

## Jane Cameron National Archives



# Newsletter

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

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## Snippets from the Past

I have been told by nautical passengers that in running before a heavy sea Campbell sometimes remains on deck all night; under similar circumstances Smithen in the Foam used to heave to under the close reefed foresail, lock the helm and peacefully slumber, with a bottle of gin under his pillow. [FIC/D3; 562]

From a report on a field exercise held 7 June 1952 between the Falkland Islands Defence Force and the sailors and marines of HMS Veryan Bay. ‘

*The main lessons to be learned by Naval and Marine parties were (1) Wide detours should have been made around flocks of sheep which acted as effective standing patrols for the FIDF.* [DEF/FID/7#6]

From FIBS announcements July 1960—How to sweep a chimney the cheap way. Mrs Hardy of Chartres writes *the other night Douglas was in the cookhouse by himself except for three cats which were in there and these decided to have a fight. One old fluffy cat jumped on the hob and as there was a good fire in the grate Doug went up to the cat but the cat wasn't having any help from him so took off up the chimney and came out of the top in a shower of soot and smoke by this time the other men were home and a rescue party was soon collecting ladders etc and finally got the cat down off the roof. The cat disappeared after this for a few days but is now back home again non the worse for his chimney sweeping escapade.* [P/FIB/2#04]

16.2.60. To Denton Thompson Stanley

Please inform goddess of the chase 216 live and apparently happy sheep landed Leith stop As only 211 were shipped would appreciate plausible explanation regards Turnbull

17.2-60. To Turnbull RRS Shackleton

Many thanks stop Have discovered (*sic discussed*) discrepancy with the Goddess but can only conclude Goddesses cant count stop Bon voyage and regards DT

[SGA/FAU/1#13]

# The Louisa, formerly the Onomea

The *Onomea*, an 88 ton schooner from the Sandwich Islands (*Hawaii*) with eight crew and under James WAY, en route from Boston to Honolulu with general cargo, arrived in Stanley 20 November 1863 due to a carried away foremast and job stay.

On 19 March 1864 the American schooner *Onomea* arrived in Stanley with eight crew under Captain HOWARD, 15 days out from Montevideo with general cargo. She cleared 29 May 1864 and arrived back 30 June 1864 n ballast, en route from Montevideo to Patagonia with five crew and two passengers, clearing 21 August 1864. The *Onomea* arrived one more time under Captain HOWARD 25 September 1864, 13 days out from Montevideo with a crew of five and a cargo of shingle.

The next recorded visit of the *Onomea* was 7 March 1865 from Patagonia with a crew of twelve under Joseph MILLER and a general cargo. She was out for 120 days when she arrived 20 August 1865 with 10 crew and one passenger, clearing 3 September 1868 bound for Patagonia. They appear to have been on another sealing cruise as they next arrived 19 April 1866 210 days out from Patagonia with ten crew and a cargo of 800 gallons of oil and 600 skins.

The *Louisa*, formerly the *Onomea*, was registered in the Falkland Islands by Jacob Napoleon GOSS, general merchant of Stanley 21 August 1866 as Number 3 of 1866. She was recorded as being a foreign built sailing ship of 63.39 tons. She was a single deck, two-masted schooner with a square stern, carvel build, no gallery, a billet or fiddle head and wooden framework. The length from the forepart of the stern under the bowsprit to the aft side of the head of the sternpost was 73 feet 25 tenths. The main breadth to outside of plank was 20 feet 20 hundredths and the depth in hold from tonnage deck to ceiling at midships was 7 feet 33 hundredths.

During 1868 the *Louisa* was employed on general work under James PARRY.

Jacob died 11 September 1868 and in his will dated 3 May 1867 left the schooner *Louisa* to his eldest daughter, Louisa HOWARD.

On 4 February 1869 Charles BULL, the official administrator of Jacob's will, sold the vessel to J M DEAN and G M DEAN, merchants of Stanley as joint owners. Who promptly transferred ownership to Charles HANSEN, mariner of Stanley, 5 February 1869. Over the next five years the *Louisa* was mainly employed in collecting penguin and seal oil and skins around the Steeple Jasons and Patagonia.

On 26 October 1881 the *Louisa* under Captain JONES departed Stanley for Fox Bay and Port Stephens to take on the cargo of the wrecked *Ready*.

Excerpt from the Log Book of the Schooner Louisa from Stanley to Fox Bay and Port Stephens October/November 1881 (NB: transcribed as written):

*Monday 24th At 7 am hauled alongside of the C Cooper & took on board 18 Brls of Sulphur & 6 of Lime for Fox Bay trooped of at 4 pm Strong West wind throughout*

*T 25th Taking on board cargo for Port Stephens*

*W 26th First part taking on board cargo for Tiel Inlet & Salvador. Noon cargo all on board got Ship ready for sea—5 pm got underweigh & proceeded out of Stanley 6.30 came to in Sparrow Cove blowing hard from NW*

*T 27th At 7 am after getting on board water got underweigh & proceeded to sea wind at NW Moderate 4 pm Calm of the Kelp Is Midnight light variable winds*

*F 28th Light airs & calms throughout the day 4 pm of Driftwood Is—8 pm Bull Pt Brze Wly S. 5 Miles wind at SSE fresh. 9 pm took in double reefs Midnight blowing a hard gale with sleet came to in Halfway Cove with both anchors.*

# The Louisa (continued)

*S 29th Daylight blowing hard towards noon the wind Moderated proceeded under double reefs & at 3.30 pm came to in Fox Bay landed Mail & all letters for Mr Pack & one passenger for Pack*

*S 30th Strong NW wind throughout*

*M 31st Til noon putting out cargo for Mr Pack latter part of the day landed 2 tons of Coal for Mr Baillon & took on Board some emptys from Schr Redy for Port Stephens Throughout the day blowing hard with rain*

*T 1st Moderate SW winds employed taking on bard Cargo saved from Schooner Ready for Port Stephens*

*Wed 2nd First part calm got on Board all cargo we could Stow below & on deck Noon light Breeze from the South got underweigh & proceeded towards Port Stephens—6 pm Calm—Midnight fresh Breeze at West with a heavy SW swell*

*Thursday 3rd 8 am of Cape Merideth Calm with a heavy SW Swell drigtin back with tide—1.30 pm came to under Peat Is Albemarle & secured fore peak halixed block*

*Friday 4th 6 am fresh wind at WWW proceeded, 8 do of Cape Meridith—4.30 pm entered Port Stephens & at 6.40 came to at the Settlement landed Mail &c throughout the day a Strong Breeze*

*Saturday 5th Employed during the day landing cargo Wind at WNW during the first part latter part wind at East with rain*

*Sunday 6th Fine weather throughout No work being Sunday*

*Monday 7th First part landed remainder of cargo Afternoon took on Baord seven Bales for Fox Bay & several parcels for Stanley Remainder of day blowing hard from the SE with heave rain*

*Tuesday 8th At 5.30 am proceeded towards Fox Bat Noon of Arch Is Calm 8 pm light west wind*

*Wednesday 9th At 8 am with the assistance of Ready's Boat towed ship & anchored in Fox Bay remainder od ay taking on Spars & Gear saved from Schooner Ready*

*Thursday 10th Am took on Board remainder of Gear & Spars At 5 pm received on Board Capt Lazier (\*) with family the crew of the Rady & Mr & Mrs Allen & with a Strong wind at South proceeded towards Stanley 8 pm wind hauling East blowing fresh came in in Halfway Cove*

*Friday 11th At 3.30 with a fresh wind at South proceeded 7 am at Bull Pt Noon light wind of the Motleys 10 pm sighted the Light Midnight in Port William becalmed*

*Saturday 12th 8.30 came to in Stanley Harbour landed passengers &c*

*\*Captain Joseph A ALAZIA*

[SHI/LOG/LO]

The log continues on until Saturday 9th September 1882 and is available online:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/downloads/Shipping%20-%20Govt%20Files%20-%20G%20to%20O/SHI-LOG-LO.%20Log%20Book%20of%20the%20Louisa%20-%2024%20October%201881%20to%209%20September%201882.pdf>

On 21 June 1884 Charles HANSEN transferred 21 of the 64 shares in the *Louisa* to Griffith PRITCHARD of Sandy Point, Straits of Magellan.

The *Louisa* stranded at Tres Puentes, Chile and the wreck was sold. The certificate of registry was returned and cancelled 9 October 1886.

# Joseph Dalton Hooker's Report on Some of the More Useful Plants of the Falkland Islands

Joseph Dalton Hooker, 22 years old and a newly qualified MD, joined HMS *Erebus* as an assistant surgeon in 1839. His duties were to include botanical research during the four year Antarctic expedition under Sir James Ross.

The HMS *Erebus*, and her sister ship HMS *Terror*, arrived in Berkeley Sound 6 April 1842, finally leaving for Antarctica at the end of the year.

The following is excerpted from a letter, dated 5 September 1842, to Lieutenant Governor Moody at Anson from Joseph Dalton Hooker, HMS *Erebus*, Berkeley Sound.

*'I shall now according to promise, lay before your Excellency a slight account of some of the more useful plants of this Colony; especially of such as appear to be at present, or may prove in time of most use to man.*

*The remarkable increase & fine condition of the cattle; (comparatively speaking) recently introduced on the Island, naturally call the attention to the grasses in a country devoid of trees or of any vegetable production likely to prove more important.*

*Amongst these which are very numerous, & form 1/5 of the plants hitherto discovered the Tussac holds the first place, as however you have a description of it & know far more of its invaluable properties than I do, it would be useless to recapitulate here; suffice it to say, that with proper attention to its propagation in any locality near the coast & preservation from being entirely eaten down where it already abounds, it alone would yield abundant pasturage for as many cattle as the Island is ever likely to want.*

*Another grass however far more abundant & indeed universally distributed over the whole country scarcely yields in its nutritious qualities to the Tussac. I mean the Anundo alopecurus which covers every peat bog with a dense and rich clothing of green in summer & a pale yellow good hay in the winter season. This hay though formed by nature without being mown & dried keeps those cattle which have not access to the former grass in excellent condition, as the beef which our parties for the 4 winter months supplied the Ships with can abundantly testify. No bog however rank seems too bad for this plant to luxuriate and as we remarked during our Survey of Port William although the soil on the Quart Districts was very unprolific in many good grasses which flourish on the clay slate & generally speaking of the worst description still the Anundo did not appear to feel the change nor did the cattle fail to eat down large tracts of such pasturage, the numerous troops of horses also, on the flanks of the Wickham Heights can have little other fodder whilst those of Mount Lowe & Mount Vernet must depend upon it entirely. Should the Tussac disappear from any of the Island where stall fed cattle are kept, it might be advisable to treat this plant as hay in Britain, by which means its nutritious properties would doubtless be much better secured to the animals during the winter months, than by allowing the leaves gradually to wither and not gathering it until nature has dried them. For sheep as hay it would also do well though I fear that it is of too wet a mixture & thrives best in situations far too damp for their succeeding on it all the year round. Experience only will prove this at any rate newly imported flocks should not at once be removed from day fodder to any so succulent.*

*You are aware that many English plants invariably follow man undesignedly on his part; many such are common here, as the groundsel, chickweed, shepherds purse, Docks &c &c have been distributed chiefly through the agency of cattle rabbits fowls & horses more or less all over the Islands; amongst such & most abundant of all is the Poa annua a very common English grass & which forms a short bright green sward all the year round on the drier soil, near the settlement mixed with a few of the smaller native grasses and the common Dutch clover. Close to Government house there are many acres of such pasturage & to it the sheep seem very partial and thrive uncommonly well. A little attention to its increase especially by sowing it in similar situations and draining the ground might produce very beneficial results.*

*Of other good grasses there are several kinds growing on the hills; but they are not sufficiently abundant to demand particular attention & in general grow intermixed with those of larger growth only one of them appears prejudicial & it is found only in scattered small tufts in a few places generally where the Quartz crops out on the hills, on a poor soil; I do not all suppose this stiffwing little herb to which I allude to be noxious in any degree but it is harsh & rejected by the cattle as a much more common one is in England. The only other use to which the grasses of the Falklands will in all probability be extensively put is for thatching unfortunately the Tussac is almost the only one of size*

## Joseph Hooker (cont.)

sufficient for such a purpose & it is as you informed me to brittle to last long in short it is too good in the animal economy. The stiff grass growing on the sand Downs of Port William would probably answer better, and might be tried though collecting it & sorting it out would be troublesome.

The Balsam bog (or *Bolax gummifera*) is a plant whose properties should be put to the test by some medical practitioner in England; I have been assured that its virtues in cases of Gonorrhoea are not imaginary & also that applied as a balsam to wounds it promotes the healing process. Its gum is very abundant & easily collected.

The wild Celery (*Apium graveolens*) so very poisonous a plant in England, before being blanched by the Gardener, is here not only wholesome and agreeable to the taste, but an excellent antiscorbutic. Treated in the Garden as the Celery is at home it would certainly succeed when a few stalks of it would be no small boon to a Ship, on her arrival from a cruise; & though it may appear trifling to mention it, its seed put into pea-soup wonderfully improve a dish, which those only who go to sea know how to appreciate. I will venture to say that had you found the plant fostered with care in the Govt Garden instead of growing wild on the cliffs and beaches you would sldom have sat down to table and not taste it in some shape or another.

The little Tea plant (*Myrtus nummularia*) a species nearly allied to the classic myrtle is commonly used here as a substitute for the Chinese herb to which many of the Gauchos prefer it singularly enough the first settlers of New Holland and Van Diemens Land selected a shrub of the same natural order (a widely different one from that to which the true Tea plant belongs) & brew tea from it to a great extent. This plant is also said to be Diuretic, for which purpose it might prove useful in medicine for which purpose the young leaves should be gathered & dried separately, or rather scattered on sheets of paper & exposed to the sun or a moderate fire, after which they should be kept free from damp.

Were it profitable to introduce grouse into the Islands it may be as well to mention that the Diddle-dee belongs to the same Genus as the crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) on which that bird feeds. The taste of the berries of the two plants is far as my memory serves me (& I have eaten abundance of both) is quite the same.

The little cress (*Cardamine glacialis*) to which I directed your attention when at Port William is at any rate worth attempting to raise in quantity for which purpose I should think the better place would be to plant it in a good & very damp soil where it would probably rapidly propagate itself. Should any unfortunate whaler come in with the Scurvy on board, it is the plant which should at once be collected & used by the sick raw, as also the wild celery & the following plant.

Scurvy grass of the Colonists (*Oxalis enneaphylla*) which should more probably be called a sorrel, it being nearly allied to the little wood sorrel of England, whilst the true Scurvy grasses belong to the same natural orders as the cress mentioned above.

It is important that the names be properly applied & universally known, especially in the Town of Anson. This sorrel though doubtless an excellent anti scorbutic loses its leaves in winter, whilst those of the cress may be found all the year round. The leaves you inform me make a sort of gooseberry fool, during the summer when boiled. In cases of fever an infusion of them would probably afford a pleasant & cooling draught an might be used in lieu of Lemons for sour sauces & lemonade.

The native spinach (a species of *atriplex*) is, I am told an excellent pot herb it should also be tried in the garden, where a good soil mixed with a little seaweed would probably suit its habits.

Amongst the Lichens there are some which yield fine colors with pure Ammonia. I am however cautious in giving an opinion about them as they require the test of chemists & Manufacturer.

The above are the most important plants that have come under my notice; & considering the scanty of the Flora of the Islands & the rapidity with which their several good qualities have been discovered by so small a number of individuals there can remain but little doubt that many of them only require a little care to become eminently useful.

For the most important,, the grasses, nature, has done almost all the others will want a little art & a very little I presume.

Allow me to hope that on the arrival of any gardener in the colony, his attention may be directed to them by your Excellency.

[C1; 50]

Hooker's Point, to the east of Stanley was named after Joseph Dalton Hooker.

# The Mystery of the Missing Matoaka and £10,000 of Gold

On 7 December 1870 Henry Wileman of Redland Knoll, Bristol, England, wrote to the Governor of the Falkland Islands *'I beg to entreat your kind attention to my petition if you would kindly send a Ship with crew to go to the island of South Georgia near the Cape Horn to see whether there is any castaways left on that desolate island. I beg to say that a Ship called Matoaka with first class passengers & also £50,000 in gold sovereigns left Lyttleton New Zealand on the 14th May 1869 for England, which has never heard nor spoken of—it is a general impression in Australia the Ship must have been wrecked off Cape Horn and very likely the castaways has escaped there. Through a report of a Captain saw a large fire on a cliff on the island of South Georgia of course I do hope you will hasten to their rescue out of humanity. If so God will bless you—as one of my sons was passenger in that ill fated Ship Matoaka. He was only six months in New Zealand to see whether he will like to stay as Sheep farmer. Ascending to the bad times, he thought it will be the best for him to come home. We are very much distressed to lose such a beloved pious boy—and feel assured you would make an allowance for my feelings to trouble you with this as a devour of sending out your ship to the rescue of the castaways at South Georgia or any islands so desolate near to that will be thankfully remembered by us. Hoping to hear from your in reference of the search. Successfully or not. [H28; 423]*

On 14 March 1871 Governor D'Arcy responded *'Your letter of the 7th December 1870, I have great pleasure in acknowledging.*

*I have only one colonial vessel at my disposal, and she is engaged in conveying the mails to and from Montevideo, but I have sent a copy of your letter to the senior Naval Officer on the South Pacific Station, requesting he will consider your request, and comply with it, if the exigencies of the service permit him.*

*From all I can hear of the South Georgia's from Sealers and other they are very inclement, but crews have ben known to subsist on them for a considerable period, all provided they have managed to save material from the wreck.*

*I will communicate further with you on hearing from the Senior Naval Officer, and at all times I am at your service in so good a cause.*

*Trusting that your efforts to recover your Son and his Companions will be successful.'* [D14; 286]

On 23 March 1871 the Captain of the *Gladiator* and Senior Officer of the SE Coast of America Station wrote from Montevideo saying *'As it is impossible for me to comply with your request I have submitted your letter for the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty'*

In a letter dated 11 May 1871 from the Admiralty they stated that *'...I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you that there is no information contained in the letter from Governor D'Arcy or its enclosure which would justify their Lordships in sending one of HM Ships to the Island in question to search for the crew of a vessel which left New Zealand for England via Cape Horn two years since and which has never since been heard of.'*

[H29; 173; 310]

On 24 May 1871 Governor D'Arcy wrote to Henry Wileman *'I forward the Senior Naval Officer's letter on the subject you wrote to me about.*

*Georgia is seldom visited, I was wrong in thinking it another name for the Beauchêne Island, which is within the Falkland group: so bleak and inhospitable is Georgia that I fear there is no hope, the time being so long since the vessel was missing, moreover, the summer is the only time when Georgia could be visited, and even then a vessel must have a Consent.*

*The Admiralty I fear will not move in the matter, unless you could furnish them with positive information respecting the fire seen by the passing vessel.*

*I am sorry to be compelled to send you so cheerless an account.'* [D14; 330]

According to an article in the Daily Southern Cross edition of 30 December 1869, the 1,093 ton *Matoaka* was

# The Matoaka (cont.)

built in 1853 at New Brunswick. She left New Zealand under Captain Alfred Stevens carrying a crew of 32 men, 47 passengers, a valuable general cargo as well as upwards of £50,000 in gold, the existence of which on board was only known to the officers of the vessel.

Shaw, Savill and Co published a full passenger list in the London Times of 22 March 1870: The Rev G Grant, Mrs Grant, George Grant, Alice Grant, Alfred Grant, Arthur William Grant; Miss Catherine Kennaway, Miss Sarah Kenneway, \_\_\_ Soper, servant; William Allison, Mrs S Allison, H Allison, S Allison, M Allison, J Allison, M Allison, D Allison; Dr Iliffe, Mrs Iliffe; F C Wilson, Mrs Wilson, William Wilson, Catherine Wilson; W Handcock, Mrs Handcock, Elizabeth Handcock, Caroline Handcock; S J Henry, Mrs Henry, James Henry and infant; C H Hoskyns, Mrs Hoskyns, C H Hoskyns, F J Hoskyns and infant; Louis B Hensley, Mrs Mary Hensley, Edith Mary Hensley; Archibald Brown, W Coup, W B Pusey, Dr Evans, W S Wildman (*sic Wileman*); W C Cooksey, W H Moss, and Master Henry Wilcox.

On Friday 10 June 1870 a letter was printed in the Sydney newspaper Empire from George Ferrers Pickering stating *'Being a passenger by the missing ship Matoaka, on her passage from Sydney to London, sailing from this port on the 9th May, 1868, I regret that I cannot share in the hope expressed by the writer of the letter "One who Hopes" as to any of her crew having found refuge on the Auckland Islands. The Matoaka was about eighteen years of age, and had stood much knocking about, and behaved well in a moderate sea; but in heavy weather I feel extremely doubtful of her capabilities. Her voyage to England on the occasion I speak of was unusually favourable, not having experienced half a-gale during the entire passage. I am sorry to say, my opinion is that the Horn could tell her calamitous fate, and that she either foundered off that treacherous cape, or was lost amongst the ice. On her arrival in England, her chief officer, Mr Burch, left her, having expressed to me his disinclination to sail in her again; but I believe the second mate, Mr Tickle, who sailed with her commander, Captain Stevens, for many years, returned to New Zealand in the ship. I shall rejoice to learn that my surmise shall prove to be unfounded, by the discovery of any survivors, either at the Auckland Islands or elsewhere; but I must confess I entertain little or no hope.'*

Many theories abounded about the fate of the Matoaka. A passenger of a ship passing the Auckland Islands reported seeing smoke; an unsuccessful search was made in July 1870. Another theory was that she had been driven to the Bounty Islands by bad weather. The Islands were searched in July 1870 and no sign found of the ship; the Islands were however annexed for New Zealand.

The Otago Daily Times of Tuesday 25 July 1870 reported a correspondent saying *'I have good reason to believe that instead of the Matoaka being lost on the Auckland Islands—as one of the answers states—she has perished in the Antarctic seas. A gentleman who was a passenger by the Matoaka on a previous occasion informed me the other*

Issue 3219 of the Otago Daily Times, dated 31 May 1872 reprinted an article from the Lyttleton Time of 27 May 1872. *'The subjoined extraordinary document was picked up (enclosed in an ordinary wine bottle) on the Ocean Beach, near Dunedin, in February last, by a Mr Shepperd and his son, and by them given to Mr E W Morey, of Akaroa, who brought it to the Lyttleton Times office on Saturday last. It is written with a red lead (or raddle) pencil on a small piece of paper, about 2 by 4 inches in size, apparently the leaf of a note-book. The paper had been folded double, and is considerably frayed at the outer edge and along the line of the folds. The original is now in the hands of Mr Murray-Ansley. It will be seen that the name of the vessel is not correctly spelled, and that there is no actual signature. Part of the writing is illegible. The Matoaka cleared the Customs at Lyttleton on Monday May 11, 1869. She was towed outside the Heads at daybreak on May 13, and sailed at 4 pm the same day. Consequently, she had been 318 days out on the date when the document purports to have been written by the first Mate.*

*"1870. March 27.*

*"Ship Matoka.*

*"Captain and myself (1st mate) and 7 (or 9?) A.B.'s re in long boat. L\_\_\_\_\_. N. of New Guinea. Passengers all lost. Trusting this will meet \* \* \* \* \* pick up this bottle when drifting about.*

*1st Mate."*

*...Captain Stevens, it is well known, had a strong presentiment that he would meet with some disaster, and had*

## The Matoaka (cont.)

*provisioned all his boats, to be in readiness, before he sailed.*

*So far as the document purporting to have been written by the first mate of the Matoaka is concerned, it is simply a matter of hand-writing, which Messrs Miles and Co. will not doubt be able to solve satisfactorily and speedily, from comparison with signatures, &c, in their possession...*' The following day they reported that the handwritings were totally dissimilar in every respect and the letter was dismissed as a cruel and wicked hoax.

£50,000 in 1869 is worth £6,615,026.18 in 2022

The *Matoaka* made eight voyages to New Zealand between 1859 and 1869, seven under Captain Stevens.

## Jean Cousteau

In a letter dated 7 April 1870 the French Consul General, London, wrote to the Governor on behalf of the brothers of Jean Cousteau who was born in Saliès, Bazzes Pyrenees, and had embarked some 25 years ago from Bourdeaux for Buenos Ayres and then went on to the Falkland Islands.

However, there must have been an error, either in the date that he left Bordeaux or in his age at death.

Jean Cousteau, age 19 and a French labourer, was murdered 24 February 1854 by Hilario Cordova. They were both attending a dancing party at the house of one of the Spanish Americans and Jean, a Basque, mimicked the actions of Cordova who vowed vengeance. He was turned out of the house where he waited until Jean came out of and stabbed him near the heart causing death in a few minutes. He was buried 25 February 1854 but there is no record of his grave number. Hilario Cordova was hung for the crime. [H28; 103:D14; 39]

## The Notorious Captain Poole

In a confidential despatch dated 1 October 1908 Governor Allardyce wrote to the Secretary of State *'It may interest you to know that the notorious Captain Charles Poole, seal poacher, rookery raider, and daring adventurer, who from time to time has been a source of considerable annoyance to this Government..., was shot and killed lately at Puerto Madrin under somewhat tragic circumstances while in charge of a schooner of which he was the Master.*

*2. The facts, so far as I have been able to ascertain them, appear to have been somewhat as follows. Poole returned to the above port from an illicit sealing expedition around this Colony with but few skins. This was doubtless owing in great measure to the earlier visit of the steamer 'Fridtjof', which, as reported in my telegram of 10 August, raided the Jasons, and probably other rookeries as well.*

*3. In Poole's case discontent seems to have followed ill-success, while this again terminated in a free fight. Poole is alleged to have thrown one or more of the crew overboard, to have been thrown overboard in his turn by the Mate, and then shot while in the water.*

*4. As Poole sank, so I am credibly informed, another of the crew dived overboard to try and withdraw from his finger the magnificent diamond ring which he invariably wore, but in this he was unsuccessful.*

*5. Personally I must admit to a sort of sentimental liking for Poole, despite of his piratical and buccaneering propensities. He was a clever, civil-spoken, and daring mariner. Once only was it possible for this Government to obtain a conviction against him for one of the many offences he had committed. This was during Mr Grant's Administration last year when he was fined £100 which he promptly paid. He was invariably smart and well dressed, and in a land of apathetic, phlegmatic, and more or less atrophied people, it was pleasing at times to come across a person of indomitable energy, though unfortunately misdirected, who in small schooners, often badly found, conjured with the elements, and gaily defied the fiercest gales of this tempestuous latitude, thereby achieving success where less bold mariners, with better craft, did not dare to venture.*

[G8; 102]

Papers and family information on Captain Poole are available on the Jane Cameron National Archives website here <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.fk/online-collections/people/early-settlers/19th-and-early-20th-century-families/n-to-r>



# Local Vessels—The Lotus

The 115 ton English Schooner *Lotus* first arrived at Stanley 14 June 1869 under Captain Henry Pain. Over the next two years she sailed around the Islands and to and from Montevideo and Patagonia for the Falkland Islands Company Limited.

At 1am on Monday 7 October 1871 the *Lotus* in endeavouring to make a passage through the Tamar Pass became a total wreck in 5 minutes, the wind having failed at a critical moment the swell from the northwest set her on a rock. The crew and passengers landed with difficulty in boats. They straggled over the country and during the Monday twelve men arrived at **Mr WALDRON's** house at Port Purvis. He immediately dispatched all his horsemen to guide the stragglers and on Tuesday sixteen men arrived. On the Thursday his gauchos found a young sickly sailor in a complete state of exhaustion lying under a rock. They revived him with a little brandy and brought him to Mr Waldron's house. **Charles FORSYTH**, master mariner, was lost in the Camp and supposed to have died from exhaustion and exposure as he was never found. A sailor who died on the cliff was given a decent burial. **Emile BOYER**, a passenger on the *Lotus*, registered the deaths by accidentally drowning of **John HANIBAL**, age 40 and a seaman, **BURFEINDS**, age 35 and a seaman & native of Long Island, North America, and **Henry McQUILTON**, seaman. The first two were drowned as the *Lotus* went down and McQuilton died after. Mr Waldron maintained the surviving men for the best part of a week. The passengers were chiefly wrecked crews of other vessels.

On 20 November 1871 **Governor D'ARCY** called a meeting of Executive Council to propose bestowing a parchment with the Colonial seal attached, passing the thanks of the Board for the prompt, cheerful aid rendered to the shipwrecked crew of the *Lotus*. The embossed parchment read "*The thanks of the Governor in Executive Council are hereby presented to the Messieurs Waldron, for the effectual aid, and great hospitality rendered to the numerous Passengers and Crew of the "Lotus" who were shipwrecked in the Tamar Pass, on the morning of Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> 1871.*" [P1; 429: B15; 222: Death registers]

## Rainmaker

Stanley E  
October 25th 1892

Your Excellency

*Having in view not only the scanty supply of water in Stanley through the long continuous drought, but also possible baneful results to the people from using impure water—which will be resorted to if such is not already the case—I would respectfully suggest that the expenditure of a simultaneous discharge of the guns in the Dockyard if it did not result in making the rain-clouds disgorge their contents it would at any rate prevent any future regret that the trial was not made, & the cost of such expenditure not be great.*

*I have the honour to be  
Your excellency's  
Most obedient servant*

## Dirty Work

The following minute was written by the senior medical officer in 1942 after Maxwell Biggs, the assistant sanitary carter requested more money:

*This man I understand has been told that if he asked for more money his case would be favourably considered. This he has now done and I agree that on the face of it he should be paid "dirt money" in conformity with those who handle dirty material.*

*At the same time it should be realised that it has taken Biggs and his employers nine years to discover the unpleasant character of his work and in fact I do not admit that his work is unpleasant. His job has been to lead and care for the horse—the normal work of a groom.*

# Lafone's French Workers

Police Office

Stanley

22nd March 1848

County of Ross

To Wit

The Information and Complaint of Thomas Garson Master of the Schooner *Paloma* now residing in the Town of Stanley in the said County of Ross taken upon Oath before me William Henry Moore Esqr. one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said County of Ross this 22nd day of March in the Year of our Lord 1848 at the Police Office Stanley in the Parish of the Holy Trinity in the same County who upon his Oath aforesaid saith that on Friday the 18th day of February in the Year of our Lord 1848, at the house of James Garnet in Philomel Street Stanley in the Parish and County Aforesaid a Frenchman named Henri Joseph who served in the said Schooner under Deponent as Cook for about two months at a period of Seven Months since applied to Deponent to know if he would take the said Schooner to Monte Video (from whence the said Henri Joseph had been brought in the Barque *Napoleon* together with other Frenchmen and Spaniards in the Employment of Samuel Fisher Lafone Esqr. Merchant at Monte Video by Richard Almond Williams Esqr. His Agent to the Settlement at Port Louis in East Falkland) or to the Coast of Patagonia it did not matter which; to which Proposition Dept. replied Yes but informed him that he had no provision or Money to which the said Henri Joseph replied Oh never mind that we will find Provision and money for I have plenty of friends to go with me at the same time—informing Dept that the Schooner was to be taken secretly and mendaciously out of Stanley Harbour amounting in Depts opinion to a decided case of Banetry whereby in the event of their Success the Owners of said Schooner would be Deprived of their Vessel and in all probability Dept. (who is a Navigator and has been Master of Five Vessels one of which was a Vessel of Five Hundred Tons burthen) after he had served their purpose of Navigating the Vessel to Monte Video or the Coast of Patagonia would have been Deprived of his life; there being no Witness present when the Proposition was made to Dept. and Dept. considering it more prudent to have a Witness by; before he informed the Authorities said he could not give him an Answer then, whereupon said Henri Joseph said he would call on Dept. on Sunday the 20th Febry—when Dept. informed him that he could not see him on Sunday but would see him on Monday Dept. however being Master of the Schooner thought it his Duty to inform the Head Constable of the Circumstances who advised Dept. to Apply to the Magistrate when informing the Magistrate of the transaction he advised Dept. to take the Foresail and the two Jibs with a new foresail and the Compass on Shore and keep them safe in his House as Dept. was apprehensive that said Henri Joseph and his Companions might take the vessel without further application to him secretly out of Stanley Harbour the Magistrate also advised Dept. to have a Witness by in case the Application should be renewed; saith however he has not since applied to him.

Exhibited and Sworn  
before me as Aforesaid

The *Napoleon*, a Norwegian ship of 350 tons, arrived at Port Louis on 10 May 1847 with Samuel Fisher Lafone's agents, Messrs Marcelino Martinez and Richard Almond Williams, 102 men some with families in all 117 souls, 15 horses, and general stores for Mr Lafone's use. Arriving the same day was the *Vigilante*, an Oriental Schooner of 90 tons with stores etc, for Mr Lafone. According to the list of passengers that arrived from Montevideo on board the *Napoleon* there were sixteen Frenchmen (NB: spellings are as per the list and the Spanish version of their names):

Scarpelini, French, married and age 21  
 Juan Beones, French, married with one child and age 37  
 Juan Fontaine, French, single and age 24  
 Lorenzo Manuel, French, single and age 24  
 Antonio Pablo, French, single and age 38  
 Francisco Duran, French, single and age 37  
 Augusto Brillante, French, single and age 29  
 Selestino Merlo, French, single and age 20  
 Robes Pierre, French, single and age 30  
 Baptista Orsoni, French, single and age 22  
 Juan Regot, French, single and age 24  
 Augusto Beltram, French, single and age 27  
 Jose Orsini, French, single and age 20  
 Pedro Bueno, French, single and age 30  
 Feoman Burgues, French, single and age 22  
 Pedro Crusien, French, single and age 24

## Lafone's French Workers (Cont.)

Governor Moody wrote to Richard Williams on 10 May 1847 advising him that he had placed temporarily at his disposal the Barracks and other Government buildings at Anson, which may be of service to him, the keys having been left in the care of Mr Whittington.

On 28 September 1847 the Chief Clerk wrote to Captain Eckart of the Brigantine *Vigilant* informing him that there were seven Frenchmen in a state of great distress who were desirous of obtaining a passage round Cape Horn on his vessel. The men would willingly work as sailors to pay for their passage and the Governor would provide free provisions for them. The *Vigilante* was bound for Tahiti and cleared 29 September 1847.

On 15 February 1848 Governor Moody wrote to the French Consul General in Montevideo informing him that there were some Frenchmen brought down in Mr Lafone's employment who stated themselves to be in distress with no means to enable them to return to Montevideo and asking for assistance for them.

On 22 March 1848 Celestin Lemerle (*NB: Selestino MERLO*) wrote to the Governor in French requesting clemency and mercy as he had been working for the Government for the past six months; he worked five hours for his food, living only in the hope to be sent from the Island. He pointed out that with the arrival of the warship there was a great opportunity and requested that the Governor speak to the commander on his behalf and that he could work his passage either on the bridge or as a servant. Celestin went on further to say that if there was no work then due to lack of money it would be necessary to steal in order to live and it was a dreadful situation.

Governor Moody wrote to the Commander of HMS Brigantine Griffon on 27 March 1848 requesting his assistance but he replied on 28 March 1848 that it was at variance with his instructions. He had also received verbal requests for passages to the River Plate from Ragot and Josef *NB: Juan REGOT and most likely Jose ORSINI*). On 1 April 1847 Governor Moody wrote to Christopher LEMERLE enclosing a copy of the letter and instructing him that he had written to the French Consul in Montevideo for his and his countrymen.

On 1 August 1848 Governor Rennie wrote to Rear Admiral Phipps Hornby, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Station about nine French subjects who had emigrated to the Falkland Islands from the River Plate and were currently employed on the Public Works, more from charity than their efficiency, and requesting that he contacted the French Admiral or the Consuls of France the necessity of providing some means of conveying them either to France or elsewhere.

On 1 September 1848 Rear Admiral Phipps Hornby wrote to Governor Rennie saying that, the French Rear Admiral Commanding in the Pacific having been at Valparaiso, he had lost no time in communicating with him on the subject of the nine French emigrants from the River Plate. Rear Admiral Legoarrant de Tromelin readily consented to send a French ship to the Falkland Islands to remove them and transport them to Europe. The *Heroine*, a French 18 gun corvette of 1,100 tons which had come from Tahiti, sailed from Valparaiso on the 4th of September 1848, arriving in Stanley 28 September 1848 to call for the Frenchmen left by Mr Williams. She departed 1 October 1848 bound for Brest.

On 25 September 1848 Governor Rennie wrote to Samuel Fisher Lafone sending him a copy of an Ordinance respecting the admission of non-British persons to the Falkland Islands. He also enclosed a copy of a Memorial from local inhabitants about the destitution which the failure of his agent to comply with the terms of his contract had thrown his employees into.

[H8: H6: D3; 28, 121, 171, 186, 201, 202: D4, 26, 64: H7]

In the census taken 22 February 1851 there was a Frenchman, Jean RAGOUT who was recorded as being age 40 and an idler from France; was this Juan REGOT or RAGOT and, if so, why had he decided not to leave with fellow countrymen?

Thomas GARSON was recorded in the Census taken 12 October 1846 as being age 46 and a labourer, and in the census taken 22 February 1851 as being age 50 and a seaman from Scotland. Thomas, age 57, was buried 15 February 1855 but there is no record of cause of death or grave number.

# Johnny or Jack Rook

The Striated Caracara has long been known as being very curious and with little fear of humans, seeing them as a source of amusement rather than danger.

Captain Edmund Fanning, of Stonington, Connecticut in a sealing expedition to the Falkland Island in 1797 noted *'rooks, these last a most troublesome bird being very mischievous and full of cunning.'*

Captain Charles Barnard in 1813 noted *'These birds, generally known among sealers by the name of rooks, partake of the form and nature both of the hawk and the crow. They are about the size of the largest hen hawks, common to the United States; of a black colour, and shaped something like a rook; their claws are armed with large and strong talons, like those of an eagle; they are exceedingly bold and the most mischievous of all the feathered creation...I have known these birds to fly away with caps, mittens, stockings, powder horns, knives, steels, tin pots, in fact everything which their great strength is equal to. On landing at any place, we always find some of these birds, who visit us for the purpose of reconnoitring; and if we have any meat in the boat, they give the signal by commencing such an ear-tormenting cawing, that we are soon surrounded by additional numbers: they compel us to secure our provisions, by covering them with the sails of the boat, which we fastened down by stones, and then direct the dog to lie down by them to prevent these harpies from hauling off the stones and sails...'*

*'Winged Mischief at the Zoo (London).*

*From the News Chronicle 14.6.1937. By the Zoo Correspondent.*

*If you carry a bunch of keys which are important to you, do not show them near the zoo's four Milvagoes, recently imported from the Falkland Islands.*

*Once the Milvagoes seize a bunch of keys they object to parting with them.*

*A Milvago (Johnny-Rook) is a bird of prey of the hawk family, larger than a Kite and smaller than an Eagle, with a well developed sense of mischief.*

*For example, a girl who likes to study birds of prey at close quarters watched the handsome brown milvagoes.*

*"Show them your keys" said the keeper.*

*She did. And then went into the cage to retrieve those keys. That was what the birds wanted.*

*They untied her shoe laces. They nipper her stockings with legs inside them. They removed her hat in flight and stamped on it. They pinched her in the back when she wasn't looking. The four of them—or rather including the girl) the five of them—had an hour's grand "rag".'*

[Penguin 12 August 1937]

Locally, these inquisitive birds are known as Johnny Rooks. Less used now is the name Jack Rook which tended to be used for the more brightly plumaged adults.



Johnny Rook on horse and juveniles investigating Jacob Goss on Jason Islands circa 1945  
—Tony Carey Collection, JCNA