

Shipping—The Myth of the Inverness-shire

The story of the *Mary Celeste* has enthralled people since she was discovered 4 December 1872 sailing off the Azore Islands with no one on board and no obvious signs of why she would have been abandoned. Although she is possibly the most well-known the *Mary Celeste* was not the first vessel to be found abandoned for no apparent reason. Other examples include the Dutch schooner *Hermania* found abandoned in April 1849 dismasted but otherwise sound and the *Marathon* found abandoned in February 1855. The Falkland Islands is surrounded by the remains of many shipwrecks and it is speculated that their numbers may be hundreds more than those known. But did the Falkland Islands have their own version of the *Mary Celeste*? The following was published on page 6 of the Otago Daily Times of 6 September 1910:

A Mystery of the Sea

The British barque *Inverness-shire*, with a good cargo, sailed away from Hamburg on March 2, bound for Santa Rosali, Cal. With every bit of canvas standing she crept down around the Spanish coast to Africa, where, taking advantage of the north-east trades, she crossed the Atlantic, passing the Cape Verde Islands and Cape St Roque, on the east coast of South America.

Captain Kinnon, a careful navigator, was in command. He knew his course and his ship, and his crew had sailed with him and knew him as he knew them, as able and willing. The *Inverness-shire* was spoken passing the Cape Verde Isles, and again of Cape St Roque. Captain Kinnon reported "All well." This was in May, and it was the last seen of Captain or his crew. His ship, in perfect condition, was found at anchor west of the Falkland Islands, in south latitude 52, longitude 50 west, on June 15, by Captain Mancho, of the Italian steamer *Vernia*, from Valparaiso de Chile to Naples, but, she proved dumb.

Captain Mancho was impressed with the quiet on board, and getting no reply to his signals, sent the first officer to see what was the matter. When the gig drew up alongside the big windjammer no one was waiting at the gangway, unless the ship's family of cats be excepted. They seemed well fed and happy, and to yearn for companionship rather than food. A thorough search was made of the ship and from truck to keelson she was in perfect order. On the mess-room table lay a pack of cards, where someone had been playing Klondyke. His game had been interrupted ere it was half finished.

The fire in the galley stove had burned itself out, and the stove was cold, yet on it was a pot of "slush", the sailors' beef stew. And it had not yet spoiled.

Every sail was furled. The deck was shipshape and tidy. In the captain's cabin, on a table, lay a copy of Coleridge's "The Ancient Mariner", opened face down, as if it has been placed there when the reader was called away for a moment. In the fo'c'sle were an accordion and a banjo, on a table, where some musically inclined seamen had left them, and on the same table were the glasses, some still half filled with grog. While there were these evidences of a hurried departure, there was not a thing to show the reason for it, or the way in which the thirty-odd men suddenly had departed. From the davits swung the long boats and the captain's gig, each stocked with its customary supply of water and hard biscuit. With both port and starboard anchors holding fast in 10 fathoms, 12 miles to the west of the southern point of West Falkland Island the barque rode peacefully in the calm sea, technically a derelict, yet in perfect condition.

Proceeding to Port Stanley, in East Falkland Island, tugs were despatched to the *Inverness-shire* by Captain Mancho. Thither she was taken, and there she now lies safe and sound in hull and cargo, awaiting the pleasure of her owners, T Law and Co, of Glasgow, who will have to meet a large salvage bill.

But what became of her crew and of her skipper, Captain Kinnon, none can explain. Why he deserted her, there within sight of land, close to Cape Horn, mid-winter, though it was, is also a mystery. It could not have been an epidemic of sickness. At least one dead man would have remained to tell the story, unless he had dived overboard in desperation.

The epidemic theory is quite upset by the presence of the boats, in which the shore might easily have been gained. But the attempt was not made. It may be that the crew became frightened because the rats left the ship. None were found on board, though the well-fed cats would explain their absence.

The *Inverness-shire* is a four-masted steel barque, 282ft long, 42 2-3ft beam, and 27½ft depth of hold. She registers 2147 net tons and 2307 gross. She was built at Glasgow in 1894 by R Duncan and Co Ltd.

The only parallel recalled is that of an Italian barque, which was found off the east coast of Africa several years ago. She was sailing before the wind with all sails set, yet without a soul on board. On the galley stove in this case the water pot was boiling over a hot fire, and a sewing machine, with the work stopped in the middle of a seam, was in the cabin which had been occupied by the captain's wife. What had become of her crew or what had happened to cause their sudden departure only a few moments before never has been learned, for neither captain nor crew was ever heard from again.

<http://www.odt.co.nz/opinion/100-years-ago/124680/abandoned-ship-puzzles-finders>

And meanwhile in the Falklands the myth of the ghost ship is debunked...

Despatch 380 dated 13 June 1910 from W A Harding, FIC Ltd to F E Cobb reported:

On the morning of the 13th Mr Allan telephoned that a message had arrived from North Arm with news that a ship (either three or four masts) has been seen on the previous day drifting in from the South with scarcely any sails, and evidently unmanageable. She eventually fetched up either on Middle Shoal or on the reef outside Bull Point, and late on in the day a second messenger brought news that four boats had been seen to leave the ship and make for Fanny Island. I therefore hurried the Deanmount away instead of waiting for the morning of the 14th as intended, and despatched the Samson at 10.30 the same night in order to be there at daylight on the 14th, fearing that if the Oropesa should come South about she might get hold of her first, as she could hardly fail to see the ship. Yesterday at 3.30 I received the following telephone message "Abandoned Invernessshire North of Sea Lion Islands. All crew landed on Fanny Island. Send steam launch. Cable Messrs Thos Law, Glasgow, 30 crew all saved. Joseph Flett, Master." This gives no details as to the reason for abandoning, and I can only cable the bare information. The wind yesterday was strong NE veering to E in the afternoon and evening—if the Invernessshire is on the reef outside Bull Point, there will be very little left of her.

The Falkland Islands Magazine of July 1910 reported:

Ship Abandoned

News reached Stanley on June 13th that a fourmasted Sailing Ship was seen near Bull Point and in the direction of Fanny Islands. Later that ship was apparently being abandoned by her crew. The tug "Samson" left in search under command of Captain Thomas, who was accompanied by the Harbour Master (Captain Birch). The ship proved to be the "Invernessshire", and she was successfully brought into Stanley Harbour. Later in the week, the "Samson" fetched in the Crew. It appears that after some extremely stormy weather off the Horn, the Captain deemed it advisable to turn back, and after some time the ship drifted into the waters where she was abandoned. The Officers and Crew numbering 30 hands were provided with accommodation at the Quarantine Station. A Court of Inquiry is held as to the abandonment of this ship.

Since the above was written I have seen Captain Poole of the Oropesa; the mail steamer passed the ship about noon yesterday, but saw no sign of life on board, nor of the Samson, but the Gwendolin was within a few miles of her and making towards her. Captain Poole gives the position as due East of Porpoise Point, and assures me that she was riding at anchor just where 35 fathoms "r" is marked on the chart. I imagine that Captain Thomas must have gone up to get some of the crew, who we heard were all at Fanny Cove House. The whole business is rather mysterious—Captain Lubcke who was on the Oropesa is quite certain that she was a anchor, and not on the ground at all."

The Shipping Register recorded the arrival in Stanley of the 2147 ton British vessel Inverness-shire 17 June 1910. The captain was recorded as Captain Flett with a crew of 30 bound for Santa Rosalia, Mexico from Hamburg and "Reported abandoned 14 Jun 1910 Nth of Sea Lion Islands. Towed into Stanley by tug "Samson" 16 Jun 1910". Interestingly there is no mention of either a Captain Mancho or the Italian steamer *Vernia* in the Shipping Register. Nor is there is mention of the Captain Kinnon of the Otago Daily Times article.

On the 17 June 1910 W A Harding wrote letters to the Receiver of Wrecks in capacity of both Lloyd's Agent and Manager of the Falkland Islands Company Ltd informing him. He applied for the arrest of the ship and appointed F Rowlands to take charge on behalf of salvors, having him sworn in as a special constable and sent him off on board the same afternoon.

The captain and crew of the *Inverness-shire* arrived in Stanley 21 June 1910 on board the *Samson* and were boarded at the Naval Depot. On 22 June 1910 an enquiry was begun. It was completed 25 June 1910 and the ship was declared to have been prematurely abandoned.

Captain J Flett departed for Punta Arenas, Chile, 29 June 1910, returning 12 July 1910. He finally departed for Liverpool 9 August 1910.

The *Inverness-shire* cleared 22 September 1910 bound for Santa Rosalia.

When Bill the Gunner Married

Sometimes when I am reading letter books of the local periodicals I will come across a report or an article which intrigues me. This then leads to me spending a happy hour or two investigating the why and wherefore. The following from the Falkland Islands Weekly News of 17 October 1940 is one such example:

When Bill The Gunner Married.

The sun was shining brightly
On that very fateful day
When Bill the Naval Gunner
Signed his life away.

His shipmates thronged the Churchyard
And inside hundreds more
Sat watching, grimly patient,
With their eyes fixed on the door.

The organ played its solemn note
Then slowly down the aisle
Walked the Naval Gunner
With a sad and wistful smile.

Not a sound was heard as he came in view
And not a word was said
The married men in the crowd all knew
Bill's life hung by a thread.

The ladies of the choir took their seats,
To the left and to the right
To watch that poor old bachelor
Make his last and gallant fight.

At last in came the Reverend
The stage is now all set
And the eyes of all the married men
Were looking slightly wet.

The bride look very charming
As she stood close to his shoulder
But sad to say, on this great day,
Bill looked twenty two years older.

The fateful words were then pronounced
Bill gave a startled yelp,
The bride then smilingly said "I will",
And Bill was beyond all help.

The congregation rose and left
With a very happy sigh
Like a crowd at an execution
Who watched a great man die.

But now the worst is over
Bill once more comes to life
And leaves the Church quite happy
With his charming little wife

For Bill is one of many
Who found it best to wed
We hope the happy couple
Have many happy years ahead.

B. G.
H. M. S. "Baltavia".



Catherine age 18

A check of the records identified "Bill the Gunner" as William Henry WARDLE, a gunlayer on HMS *Baltavia*. He was born 11 November 1889 in England so would have been just shy of his 51st birthday at the time of his marriage. His blushing bride was 35 year old Catherine Mary MARTIN. Catherine was born 22 August 1905 in Stanley to Alexander Martin, butcher, and Ann Elizabeth Martin, née Davis. William and Catherine were married by Special Licence 10 October 1940 by Walter Forrest McWhan, Nonconformist Minister at the Nonconformist Church (Tabernacle), Stanley. The witnesses were W H Brockman and George A Martin. Due to World War II and censorship of records there are no definite dates for when HMS *Baltavia* either arrived or left Stanley so I am unable to find out how long the courtship was or how long they had together after their marriage. However HMS *Baltavia* was mentioned as being in Stanley in March 1941 and in October 1941 she is again mentioned as having arrived in Stanley 9 October 1941; the day before the marriage. Catherine, age 41, travelled to the UK in 1947 to rejoin her husband. Catherine, age 66 and the widow of William Henry Wardle, a postman, died 19 December 1971 in Stanley and was buried 22 December 1971 in Grave U2180

Donation of Digitisation Equipment to the Archives

On many occasions during my time in the Archives I have been asked for photographs of various objects such as a gravestone or an old house in Stanley which has never been a problem. I have struggled however when asked to produce digital images of records which are unable to be scanned such as outsized manuscripts and large plans for a number of reasons. The main reason was that my little Kodak doesn't have the capability to photograph at a high enough resolution for old faded documents. As for large maps and plans, with a limited zoom capability it was a challenge at times getting far enough away and high enough up to get the whole item in shot.

In 2014 I was approached by the Friends of the Museum and Archives (FIMA) offering to donate to the Archives and asking me if there was anything I would really like that was outside my usual requirements from the Falkland Islands Government. After some thought I decided that some specialist digitisation equipment would be of great value. After some discussion of ideas put forward I decided that a good quality camera would be the best option as it would provide far more flexibility than an overhead scanner. FIMA were happy with this and went ahead with sourcing and ordering suitable equipment and on 23 December 2015 I collected the equipment in Stanley.

FIMA were really generous and as well as the requested camera and stand the Archives received accessories including a MacBook Pro and a bag to store everything in. This equipment will be a valuable aid to the Archives as we have a small number of fire and water damaged manuscript books that are currently either restricted or closed to researchers and now I will be able to photograph them and make them available in digital form. This is also true of some heavy manuscript books which are too large and heavy for the scanner bed. All-in-all this equipment opens the door to digitising a whole range of outsized items in the future.

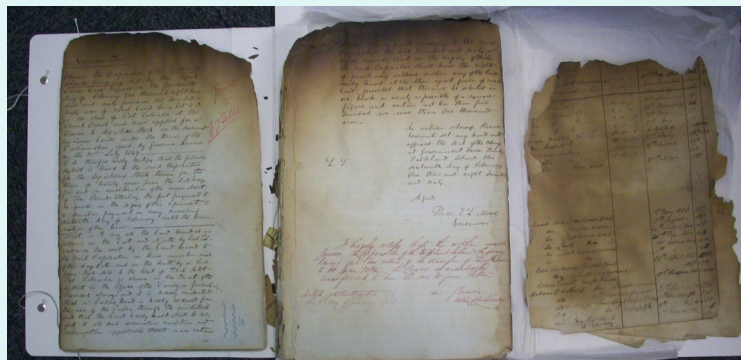
I would like to take this opportunity to again thank the Friends of the Museum and Archives for their generous donation and support of the Archives, especially Donald Lamont, Bill Featherstone and Stephen Palmer for taking the time to listen to exactly what I needed (and giving me so much more) and to Saul Pitaluga for arranging the shipping and his careful packing which meant that everything arrived in perfect condition.



Camera and bag



MacBook Pro



Fire damaged book



Camera stand

Stanley Hotels

Despite the smallness of the population there have always been quite a few public houses in Stanley. In 1912 the question of hygiene was raised and addressed by the Board of Health. The following is a copy of a letter dated 17 July 1912 sent to Mrs M A Fleuret of the Stanley Arms and Mr G B Smith of the Ship Hotel; both tenants of the Falkland Islands Company Limited: [FIC/EG/7#7]

Sir,

I am directed by the Board of Health to inform you that at a meeting of the Board held on the 20th June, the Sanitary Arrangements of the various Hotels of Stanley were under consideration.

In the opinion of the Board there is not sufficient sanitary accommodation for the persons frequenting these Hotels and it was decided that it would be the duty of the Board to object to the renewal, on the 1st January, 1913, of the Licences to those Public Houses on which the Sanitary Arrangements shall not have been improved to the satisfaction of the Board by the 30th November, 1912.

By the latter date the Board will require your Hotel to be provided with the following accommodation accessible from the Public Bar, not less than six feet from a Public Road, or dwelling house and properly screened from the sight of persons passing by=

(a) Two earth closets constructed in accordance with the Building Bye-laws Nos. II to I6 inclusive, approved by the Governor in Council on 11th May, 1908 and published in the Gazette of 1st June, 1908.

(b) One Urinal capable of accommodating at least three persons at the same time so constructed of cement,

metal or some other damp proof material as to be impervious to moisture and provided with a cement drain with a fall of not less than half an inch to the foot communicating directly with Public Drain or other drain emptying into the Harbour. The Urinal must be automatically flushed by rain.

The Stanley Arms (Crown Grant 5) was situated on the corner of John Street and Dean Street. The grant was originally issued to John Markham Dean in December 1845 and consisted of half an acre running from John Street to Ross Road. In 1858 and 1859 the publican of the Stanley Arms was Thomas Dowers.

In 1888 John Markham Dean (junior) sold the Crown Grant 5 consisting of the Stanley Arms and the West Store to the Falkland Islands Company Limited along with his other holdings in Stanley.

The Stanley Arms was pulled down in 1958.

With the expansion of the West Store in the last decade more car parking was required and the area was tarmacked over.



Stanley Arms [FIC Collection]

Mary Ann WATSON married **Alphonse Edward Falkland FLEURET** 28 May 1903. Alphonse, a publican, died 15 May 1909 and Mary Ann continued on the business. Mary Ann, a widow, was married to Sydney Shannon, manager, 20 October 1914 in the Stanley Arms Hotel. Mary Ann, age 63, drowned 31 December 1936 and was buried in Stanley Cemetery in Grave K1104. Mary and Alphonse's only child, Edna, emigrated to the UK in 1948.

The Ship Hotel has had a number of name changes since the block of semi-detached buildings it was part of was built. The row was built by Jacob Napoleon Goss to house his public house the Eagle Hotel in the east end, and a sail loft and retail business in the west end. He started building the Eagle Hotel in 1854 and it has been a prominent feature of the Stanley waterfront ever since.

George Markham Dean purchased the Eagle Hotel at auction on 1st July 1874 and during his ownership the name of the hotel was changed to the Ship Tavern.

When the Falkland Islands Company Ltd purchased the buildings 17 May 1889 they were referred to as Marmont Row and part was used as a drapery and other stores and the remainder as the Ship Tavern.

In 1969 the buildings were sold to Des King and he renamed it The Upland Goose Hotel.

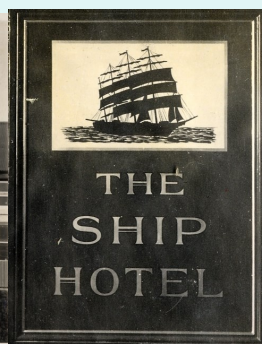
Ownership eventually passed back to the Falkland Islands Company Ltd and in the last five years the buildings have been separated into private flats and the block has reverted back to being called Marmont Row.



Marmont Row soon after the left corner house was converted to the Ship Hotel [FIC Collection]



Ship Hotel with a sign and a porch added [FIC Collection]



[FIC Collection]

George Bennet SMITH was born 19 February 1869 at Port Louis, a son of George Patterson Smith, who had come out as a child with his family in 1852 and later farmed Johnsons Harbour with his wife Mary Ann formally Hogan. George junior was a shepherd when he married **Isabella McGILL** in 1903 but by the birth of his first child in 1905 his occupation was listed as publican. George died 26 August 1927 and was buried in Stanley Cemetery in Grave N965. George's son, Douglas, took over the licence of the Ship Hotel. Descendants of George and Isabella are still living in the Falkland Islands today.

Travelling in the Falklands

Anyone who has travelled in the Falkland Islands recently, whether by road, ferry or Islander plane, can attest to the fact that the singular geography and weather can make even a short journey quite a trial at times. Spare a thought for earlier inhabitants who didn't have the comfort of modern vehicles and had to rely heavily on transport by sea to reach the majority of Camp.

The following is an excerpt from a despatch from the Colonial Manager of the Falkland Islands Company Ltd in Stanley written 6 May 1918 to the secretary of FIC head office in London:

"My visit to Darwin was far from a pleasant experience. I had the mortification of seeing Johnsen put the "Falkland" on the beach on three occasions in Choiseul Sound, and some days later in seeing her badly aground close to Lively Island Settlement. As soon as news reached me of this last mishap I got in touch on the telephone with Captain Larsen of the "Orn II" who very kindly put his most powerful whale catcher at my disposal. Captains Larsen and Thomas came out to Goose Green on the "Gleb II" towing the "Gwendolin" all the way, picked me up there and proceeded to Lively. Unfortunately, although it was high tide when we were there, the tide was so bad that to have attempted to pull her off then would only have ripped her bottom open. She went on the reef at high tide, but fortunately had a fair cargo on board and it only remains for me to despatch the "Samson" with scows in the course of a day or two to lighten her and if necessary to tow her off. Captains Larsen, Christiansen and Thomas are all agreed that there is every hope of refloating her when the tides are again better. The scows will be taken from Darwin as there is a minimum of risk in towing them from there, whereas to send anything of the kind from Stanley would be dangerous. It is also fortunate that she went aground in a well sheltered position. Captain Johnsen is too old for the trade, works his crew very badly, and appears to have lost his head after his first mishap. He has apparently at no time made use of members of his crew who have a thorough knowledge of the harbours, preferring to struggle along on his own judgement. At the same time he has all along been without a certificated mate which must be most trying for a man of his years. He cannot be allowed to remain in command and I have asked Captain Thomas to accept the position, pending the arrival of a man appointed by Lowden, Connell & Company."

[FIC/D13; 545, 2]

In all fairness to poor Captain Johnsen he was shipping sheep from the West Falklands to the east for the Goose Green canning works (see page 9). The *Falkland* was only able to take approximately 2,000 sheep per trip and at the time of his grounding on Lively Island he had already shifted some 14,400 across that canning season and there were still more or less 13,400 to go (approximately 50,000 were killed & 127,000 cans filled in a season of less than 3 months).

As well as sheep shifting the *Falkland* was responsible for the Inter-insular Mail Contract, movement of stores and produce around the Islands and voyages to and from Punta Arenas, Chile—all while World War I was happening.



ss Falkland loading wool at North Arm [FIC Collection]

The Canning Works & Foreign Workers

The Falkland Islands Company Ltd started building the Goose Green Canning Factory in 1910 with work finishing March 1911. Workers were imported from Chile for the canning season. In 1912 twenty labourers were brought over from Punta Arenas and by 1913 the number increased to twenty-eight. The canning works at Goose Green closed down in 1920.

456

440 per Orcoma (12.5.13) 10.

21. We succeeded in getting the Chilians to Goose Green and back to Stanley without sending the Samson, and the whole of the canning work was completed in the 6 weeks. They returned to Stanley in the Columbus the day before the outward mail arrived and were all paid off that evening. We had saved up some 350/400 sovereigns and thus avoided paying commission at Punta Arenas as last year. The payment in cash here would have been disastrous if they had been delayed in Stanley, for next morning all were drunk and we feared that some had been left behind. We therefore sent on board the Orissa to ask the Spanish steward to tally them; his reply was that two had been stabbed, one had his head broken and all were drunk, but as they were all sleeping and quiet he thought it better not to disturb them. Fortunately, they were all on board, at any rate we have not heard of anyone left behind.

And Times Were Tough...

As in many small isolated communities an epidemic was dreaded as it could have devastating effects. The Falkland Islands suffered early in its history from one such epidemic. In 1855 typhus hit Stanley and with the limited housing forcing people to live closely together this proved tragic to the children of the small population.

In a letter dated 6 October 1855 to H J Hamblin, Colonial Surgeon, Governor George Rennie wrote:

"I have to inform you that the preparations for converting the West Barrack into an Hospital for the reception of the juvenile fever patients, are now completed and a guardian (James Hocking) has been engaged to see put into execution such regulations as you think necessary to be observed.

Regarding conveniences & such provisioning medical comforts as may be required Mr Longden has received authority from me to arrange with you on the subject.

The malignant type which this epidemic has assumed more particularly as I am informed in families where two, three and in some instances over four children sleep in the same bed, all more or less infected would seem to make it especially your duty as well as my own to use every legitimate influence to procure by separation a mitigation of the virulence of the poisonous infection which cannot fail to be aggravated by the fetid breath and exhalations of the patients in such close contact.

If therefore in any instance when you are of opinion the infected should be removed to the hospital and the parents are unwilling to consent, should they be in any way under the influence of the Local Government, I request that you will inform me that I may take such steps as may lie in my power to assist you.

I would also suggest that if you are aware of any children (altho' not already infected) who are in the habit of sleeping two, three or four together and their parents unable to procure separate beds immediately, you should inform me in order that some of the iron bedsteads of which there are a good supply in the Government Store might be lent to them to remedy this unwholesome practice which must always be injurious and dangerous, but more particularly so now during this fatal epidemic." [D7; 75]

In all 19 children perished between 8 May and 30 November 1855; approximately 20% of the children under 16 years of age who were living in Stanley.

Children of Patrick (military pensioner) & Mary BYRNE:

15 May: James Alexander BYRNE age 9 years – typhus

20 Jun: Margaret BYRNE age 7 years – typhus

Marsilla BYRNE age 2 years 5 months – typhus

Children of Louis (seaman) & Catherine DESPREAUX:

3 Oct : Louis Matthew DESPREAUX age 1 yr 6 mths – typhus

Children of Patrick (military pensioner) & Ellen FLEMING:

2 Oct: Catherine FLEMING age 7 years – putrid sore throat

Children of John (military pensioner) & Henrietta MORRIS:

29 Aug: Henrietta MORRIS age 10 years 6 months – typhus

Children of Andres (gaucho) & Margaret PETALUGA:

30 Nov: Joseph Benito "Pepe" PETALUGA age 3y 7m – putrid sore throat

Children of John (military pensioner) & Sarah SHORT:

30 Aug: Caroline Sarah SHORT age 7 yrs 4 mths – typhus

7 Sep: Richard SHORT age 9 yrs 4 mths – typhus

Children of John (military pensioner) & Esther SMITH:

8 May: George SMITH age 6 yrs 2 months – typhus

14 May: Edwin SMITH age 8 years 6 months – typhus

19 May: Esther SMITH age 5 years 5 months – typhus

21 May: John SMITH age 12 years 2 months – typhus



Gravestone for Joseph Pitaluga in Stanley Cemetery—he shares it with his uncles Joseph (d 1856) & John McIntosh (d1861)

And Times Were Tough...

Children of Thomas (military pensioner) & Margaret YATES:

- 23 Sep: Lavinia YATES age 4 years – putrid sore throat
 1 Oct: Augustus YATES age 8 years – putrid sore throat
 Mary YATES age 12 years – putrid sore throat
 2 Oct: Emma YATES age 6 years – putrid sore throat
 4 Oct: Alice YATES age 15 years – putrid sore throat
 13 Nov: Sarah YATES age 10 years – putrid sore throat

The six Yates children are buried together in four graves in the top of Section C. They share a gravestone and the inscription under their names reads:

*Secure from every mortal care
 By sin and sorrow vexed no more
 Eternal happiness they share
 They are not lost but gone before*

Their father Thomas only survived them by 12 years, dying 21 November 1867, age 56, and was buried to the west of their graves.

Their mother Margaret outlived at least 8 of her 9 children and died 3 August 1902, age 89 and is buried to the east of their graves.

Descendants of Thomas and Margaret's son Robert still live in the Falkland Islands today.



Gravestone for the six children of Thomas & Margaret Yates in Stanley Cemetery

As to the other families:

Patrick BYRNE, age 51 and a labourer & military pensioner from Wexford, Ireland died July 1857. Patrick and his 3 children are possibly buried in Section B, a Catholic section of Stanley Cemetery.

His wife Mary and their 3 surviving children are thought to have left the Falkland Islands in 1858.

The last mention found for them to date is an advertisement in an Irish newspaper in Buenos Aires in 1875, The Southern Cross' edition of 19 August 1875 "*Intelligence of Mary, Bridget and Catherine Byrne, requested in The Southern Cross office. They are late of the Falkland Islands.*" Three orphan children from the Adderly family were sent to the Irish Industrial School and the Sisters of Charity establishment in Buenos Aires in 1857—were the three young daughters of Patrick, Mary age 7yrs, Bridget age 2yrs and Catherine under 1, also sent there?

Louis DESPREAUX and his wife Catherine (who may also have been born in Wexford, Ireland and was the daughter of an Irish military pensioner and on the same ship as Patrick Byrne) had nine children, five of whom married in the Falkland Islands.

Patrick FLEMING, age 46 and a labourer & military pensioner, pre-deceased his daughter, dying 29 July 1853 in Stanley from inflammation of the chest. His wife Ellen re-married in 1857. Ellen, age 44 and from Tullamore, Ireland, was murdered by her husband striking her on the head with an iron bar 28 February 1861 and was buried near her first husband in Section B, Stanley Cemetery. Three of Patrick and Ellen's daughters married in the Falkland Islands and descendants of Patrick and Ellen still live in the Falkland Islands today.

John MORRIS, age 49 and a sergeant gunsmith and pensioner, died 7 July 1856 in Stanley from dropsy and was buried next to his daughter in Stanley Cemetery. His wife Henrietta remarried in January 1858 but died 13 years later 20 March 1871. Henrietta was the only child of John and Henrietta.

Andres & Margaret PETALUGA had 11 children, 5 of whom married in the Falkland Islands, and descendants of Andres and Margaret still live in the Falkland Islands today.

John & Sarah SHORT had 4 children together and Sarah also had an older son Thomas ALDRIDGE. All three of the surviving children have descendants in the Falkland Islands today.

John & Esther SMITH had 6 children together and only the youngest, Edwin, survived to adulthood. He married and has descendants in the Falkland Islands today. Esther also had a daughter from a previous marriage; Margaret JOHNSTON who married John BETTS and their descendants are also still living in the Falkland Islands.

Early Falklands' People

Many people resident today in the Falkland Islands can trace their unbroken family line back over more than 150 years. Some of the people who arrived prior to 1860 and whose surnames live on in their descendants today are PITALUGA (1838), WATSON (1840), BIGGS (1842), GOSS (1842), FELTON (1849), SHORT (1849), BONNER (1850), KING (1852), SMITH (1852), BETTS (1855), ROBSON (1855), PECK (c1855) and ANDERSON (1859). Other surnames, where the bloodlines were carried on through female offspring, are gone but still have descendants here and are remembered in geological features such as DETTLEFF (1841), YATES (1842), McINTOSH (c1845) and RUDD (c1847).

Some arrived as colonists, some were imported labourers, some were passing through on ships, some were posted as part of a military detachment and some as shipwrecked sailors but all decided for one reason or another to stay and many different nationalities were represented including England, Scotland, Gibraltar, Denmark and Germany. The trend for cultural diversity continues today with the census of 2012 showing that those not born in the Falkland Islands came from 60 different countries.

James & Mary Watson

This November 2015 was significant for the Watson family as they were able to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the arrival at Port Louis of their ancestors, James and Mary Watson, on 17 November 1840.

By January 1842 James was a farm servant and Mary was a house servant for John Bull Whittington and they lived with him in Falkland House, which was described as "built of wood, it is commodious, in good repair consists of large store, 9 rooms & various convenient domestic offices" - there were 11 people, including 2 children living in Falkland House at the time of this remark! By the end of 1843 James was working as one of three chainmen helping the surveyor Murrell R Robinson.

Mary died 1 October 1852 in Stanley from consumption, followed 23 December 1852 by her youngest child, William, leaving James with three surviving children, 10 year old James, 8 year old Martha and 5 year old Elizabeth.

James didn't remarry and by October 1858 he and his son were working for the Falkland Islands Company Ltd in Camp; 90 miles away from the two girls who were boarded in Stanley with Constable Parry.

James, age 80 ½ and an English shepherd, died 1 March 1891 in the house of his son James at Orqueta, Lafonia and is buried in Darwin Cemetery. He was the oldest inhabitant at the time of his death.



Grave of Martha and her infant son in Stanley Cemetery

James junior married Elizabeth Wilson, an Australian girl, and they had six children; four of whom who went on to marry and two of whom still have descendants here today. When James died in 1909 he was the oldest living Falkland Islander at the time. Elizabeth died the following year and they are buried side by side in Stanley Cemetery.

Martha married a Scottish shepherd, David Smith, but died young in December 1869 from puerperal fever at Tranquilidad. Her infant son, David, predeceased her by 5 days and they are buried together in Stanley Cemetery. Martha's only surviving child, James, farmed Great Island for many years before emigrating to the UK in 1920 with his wife.

Elizabeth married a French carpenter, Emile Boyer, and they had three daughters who survived to adulthood and married and their descendants are still in the Islands today. Elizabeth also died relatively young, age 36, in 1883 and is buried near her sister.