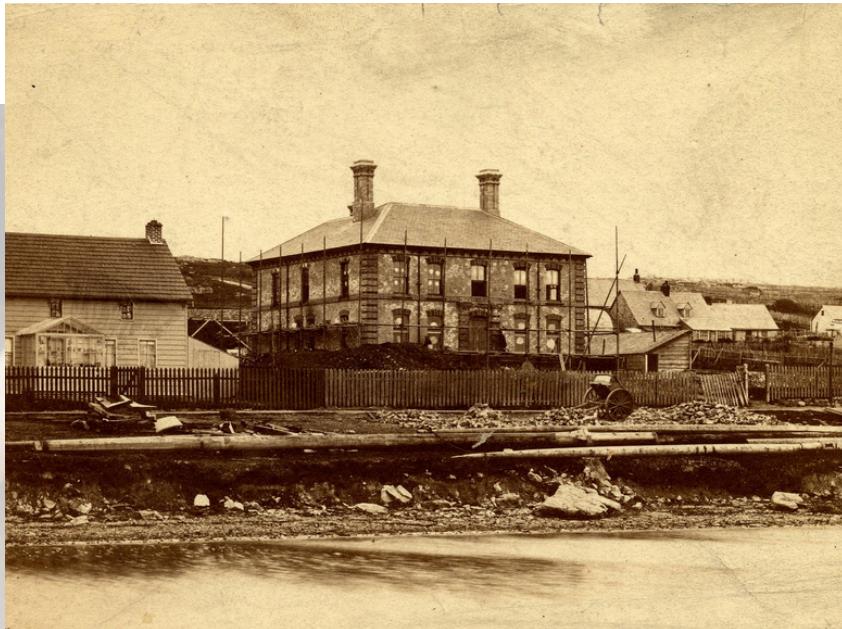
Arrangements were completed in July, and Mrs. Murdoch sailed for the Falkland Islands, about 300 miles from the southern-most part of South America.

[From the Daily Chronicle 12/10/27.]

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter were married in the Registrar's Office, Stanley on 8th October 1927."

Highlights from our Photographic Collections

You can access these from: <https://nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/photographic-collections>



ABOVE: JCNA. FC001-0050. COLONIAL MANAGERS HOUSE (STANLEY HOUSE) STANLEY, FIRST WEEK OCTOBER 1878. FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY LTD COLLECTION.

TOP RIGHT: JCNA. FC-006-0170. LAUNCHING OF RMS DARWIN AT GOOLE 18 FEBRUARY 1957. LOOKING AT BOW OF SHIP ON CRADLE. FALKLAND ISLANDS COMPANY LTD COLLECTION.



ABOVE: JCNA. PC-003-0136. FIRST TOWN HALL FIRE; IN DAYLIGHT FROM SOUTH WEST, WITH HALF BURNT CHAIR AND ROAD BROKEN SIGN IN FOREGROUND. C.1944.

LEFT: JCNA. PC-018-0243. CAPE PEMBROKE LIGHTHOUSE. SCAFFOLDING AROUND CAPE PEMBROKE LIGHTHOUSE. C.1992.

Highlights from our Photographic Collections (contd.)

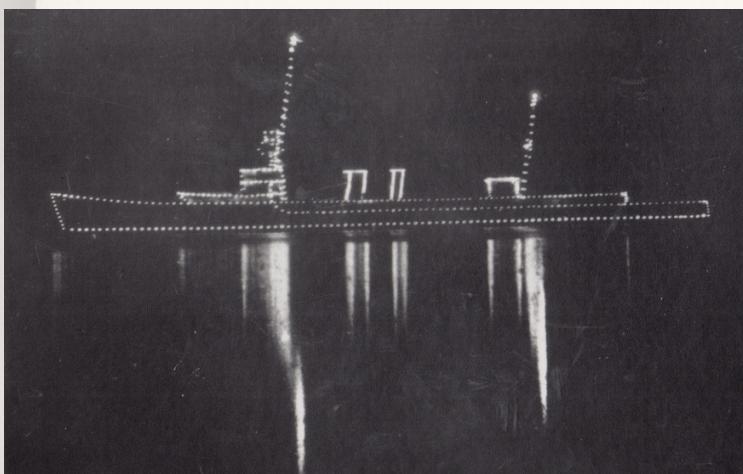


ABOVE: JCNA. PC-026-0009. ROSS ROAD FLOODED. KEM HOSPITAL AND ADMIRALTY COTTAGE IN BACKGROUND. C.1960S. TONY CAREY DRIVING CAR. LAND ROVER BEHIND. TONY CAREY COLLECTION.

BELOW: JCNA. PC-015-0103. H.M.S. 'DURBAN' LIT UP AT NIGHT IN STANLEY HARBOUR. FEBRUARY 1933. STEPHEN PALMER.



TOP RIGHT: JCNA. PC-013-0183. PECK CHILDREN STANDING. BACK GEORGE, HYACINTH, WILLIAM. MIDDLE MARY ANN, ISABELLA. FRONT JAMES, LILIAN. C.1901. ARINA BERNTSEN.



BOTTOM RIGHT: JCNA. 1.F. STANELY. KING EDWARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, HOSPITAL GARDENS AND ADMIRALTY COTTAGE FROM DE HAVILLAND BEAVER AIRCRAFT. C.1968-1969. GILLSÄTER COLLECTION.



BOTTOM LEFT: JCNA. PC-022-0235. MAN ON HORSE BACK LASOING A STEER. CATTLE. FALKLAND ISLANDS ASSOCIATION.

Falklands On Record

H.M. Navy Ships

By Chloe Anderson-Wheatley

From the early days of British administration to the present date, the Falkland Islands have had a long and close association with the British Navy, with H.M. naval ships making regular visits to the Islands. The records in the Archives contain government reports and correspondence relating to these visits, including: the arrangements of upcoming visits; progress and operational reports; repairs or stores required by the vessels; and details on the social events and community activities held in Stanley during these visits.

The latest set of records have been recently digitised and are now on the JCNA website, so you can access all this information for the period 1916-1971 at:

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/defence-and-war/naval-and-admiralty>

This article focuses on snippets of information recorded in the latest tranche of documents uploaded to the JCNA website, covering the period 1952-1971 about visiting naval ships and of naval staff.

The value of the visits

A questionnaire circulated by the Admiralty in June 1965 asked for feedback on the value of visits of H.M. Ships to countries around the world. The Ministry of Defence were most anxious to assess importance of special squadron visits, and asked questions regarding the impact of visits, the effect on the community if the number of visits were to be increased or decreased, and activities undertaken during the visit. The Falkland Islands, in their response, made it clear that the continuation of visits was important in demonstrating 'Great Britain's readiness to support the integrity of the Colony'. These visits served to foster the tradition of good relations with the people of the Islands. The annual visits were welcomed, as it was acknowledged that the Islands was used as a point for refuelling, provisioning, and recreation and many ships, such as the *Protector* established friendly liaison with families in the Islands.

In terms of security, these visits were also important in reinforcing British control over the Islands. A message from the Admiralty in 1952 stated that they could not exclude the possibility that the Argentines might attempt some 'minor action'.

The visits were popular and even symbolic when the visits coincided with special occasions like the anniversary of Battle Day. It was frequent for servicemen to take part in these memorial events.

The biggest anniversary had been in 1933, marking 100 years since the reoccupation of the Islands by the British.

During this event, the crew of H.M.S. *Durban* took an active part in the commemorations, being part of the military line-up reviewed by the Governor on the Government Paddock. The ship's crew attended events and services at the Cathedral, and took part in the entertainment - lighting up the lines of the vessel, hosting a dance in the Town Hall, and partaking in a football match against RRS *Discovery* staff.

To mark the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, H.M.S. *Bigbury Bay* took part in the Coronation Celebrations, 'dressing' the ship and illuminating it at night. They provided a gun salute at their arrival in Darwin and sailed Governor and Lady Clifford back to Stanley after the event.

The visits were also very much valued as a community affair, giving even more rise to their popularity. In 1953, H.M.S. *Superb* hosted ship's cocktail party, a children's party and an open day for visitors. They conducted a small Naval Tattoo in public, with their Royal Marine Band, and had various receptions held for their arrival. As their name suggests, the visit was 'superb', and the Vice Admiral Sir William Andrews thanked the community:

"Our impression on leaving will be of a place in which all doors have been open to us, and of people who have been friendly and helpful to the utmost. To have a cruiser in Port Stanley for so long has I know imposed a considerable strain on the town's resources, but none the less any assistance we have needed has been readily and willingly given."

For H.M.S. Warrior in 1957, three days of events were organised for 27 to 30 August 1957. The Warrior had sailed from UK in early February 1957 for the Christmas Island, Pacific, and was returning back after operations. The vessel was being used by the Royal Navy as part of Operation 'Grapple', with its mission outlined below:

She sailed from the United Kingdom on 2nd February, 1957 for Christmas Island, Pacific, for participation in the British Megaton Trials, known as Operation "GRAPPLE".

Shortly after her arrival at Christmas Island Captain Hicks was appointed Commodore, GRAPPLE Squadron and his Broad Pendant has flown in her throughout the period of the Operation until August, when she becomes the temporary flagship of the Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic and South America.

The ships role has been:-

- (a) Maintenance and Logistic Support ship of the GRAPPLE Squadron.
- (b) Control ship in the forward area for the Valiants carrying the nuclear weapons.

H.M.S. WARRIOR is returning to the United Kingdom via Cape Horn, calling at a number of South American ports. During this cruise she will be wearing the flag of Vice-Admiral Sir W. Geoffrey ROBSON, K.B.E., D.S.O.⁺, D.S.C.

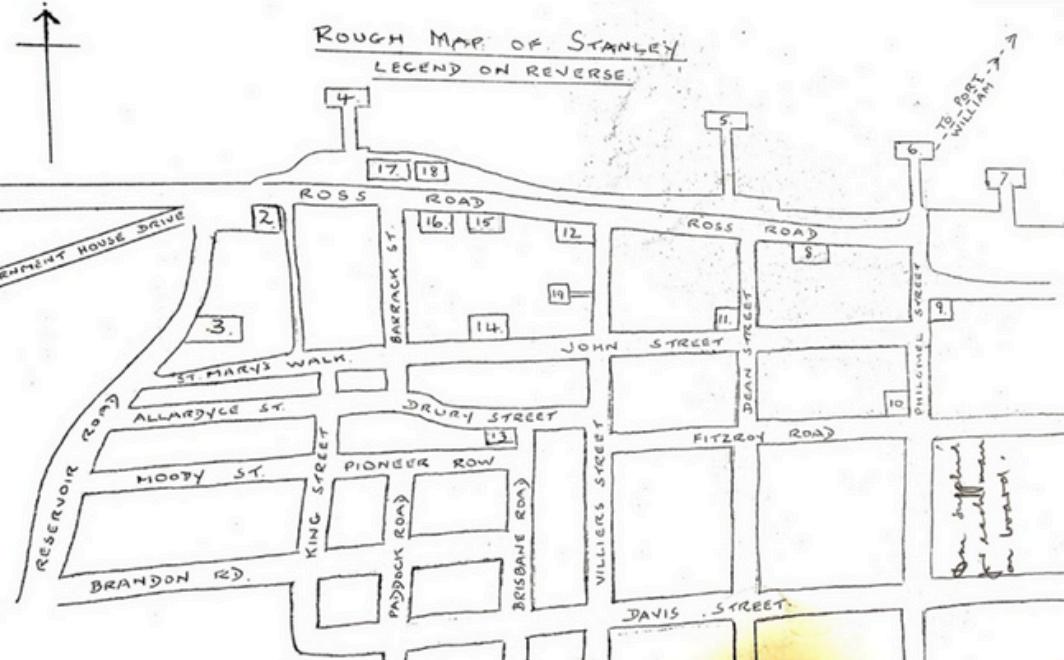
The ship will be carrying a large number of stores and vehicles used during the Operation.

ABOVE: JCNA. DEF/NVI/3/5. EXTRACT FROM BRIEFING NOTE ABOUT H.M.S. WARRIOR.

The social programme was extensive for the visiting servicemen, and the local community. Maps of Stanley were printed and distributed to servicemen from the Warrior so they could navigate and attend the 20+ events organised.

LEGEND.

1. Government House.
2. Secretariat.
3. Hospital.
4. Government Jetty.
5. East Jetty.
6. Public Jetty.
7. West Jetty.
8. Cathedral.
9. Globe Hotel.
10. Victory Bar.
11. Stanley Arms.
12. Ship Hotel
13. Rose Hotel.
14. Canteen & Drill Hall.
15. Colony Club.
16. Police Station.
17. Town Hall & Post Office.
18. Gymnasium.
19. Squash Court.
20. Battle Memorial.



Events on such a scale rested on months of organisation and correspondence between the Government and the incoming vessels. Planning for the three-day programme for the *Warrior* commenced in June 1957, and the details and notes were still being added to in August. The full program included:

- Drill Hall open for practice shooting
- Cocktail Party at Colony Club for 30 officers
- Colony Ball at the Town Hall for Ship's Company
- Children's Party on H.M.S. *Warrior* – approx. 160 children attended
- Dance at Government House
- Dance hosted by Defence Force at the Town Hall, and an additional one at the end of the visit
- Fishing expedition – crew advised to bring duffle coats and wellingtons
- Hare shoot- guns would be provided if needed
- Football matches
- Pulling race in Stanley Harbour
- Squash, badminton, darts and table tennis matches
- *Warrior* open to visitors/public- people were transported via the *Philomel* from the Government Jetty

Letters of thanks were sent to those individuals who provided support and helped organise events, such as the dance in the Town Hall and facilitating the use of the Gymnasium for badminton matches. A special note of thanks was sent to the Chief Constable of Stanley's Police Station, by the Commodore himself, stating:

*"I wish to express my deep appreciation for all that you and the Police Force have done to make the *Warrior*'s visit so smooth-running and enjoyable. I have been most impressed by the efficiency, consideration and courtesy of the Police even when faced with, I regret to say, a number of 'delicate situations' involving my men."*

Did you know these archival records fill important gaps of information about the community in the 1950s? There is a significant gap in the local periodicals, with no formal publications between the last issue of the *Falkland Islands Weekly News* in 1949 and the publication of *Falkland Islands Monthly Review* in 1958.

However, even after months of planning, it was not all plain sailing for events organised for the H.M. Navy ships or their staff and there were times when the long-awaited social activities in Stanley could not happen. In November 1963, the cocktail party that Governor Arrowsmith had organised for the arrival of H.M.S. *Protector* was cancelled following the assassination of President Kennedy in America. The Government went into a week-of-mourning from 23 November 1963. The servicemen did get to take part in a few events, as staff continued to make plans to use the football field for competitive matches and held a children's party aboard the *Protector* for ages 6-12 (children under 5 years old were considered to 'create special problems' for logistics).

What shall we do with the drunken sailor?

There were times when acting servicemen became too carried away with the celebrations and were involved in 'delicate situations'. In June 1958, a sailor was charged with being drunk and causing a disturbance. The sailor in question had fought with a fellow sailor from H.M.S. *Burghead Bay* during a football match. The drunken sailor, E Archer, was in the process of being transported by the Police Land Rover to the Public Jetty, when the actual incident occurred. P.C. John Dolan Williams, who was off duty, but assisting P.C. Arthur Middleton in transporting Archer, stated that:

"We managed to get the sailor into the front seat of the rover and P.C. Middleton sat with us up front. Upon reaching the front gate of the Station yard I stopped at the Junction with Ross Road to allow a Bedford car being driven by Mr Aubrey Summers to pass in front of me travelling from East to West. When Bedford was abreast of the Rover the drunken sailor lurched over to the offside door of the Rover in what I thought was an effort to get out. In doing so he knocked my left foot off the clutch pedal and the Rover sprang forward striking the Bedford on the nearside front door, causing severe damage to the panelling."



ABOVE: JCNA. DEF/NVI/3/5. THE TWO VEHICLES AFTER THE COLLISION.
POLICE ROVER (LEFT) AND MR AUBREY SUMMERS' BEDFORD CAR (RIGHT).

The repair work required to the Mr Summers' vehicle was estimated to cost £250. The Government organised for the vehicle to be shipped by the FIC Ltd, via R.M.S. *Darwin*, from the Falkland Islands to Montevideo for the repair work to be undertaken. The damage included a buckled door, extensive buckling to the bodywork of the car, and dis-alignment of the wheels. The bodywork itself required specialist tools and expertise, not found in the Islands. A claim for damages was sent to the Admiralty however a message from the Secretary of State for the Colonies concluded that the: '*Admiralty repudiate claim for damage on ground that the Police are really responsible as they failed to exercise sufficient control over the rating while he was in their custody*'.

Unfortunately, there is no answer to the question of what happened to the drunken sailor- there being no further mention of what consequences the sailor Archer faced once back on his vessel, or what happened to him after the crash.

For some more extreme cases of disturbance, sailors were requested by their Captains to be taken from their ship and placed into Stanley Prison for sentences of up to 60 days imprisonment and hard labour. In 1920/1921 there were two cases within weeks of each other whereupon six sailors, three from H.M.S. *Dartmouth* and three from H.M.S. *Southampton* were 'received' by Stanley Prison.

Digitising the full series of Naval staff (DEF/NST) and Visiting Naval Ships (DEF/NVI) files have all been completed.

The Archive team have also digitised and made available the set of photographs of H.M.S. *Endurance*, included in two files, as the vessel conducted activities in 1970s around the Falkland Islands and Antarctica.

References:

- DEF/NST/1/3. Forwards notification of landing of three members of crew to undergo sentence of imprisonment.
- DEF/NST/1/23. Claim on Admiralty for damage to motor vehicle.
- DEF/NVI/1/9. Programme of the cruise of the H.M.S. 'Durban' and H.M.S. 'Caradoc'.
- DEF/NVI/1/17. Proposed visit of H.M.S. 'Durban'.
- DEF/NVI/3/1. Visit of H.M. ships March 1952 to October 1952
- DEF/NVI/3/2. Visit of H.M. ships October 1952 to August 1953.
- DEF/NVI/3/5. Visit of H.M.S. 'Warrior'.

Contact & Research Information

The staff at the Jane Cameron National Archives are happy to answer any questions that you might have regarding:

- General queries
- Accessing and booking an appointment in the Reading Room to conduct research
- Queries about our catalogue and physical collection
- Queries about our website or online collection
- Advice on information management and storage of records
- Discussion with potential donors about transferring records to the Jane Cameron National Archives

The JCNA have a dedicated Reading Room to access archival records upon appointment. There are power points available for laptops and a computer station that can be used to access our website, the online collections and internet.

The opening times are as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: 9am – 4pm (12 noon to 1pm on request)

Wednesday: Closed

Saturday: 1pm – 4pm (on request)

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