

# Jane Cameron National Archives

# Newsletter

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

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## This Issue

**B**efore the opening of the Panama Canal Stanley Harbour was a hive of activity with ships calling in for a wide variety of reasons. This issue covers mutiny, a shipwreck and unhappy passengers as well as a local man who, despite being unable to swim, risked his life to try to rescue some men from the sea. Continuing with the theme of accidental deaths, life in Camp was often hard and isolated and the lonely death of William Stewart is a sad example. From death to development; the Police Cottages are among Stanley's listed buildings and in this issue you can read about their construction. Please note that the transcriptions are as written therefore may contain grammatical and spelling errors.

## Snippets from the Past

Cane chairs are most uncomfortable when they have become slack. By turning the chair bottom upwards and sponging the cane work with hot water and drying out of doors in the sun, the seat will become perfectly tight again.

FIM January 1914

### POLICE NEWS.

At the Court House, Stanley, on November 16th, John Aldridge appeared to answer the charge of having on the 8th inst., served with beer two boys who were under age (under 12 years). The charged was proved. He was fined in the mitigated penalty of £2 0s. 0d.

A DINGHY was carried out to sea some years ago from the channel between Speedwell and George Islands. She was picked up *five months* afterwards on Annie Islet, near Speedwell. The rowlocks, puddles, and a coat which had been left in her were all still there.

FIM December 1896

### A Tale of a Cat.

Whilst on a nocturnal mouse-hunting safari, the trail of which led into the Power Station, a large black and white member of the feline species safely negotiated the trail past live switchgear and rotating alternators but was hypnotised by what must have appeared to him to be a Picasso exhibition of paintings on the Third Programme of the B.B.C. television service. It was in fact a pair of dirty overalls being washed in a Bendix washing machine. Not being satisfied with a one dimensional view the cat investigated the possibility of a fourth dimensional view by moving under and alas unintentionally up by way of the driving belt. This is where the axiom of curiosity killing a cat was true. At the subsequent inquest a verdict of death by mouse-adventure was recorded.

FI Monthly Review September 1965

### AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE FALKLANDS

The aerial photographs taken by HUNTING AERO SURVEYS are now being examined at Birmingham University in order to establish whether or not there is any likelihood of oil deposits in the Falklands. We understand, however, that prospects of oil deposits are not hopeful.

FI Monthly Review December 1958

# Mutiny

**T**he *John A Robb* was an American barque of 272 tons under Barney GREEN and a regular visitor to the Falkland Islands during a whaling cruise in the 1860s. She first arrived in Stanley with 27 crew 5 February 1864 for refreshments after a six month whaling voyage from Sag Harbour, New York and cleared 11 February 1864. The next visit was 12 January 1865 with 28 crew and 16 months out. The final visit was 8 January 1867 with 32 crew and 31 days out from Brava, Cape Verde Islands.

In an undated letter answered 23 January 1867, from W H Smyley as US Commercial Agent in Stanley to Governor Robinson, Commander-in-Chief of the Falkland Islands:

*Sir, Six of the Crew of the American Barque John A Robert Barney Green Master having mutinied & having attempted to take the Vessel and Poison the officers. I Respectfully Beg to Request you to Imprison them Until I Can Either Send them to the United States for Trial or give them there Liberty.*

In a letter dated 24 January 1867 from Barney J Green, Barque *John A Robb* to Governor Robinson:

*Respected Sir, As I am about to set sail from your port, which I entered under circumstance of peculiar trial and embarrassment, I can not weigh my anchor without attempting in some feeble manner to express my deep appreciation of the able wisdom and kind courtesy with which you have piloted myself and my country's worthy representative, Captain Wm A Smyley, through the seemingly insurmountable obstacle which lay before me.*

*On my last sojourn here, when Her Royal Majesty's ship "Harrier" lost a valuable officer, although an entirely disinterested party, I lent Her Majesty, through Captain Fenhidge, every operation that lay in my power to recover that unfortunate gentleman; accepting no reward save the thanks of your worthy Predecessor and His suit, and the consciousness of fulfilling the mandate of our Divine Master that "whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also unto them." Little did I deem that in so short a period I should stand in need of a helping hand. That hand of succor and fellowship has been freely extended to me in this our time of need, and most gratefully have we availed ourselves of its potent power.*

*I am now about to spread my sails to the breeze, feeling that Justice has been impartially vindicated, and that the friendly feeling so long and so happily existing between our two countries has again been illustrated.*

*Thanking you for these particular favre and trusting that the amicable relations existing between us as individuals may prize symbolic of the fraternal feelings which shall forever abide between two of earth's greatest nations, and invoking Heavens choicest blessings upon Her Royal Majesty Victoria as also upon yourself, your Lady and all your personal interests.*

On the same day Captain Smyley again wrote to the Governor:

*"...I will do my best to Relieve you of the Prisoners as soon as possible. If no Conveyance offers soon I will send one of my Vessels away with them....The names of the Prisoners is as follows 1st Frederick Power 2 Wm Gastock 3 Joseph Lilmer 4 George Myers 5 Augustin Randolph 6 Charles Miller..."*

The *John A Robb* cleared 31 January 1867.

The six alleged mutineers were kept in irons for 26 days by Captain Green before being liberated. Two shipped on the barque *Germania*, one in the schooner *Sea Lion*. According to Captain Smyley the remaining three, Fred BOWER William GASTROCK & George MAIER, were "*neither English or American*"

By 24 June 1867 only George MYER, shoemaker, is listed in the List of Aliens Residing in The Falkland Islands. On 5 December 1867 George MEYERS was a member of the crew of the schooner *Louisa* and appointed to act as a special constable for the preservation of the cargo of the wrecked ship *Coquimbana*, this appointment ending January 1868. No further mention has been found to date. [H25; pg 28, 29, 30, 59, 63, 219, 244: D12; 379, 380, 381]

## The State of the Gaol

A letter from A Montagu, Police Office, Stanley to Governor Rennie dated November 1852:

*Sir, I have the honor to call your Excellency's attention to the state of the cells in the Gaol. Solitary imprisonment under Acts of Parliament means imprisonment in solitude and darkness, but the cells being light, do not produce that dread which they would, were they dark, and the sentence of short duration. I have therefore to request you will be pleased to order the cells to be made dark, or capable of being made so by the Gaoler, when he is required to confine a culprit in solitary imprisonment.* [H11; 98]

The Governor gave orders for shutters to be made for each cell so that daylight could be excluded by the jailer when necessary. [D6, pg 177]



# The Melancholy Death of William Stewart

**W**illiam STEWART, age 61, left Cardiff 29 June 1862 on board the *Harmonia* and landed in Stanley 22 September 1862.\* He was brought out on contract to the Falkland Islands Company Limited and went to work for them in Camp on a monthly wage of £4-3-4.

On Friday 31 March 1865 John BONNER, Camp Manager, wrote to James LANE, Colonial Manager:

*It is with a feeling of deep regret that I have to announce to you the Death of old William Stewart which occurred since Tuesday last in the following manner. He Stewart was last seen on Tuesday morning near to the "Ceritos" leading a horse which was made fast to the girth of the horse he was riding. I was informed last evening that Stewart had not been seen for the last 2 days past. This morning I sent in search of him and Arguello found him with his horse laying on top of him in a valley between High Hill House and the "Ceritos" and then sent me word. I left here with 6 of the men to go and see him and I found him in the valley (as named by Arguello) in a hole of Peat and water from 3 to 4 feet deep had it not been for his dogs remaining alongside of him most likely he would not of been found for months it was one of those valleys with the long Indian grass in it and from the hill opposite to where he was lying you could not see either him or the horse until you came within a foot or two of the spot. On taking the horse out of the hole I found that he had 1 foot fast in the stirrup and my opinion is (and the men present) that he must have been going to jump the ditch and the horse he was leading (which they generally do) set back and by so doing thrown both him and the horse into the hole and he was not able to extricate himself by having 1 foot in the stirrup. The horse was laying length way on him and he had 1 hand hold of the reins and head state I should say and it is also the opinion of the men that he must have been dead at least 2 days part of his face has been eaten by rats during the time he has been laying there. I wish to know from you if I can bury him for I can assure you the body will not keep. Annexed I give you're the men's signatures that were present and all fully agree with the above statement.*

As Witness our hands this 31st day of March 1863.

George Stewart

Thomas Williams

C M Supple

J M his X mark Arguello

William his X mark Herkis

James Hunter

George his X mark Harrington

Owing to the peculiarities of the case and also that the recent murder of John RUDD (17 October 1864) had occurred in the vicinity of where William's body was found Governor J G MACKENZIE called for an inquest.

Due to the state of his body William had been buried at Hope Place so his body was disinterred and brought to Darwin for a coroner's report. The inquest was held at Darwin so that the shepherds called as witnesses would not have to be away from their work for too long.

The coroners certificate recorded a verdict of "*Died by the visitation of God in a natural way*".

William, age 64, a shepherd and native of Colvain in Scotland was buried in Stanley Cemetery in Grave H502.

William's gravestone reads:

*Sacred to the Memory of William Stewart born in Colvain, Galloway, N.B. died in the Falkland Islands the 29 March 1865 aged 65.*

\*Other passengers on board for the FIC included George STEWART, age 22, and Agnes STEWART, age 22, but there is no mention of whether they were related to William. George was paid off 1 November 1866 and died in Stanley from consumption 30 November 1866. Agnes, a widow, was married to Andrew HALLIDAY 9 July 1867 and her descendants are still resident in the Falkland Islands today.



William's gravestone in Stanley Cemetery

# Police Cottages

The Stone Cottages or, as they are now known, Police Cottages were originally a row of eight stone-built semi-detached cottages on Ross Road to the south-west of the Town Hall. Initially they were intended to house part of the Falkland Island Garrison and in the Blue Book for 1862 are described as “*Stone cottages to be used as Barracks for the Men of the Falkland Islands Garrison Company.*” In January 1864 the FI Garrison were replaced by a Marine Detachment which remained until the establishment of a civilian police force in 1878. The cottages were then allocated for police occupation and became known as “Constables Row”. Construction of the Stone Cottages commenced in 1861 with the final work being completed in 1867. In June 2002 the Police Cottages were designated as buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The current cottages were extensively internally refurbished in 2007 with new extensions built on at the back. There are now six cottages from west to east with the seventh house, the “sergeant’s house” consisting of two cottages converted into one. They are owned by the Falkland Islands Government and are used as rental accommodation.

## TIMELINE OF CONSTRUCTION

NB: Unless stated otherwise all the artisans in 1864 were Marine workmen.

### 24 September 1860:

Despatch No 45 from Governor T E L Moore

*...it would be very desirable to build a permanent row of at least 10 cottages in which to lodge some of the families now inhabiting hired cottages and the barracks...if built of stone, they would not require the constant repairs which are necessary to the wooden buildings.*

### 10 December 1860:

Despatch 72 from the Duke of Newcastle approves the proposed construction of cottages for the use of the Garrison.

### 30 April 1861:

A requisition is sent to the Duke of Newcastle from Governor Moore for:

*15 tons of good stone lime packed in barrels or casks*

*24 windows framed & glazed according to pattern A*

*24 windows framed & glazed according to pattern B*

*24 outside cottage doors, ledge*

*24 inside cottage doors, ledge with iron hinges not in frame*

*48 stock iron rim locks for these doors*

*12 dozen panes of Crown glass 8" x 10" to repair above windows from time to time and two cwt of putty*

*3 cwt of red paint for iron work mixed*

*1 cwt of blue paint*

*120 yards of brussels carpet (to suit light blue paper & furniture) price not to exceed 4s6d a yard, with hearth rug (large size) and some needles & thread for making*

*24 firmer chisels 6 ¼ inch & 6 ¾ inch, 6 1 inch & 6 1½ inch*

*1 carpenter’s brace & set of bits.*

*Note. The doors & windows should be made plain & strong suitable for soldiers’ cottages—Manning of High Holborn has supplied such articles before*

### 10 August 1861:

Letter 182 to Captain Molony, FI Garrison:

*I am anxious to commence the Work for the cottages of the Garrison as early as possible to avoid interfering with the men cutting peat & planting their gardens. I could therefore request that a party of 6 men should be employed daily under the superintendence of the Surveyor general, commencing on Monday next... [D10; 128]*

### November 1864:

Mon 14th 4 masons Nos 1 & 2 cottages

Wed 16th 3 carpenters in shop preparing lining for No 1 & 2 cottages

Fri 18th 3 masons ½ days at No 1 & 2 cottages

General: Masons breaking a doorway through No 1 & 2 cottages. 3 masons 1/2 day plastering No 1 & 2 cottages

Mon 21st Three masons excavating behind cottages  
 Tue 22nd Blacksmith making brackets for shoots  
 Thu 24th Two masons cottages  
 Fri 25th Mason paving footpath behind stone cottages  
 Sat 26th Mason ½ at footpath ½ opening barrel of lime

General: Masons employed excavating the clay and wheeling it from behind stone cottages, Making a drain & paving footpath. Blacksmith making brackets for shoots round stone cottages.

#### December 1864:

Thu 1st 3 masons ½ day mixing mortar & clay for cottages ½ day wheeling stone off jetty  
 Fri 2nd 3 masons mixing mortar & clay for cottages  
 Sat 3rd 3 masons mixing clay for cottages & clearing stone from jetty. 1 carpenter preparing lining boards for No 1 cottage

General: Stone cottages: clay and mortar has been mixed and building stone removed from jetty preparatory to building

Tue 6th 3 1/4 masons mixing clay for cottages. Carpenter ¾ day No 1 cottage  
 Wed 7th 2 masons mixing hair mortar for cottages. Carpenter ¾ day No 1 cottage  
 Thu 8th 3 plastering No 6 cottage. 1 carpenter a partition No 1 cottage  
 Fri 9th 2 plastering No 6 cottage. 1 No 1 cottage.  
 Sat 10th 1 carpenter No 1 cottage

General: Masons have been employed mixing mortar for & plastering No 6 cottage. Carpenters have finished partition in No 1 and put up the under paper in front room.

Mon 12th 4 masons plastering No 6 cottage. 1 civil workman papering No 1 cottage  
 Tue 13th 2 blacksmith, 1 mason mixing hair mortar. 1 carpenter painting No 1 cottage. 1 civil workman papering No 1 cottage  
 Wed 14th 1 carpenter painting No 1 cottage. 1 civil workman No 1 cottage  
 Thu 15th 2 masons plastering No 5 cottage. 1 carpenter painting No 1 cottage. 1 carpenter making paint for plastering. 1 civil workman ¾ day No 1 cottage  
 Fri 16th 3 masons plastering No 5 cottage. 1 civil workman ¼ day No 2 cottage  
 Sat 17th 1 mason & 1 blacksmith ½ day plastering No 5 cottage. 1 blacksmith ½ day painting No 2 cottage

General: Masons employed plastering No 6 cottage—1st coat. No 5 2nd coat. No 1 cottage front room finished papering and first coat of paint. No 2 cottage commenced papering & painting

Mon 19th Two masons plastering No 5 cottage. One civil worker ¾ a day No 2 cottage  
 Tue 20th One mason plastering No 5 cottage. One mason sundry jobs No 1 & No 2 cottages. One civil worker No 2 cottage  
 Wed 21st One carpenter ¾ day painting No 2 cottage. One civil worker papering No 2 cottage  
 Thu 22nd Three painting No 2 Cottage; one plastering No 5. One civil worker painting No 2 cottage  
 Fri 23rd Two & ½ workmen painting No 1 & 2 cottages. One civil workman painting No 1 & 2 cottages  
 Sat 24th One workman painting No 1 cottage. One civil workman painting No 1 cottage

General: Works on No 1 & No 2 cottages complete except for fixing of mantelpieces.

28th 3 masons plastering No 5 Cottage; one carpenter making building wall. One civil workman preparing partition beams for No 7 & 8 cottages

[H21]

1867:

Works finished. The total cost was £1,617-1-9 ¾.



Police Cottages late 1940s

# Shipping—The Merlin

**M**any ships were abandoned in a sinking state after rounding Cape Horn, often with the crew and passengers having to take to boats to try to reach safety. If they were lucky they would be picked up by a passing ship and the Falkland Islands was often where shipwrecked seamen were brought by their rescuers.

The British ship *Merlin* of Liverpool, 1030 tons under Captain George BORLASE, with 30 crew and 1 passenger bound from Callao to Queenstown with 1300 tons of guano on board, was abandoned at sea off Cape Horn 44 days out in latitude 52 S and longitude 86 W in a sinking state on 8 June 1861. The Ship had 4ft aft & 3.5ft forward when left with the water increasing & much in the tween decks above the Guano. The crew were taken off in the Barque *Coquimbo* and landed in Stanley 19 June 1861.

The Certificate of Registry of the ship *Merlin* of Liverpool, official number 1848, was sent to the Registrar of the Port of Liverpool 21 June 1861 and the Articles of the ship were sent to the Registrar General of Seamen, London Bridge 23 June 1861.

At the end of June some of the crew were employed in levelling and laying out paths in Stanley Cemetery. Four of the crew were sent to the United Kingdom on board the *Coquimbo*, leaving Stanley 25 June 1861:

Joseph EADSON,  
John A DOYLE,  
John ROBERTS and  
Lawrence LAWLESS.

Seventeen of the distressed British seamen were given passage to England on board HMS *Niger*, leaving Stanley 1 July 1861.

Sixteen crew members were listed as:

William HARVEY, 21;  
Thomas MURPHY, 40;  
Samuel MARTIN, 35;  
Thomas BURGIN, 50;  
Thomas COOK, 31;  
Peter LAWLESS, 42;  
Francis PHILLIPS, 29;  
Elias JONES, 24;  
Manuel BEZES, 35;  
William EVANS, 25;  
Phillip POWELL, 29;  
Charles MILLER, 23;  
William GRANT, 26;  
William GREEN, 33;  
Charles C CROWLAND, 18;  
Charles BLYTH, 30;

Also listed was Andrew ADAMS, a distressed seaman, who had been sent home in the *Merlin* by the British Consul in Callao.

There does not appear to any record of the remaining 10 crew and they may have been also taken on HMS *Niger*.

On 16 July 1861 a bill for £150-17-1 was drawn on the Board of Trade for the relief of the distressed British seaman of the *Merlin* landed by the Barque *Coquimbo*. [D10]

Captain George BORLASE, son of John BORLASE of Belfast, was married to Matilda BANNON 26 May 1855 [Liverpool Mail] He was captain of the *Merlin* from at least November 1856. By 1862 Captain George BORLASE was Captain of the Irish emigrant ship *Erin go Bragh* sailing from Cork to Moreton Bay. Also on board was his wife, son and daughter. On 17 September 1862 the *Erin go Bragh* arrived in Brisbane, Australia on a voyage to Callao via Sydney. [Courier, 18 September 1962 pg 2]

In 1865 Captain George BORLASE was commander of the ship *Melmerby*, 3000 tons. "The *Melmerby* the fifty-sixth vessel that has sailed on the land-order system of emigration, under the immediate direction of the Queensland Government. She contains 520 souls, divided into paying, assisted, and free passages, and consisting of 221 members of families, 250 single men, and forty-nine single females". [London Illustrated News 27 May 1865, pg 510]



# Shipping—The Helena

**T**he *Helena*, a British ship of 620 tons under Captain H D SINCLAIR, with 14 passengers and a cargo of coals, 120 days out from Liverpool bound for California, first called into Stanley 19 September 1852 for water. In a memorial dated 22 September 1852 from Berkeley Sound the crew and passengers wrote:

*...That the ship is in such a leaky condition that it is as much as our united efforts could do to keep her above water until we reached this port and the captain cannot do anything to remedy the evil on the 7th until the 11th we expected every Hour the Ship to go down under our feet and had the Long Boat ready for Launching and by working night and day we managed to arrive here and the Capt he swore if he did not reach here in such a time he would take the Boat and five or six Sailors with himself a leave the rest to perish.*

*We the undersigned do Hereby Protest that the Ship Helena of Liverpool to San Francisco now riding at anchor in Berkley Sound is totally unfit to Proceed any further on her intended voyage without imminent danger of loseing both ship and all on board we have taken the present method of communicating with your Honours as we are denied all other means by the Captain and hope Your Honours will forgive us and we will Ever Pray.*

*Ships Company: William Durrees, John Murphy, Joseph Murray ab, Vance Ritchie ab, James Thomas ab, Jhon Wilson ab, Joseph Martin ord, George Rolland ord, William Roberts ab, William Nelson ab, John Rasmussen ab.*

*Passengers: James Toole, James Lawler, Margaret Lawler & 3 children, Peter Hinde, Joseph Robinson, Isabella Kelly, John Byshe, Daniel O'Connell, Adolph Adler, John C Molony.*

In a letter dated 30 September 1852, J R LONGDEN, Acting Colonial Secretary, wrote:

*"I am directed by HE the Governor to inform you that he has received a memorial signed by 12 of your Crew and 13 Passengers stating that in their opinion your ship is from leakings, not in a fit condition to proceed on her voyage. As one of the memorialists is the Carpenter the Governor cannot suppose that the fears of the subscribers are altogether unfounded, and I am directed to inform you that it is HE's opinion that you should (without loss of time) bring your ship into this Harbour in order that a survey may be held to investigate her seaworthiness..." [D6, pg 149]*

On 1 October 1852 the captain wrote to the Governor RENNIE from Berkeley Sound:

*May it please your excellency. I have this day received your letter. And a copy of a memorial, signed by part of the Crew and Passengers, on board my ship. I was greatly surprised, as it is the first I have heard of the subject, no one having spoken to myself, or Officers, concerning this matter. I regret, that they did not mention it on my arrival here. Nor to have left it till the ship was upon sailing, and also to have done it in such a clandestine manner. It is apparently a Plot, to enable them to get on shore, (The Passengers, wanting Liquors, which, is against my rule.) and the Crew having but little clothing, they do not like to go round Cape Horn. The Passengers cannot be expected to know anything concerning the sea worthiness of the Ship. I should not have the least objection to the Ship being surveyed, feeling certain, that the Ship, will be found in good condition, and well supplied, If I not deem her seaworthy, its not probable that I should, risk the life, of myself, and Sisters, also, the large amount of capital that I have invested in this Ship, which is not insured. To be detained, and expenses caused by a survey, through the caprice of the Passengers & Crew, I certainly shall protest against. The Ship has been sounded, in the presence of Mr Bayley, and the Water made in Fifteen hours, was one & a half inches, and \_\_\_\_\_ inches was pumped out, in forty five minutes. I have not yet finished, the Top Work of the Ship, when I have done so, I shall proceed on my Voyage, and in case of the Crew refusing to go to sea in the Ship, I shall immediately come into Stanley or Sparrow Cove. Trusting the measures I have taken, will meet your excellency's approbation. [H11, pg 67]*

In a letter to the Governor dated 20 October 1852 John SOLE, the acting Colonial Surgeon and Emigration Officer wrote:

*In compliance with your instructions, contained in a letter of yesterday's date, requesting me to enquire into the Justice of sundry complaints made to you by various passengers in the Ship Helena, bound to San Francisco, I have the honor to inform you that I this day have been on board the said Ship, and find as follows.*

*That the scale of provisions and necessaries, stated on the passengers tickets (with one exception) to be in my estimation insufficient to maintain them in health for so long a voyage, and further it appears to me that such scale of provisions &c to be authorized only for the passage from England to the Eastern side of North America.*

*There is no animal food allowed, neither has any lime juice been issued to the passengers, which article is absolutely necessary to preserve health during a long sea voyage.*

*In consequence of which neglect, two of the passengers are now suffering from Scurvy.*

*The quality of the Bread which they are now using, is bad, some of it wholly unfit for human consumption.*

*Other bread which I have examined is wholesome, but even this is not so good as it should have been, had it been new at the commencement of the voyage.*

*From the testimony of the passengers and from what the Master of the ship himself allows, it appears to me that the*

# Shipping—The Helena (continued)

passengers have been grossly deceived, either by the passage Broker, or others interested in the matter, for they were given to understand, that they should receive ample rations and necessaries for the voyage; and that the scale of diet on the tickets was nought, and that before sailing they were to receive another scale of provisions for the voyage. [H11, pg 76]

On 30 October 1852 Governor RENNIE instructed Mr McMURRAY to “Release all the prisoners belonging to the Ship Helena at the request of Captn Sinclair to be put on board of the ship.” [D6, pg 160]

The *Helena* was cleared 5 November 1852 but her misfortunes continued as she then ran into and damaged the 1066 ton HMS *Trincomalee* as that ship was working out of Port William. [H11, pg 93] The *Helena* was finally cleared 10 November 1852.

To date no further mention of either the ship *Helena* or Captain H D SINCLAIR has been found.

## Archives' Website

Work on uploading records to our website commenced in May of this year. The first records to go up were those that I receive the most queries on; the early shipping and local periodicals.

With the capable and patient assistance of Josh Peck, 100 years of local periodicals were scanned and uploaded—not an easy task due to the fragile state of some of the earlier copies. These periodicals start in 1889 and are a fascinating glimpse of day-to-day life in a small Colony and the people who built and shaped it. They not only combine church news and government notices but also notable events and a wide range of local news such as baptisms, births, deaths, funerals, marriages, bazaars, sports, migration and shipping, thus providing a comprehensive record of social history in the Falkland Islands. My intention with placing the early periodicals online was not only to allow people in the Falkland Islands to easily access the history and culture of their home but also so that readers from overseas would get a better understanding of the place, the cultural diversity of the people who made their lives here and how the distinctive culture of the Islands evolved. They are also a treasure trove of information for those wishing to research their family trees. The Church periodicals produced by Christ Church Cathedral are especially important in this as they are nice and “gossipy” so give a much better picture of the population than plain facts and figures ever can. There are gaps in our periodical collections but we are hoping that these gaps may be filled in the future by people who do have copies and will lend us the missing copies to scan and upload.

Another large and complicated scanning job was the closed letter books. A number of these books were seriously damaged in 1944 when the first Town Hall was destroyed by fire. I had last assessed the books in 2010 and had listed those in need of further attention and closed those too fragile to be handled and those at risk if accessed by researchers. Our holdings are kept in a controlled environment so there was no danger of further deterioration but the website work gave the opportunity to go through them page by page removing old pins and similar metal objects which had been missed in the initial evaluation and after scanning do any necessary small repairs, cleaning, etc, and then, depending on their special needs, make boxes or protective wraps to relieve any potential stress.

A fair amount of the H series of manuscript books which weren't damaged by fire and water were also in need of extra attention; they are Miscellaneous Inward Correspondence books and have suffered from being overfilled beyond their capacity which has caused permanent damage over the last 100+ years from careless handling and poor storage prior to the building of the Archives building in 1998. These books won't be scanned as they are in a fair enough condition to be open to researchers and scanning would require them to be unbound but they have benefited from having custom made book wraps made for them.



H Series volumes before and after

Work on the website is expected to continue for some time yet with further of the more commonly requested records being made available online.



# The Execution of Manuel Gill

The following description of the trial and execution of Manuel Gill was found while working page by page through a closed volume in preparation for scanning. This was an unusual case as there did not seem to have been any trouble between the two men and, if anything, the evidence given by people that knew and worked with them indicated that up until the stabbing they got on well and were friends. Evidence from both the defendant and the witness was that after the stabbing he tried to make the victim comfortable and that he bound his wounds.

Manuel GILL, age 18 & (Banda) Oriental, arrived 31 August 1855 on board the *Victoria*. He was one of a group of workers brought down from Montevideo, Uruguay by the Falkland Islands Company Ltd to work at their establishment at Hope Place. On the List of Registered Aliens returned 14 September Manuel was listed as being a native of Montevideo and single. He continued to work for the FIC up until he was convicted of murdering John RUDD 15 October 1864.

On 1 November 1864 Manuel GILL was convicted before the Magistrate's Court of the wilful murder of John RUDD and a sentence of death was passed on him. A copy of the Stipendiary Magistrate's 33 pages of notes on the trial are held in volume H21; pg 244. George CLETHEROE and Louis DESPREAUX acted as interpreters for Manuel and witnesses called were: John BANE (*BEAN*) or DOOLAN, age 15 (*with Manuel GILL and John RUDD at the time of the stabbing*); Edward "Ned" GLEADALL, age 21; Pedro VARELA; Ruffino SALCO (*Rufino SAUCO*); James LANE; Thomas WILLIAMS, age 27, (*brother-in-law of John RUDD*); William Forrest MacCLINTON, RN surgeon.

The warrant of execution read:

*Falkland Islands To wit} To Francis Henry Parry, Chief Constable, and to the Keeper of Her Majesty's Gaol at Stanley in the said Islands jointly and severally.*

*Whereas at and before the Magistrates Court, holden at Stanley on the First day of November Instant, before Edward Rogers Griffiths Esquire, Chairman and Arthur Bailey Esquire, Charles Conyngham Turpin Esquire, and John Sibbald Esquire, Justices of the Peace, "Manuel Gill" was in due form of law convicted of the "Wilful Murder" of "John Rudd", and thereupon received Sentence to be hanged by the Neck, until he should be dead. Now it is hereby Ordered that Execution of the said Sentence be made and done upon the said "Manuel Gill" on Tuesday the fifteenth day of November Instant between the hours of five and six in the morning on the same day, in all things according to the said sentence.*

*Given under our hands and Seals respectively at Stanley in the said Islands this third day of November one thousand eight hundred and sixty four.*

From Arthur Bailey, Surveyor General to Governor Mackenzie, dated 14 November 1864:

Sir

*I have the honour to request Your Excellency will give instructions to the Clerk in Charge of stores to furnish one with the undermentioned materials for the Public Service*

*150 feet of 3/4 boards for "Gill's" scaffold*

*Police Office, Stanley, Falkland Islands, Novbr 15th 1864*

*1/4 to 7am*

*Private*

*My Dear Sir*

*I have to inform Your Excellency that Manuel Gill was executed this morning at 26 minutes to six in the presence of about 50 people or thereabouts. Every thing was conducted in my opinion in the most orderly & satisfactory manner. No noise, confusion, or hitch in the proceedings.*

*He died without a struggle, only 2 convulsive kicks, and in a second he was dead. He remained hanging about a 1/2 an hour & was buried beneath the scaffold. He was perfectly quiet & resigned, and died with a prayer on his lips. I trust that his penitence will in the sight of God be an atonement for his great crime. He however freely acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and forgave everybody that was concerned in doing their duty.*

Followed by two entries on page 273 in the Return of Public Works at Stanley for the week ending 19 of November 1864:

*Monday November 14th Marine artificers: One carpenter & blacksmith on Gill's scaffold Civil: One scaffold*

*Tuesday November 15th Marine artificers: One carpenter removing scaffold Civil: One removing scaffold*

*One civil artificer one Marine carpenter & one blacksmith employed erecting scaffold for the execution of Manuel Gill. One marine carpenter removing scaffold*

[H21; pg 267, 268, 273]

## A Local Hero —

**W**orking through the closed letter volumes preparing them for scanning for uploading to the internet I came across a number of letters which piqued my interest. One in particular was commending a local farmer on his bravery so I decided to follow it up. Unfortunately our records are not complete for this period due to the Town Hall fire but the following correspondence has survived.

Letter dated 23 June 1877 from George Travis, Acting Colonial Secretary, Government Office, Stanley to George Patterson Smith, Johnsons Harbour [D18; pg 80]:

Sir

*The attention of his Excellency the Governor has been directed to the finding of the Coroner's Jury held on the bodies of the poor men who were drowned in the late melancholy accident at Johnsons Harbour, and has great pleasure in endorsing the opinion of the Jury to the effect that your "conduct in trying to assist the unfortunate men is deserving of great praise."*

*His Excellency is unwilling to allow the opportunity pass without conveying to you, on behalf of the Government, his warm acknowledgements for the very brave and humane exertions made by you at the imminent risk of your life to render assistance on the sad occasion.*

Despatch No 24 dated 28 June 1877 from Governor T F Callaghan, Government House, Stanley to The Earl of Carnarvon[B18; pg 163]:

My Lord

*I regret to have to inform your Lordship that four poor men belonging to Stanley were drowned at a place called Johnsons Harbour—about 30 miles from this—on the 14th instant, by the upsetting of a small boat in which they were proceeding, late at night, on board their vessel, lying at some distance from the shore.*

*The four bodies were recovered, and at the inquest held upon them a verdict of accidental drowning was found, with the following addition:*

*"The Jury wish it to be put on record that they consider George Smith's conduct in trying to assist the unfortunate men is deserving of great praise."*

*2. I append an extract from Mr Smith's evidence at the Inquest; which will give an account of what he did on the melancholy occasion.*

*"I live at Johnsons Harbour. I remember a sailing boat arriving at my place about 6 o'clock pm on the 14th instant, four persons landing from her. Mr Grimmond, "Frenchy", Peter, and Thomas Carey. They went to my house and had their tea. They all left between 10 and 1/2 past 10pm. I went a few yards outside the house with them. I could see the Cutter from where I stood, but it was too dark to see anything small on the water. After we got outside the house I asked Grimmond to stop on shore—he said he would not stop then, but the next night, that he would come up the first thing in the morning.*

*The next thing I heard was: when sitting at the fire, a shout, my wife also heard it, and went to the door, she said the men in the dingy were making a queer noise, she took my opera glasses, but could not see anything. The noise still continued. I jumped up and went to the door and could hear the men lowing and calling out "here! here!" I knew by that they must be in the water. I ran down to the beach abreast of where I could hear the noise. I could not see anyone. I got a piece of scantling, and went into the water up to my waist and pushed it out into the kelp. I then got a second piece and tried that. I could not get either pieces through the kelp. I never heard more than two voices. I then threw in a small box in the direction of one of the voices. The next thing I thought of was the gate of the sheep pen to make a raft. I went off on the raft to where I heard the sound of the person in the water. I came across the dingy on the edge of the kelp. I tried to haul it alongside the raft to tow it on shore; in hauling the dingy toward me I found the raft going under the boat, and was obliged to let go. I found I could not do anything with the dingy so paddled off to the Cutter, when I got on board I found my legs too benumbed to stand. I put on dry clothing and then went on deck and lifted the anchor and dropped the cutter alongside the dingy, when I got close enough to lay hold of the dingy I let go the anchor. As I hauled the dingy alongside I saw something black in the bow, I took it for kelp and put my hand down to clear it to enable me to get the water out of her, instead of kelp found I had got hold of a coat".....*

*Witness then proceeds to describe how he found one poor man clinging to the dingy, but unfortunately life was extinct.*

*3. Mr Smith cannot swim, and there can be no doubt that he risked his life most bravely in his endeavour to rescue*

# George Patterson Smith

*the unfortunate men, and also shewed great readiness of resource in such a sudden emergency in constructing a raft out of the gate &c.*

*Although his efforts were unfortunately not rewarded with success it has occurred to me that perhaps if the case were brought under the notice of the Royal Humane Society it might elicit some recognition or mode of approval of this act of bravery.*

*4. I have already thanked Mr Smith warmly on behalf of the Government, but I think it would have a very good effect in this remote Colony if his conduct were to receive some such recognition from home as I have mentioned.*

*Mr Smith—who is a Scotchman—is a small farmer, and has been in the Colony for over 25 years. He is a remarkably good specimen of his class.*

Despatch No 21 dated 30 November 1877 from The Earl of Carnarvon to Governor Callaghan [F19; pg 146]:

*I caused to be forwarded, for the consideration of the Royal Humane Society a copy of your despatch No 24 of the 28th of June last, drawing attention to the case of Mr George Smith, and I have much pleasure in transmitting to you, herewith, a Testimonial on Vellum which the Committee of the Society have awarded to him in acknowledgment of his attempt to save the lives of four persons from drowning at Johnsons Harbour, Falkland Islands on the night of the 14th of June last.*

*I request that you will cause this Testimonial to be presented publicly to Mr Smith, and that you will obtain from him and forward to this Department an acknowledgment of its receipt.*

In a letter dated 20 March 1878 to Governor Callaghan [H34, pg194], George Patterson Smith writes:

Sir,

*I beg to acknowledge the receipt at the hands of Your Excellency of a Testimonial on vellum which the Committee of the Royal Humane Society have awarded to me for attempting to save the lives of four persons from drowning at Johnson's Harbour on the night of the 14th June last, and have to thank you for the kind interest which Your Excellency has taken in this matter.*

*I respectfully request that Your Excellency will offer to the Royal Humane Society my very grateful acknowledgments for the Testimonial which they have been pleased to grant me and which I shall always prize. I am only sorry that in what I did I had not the good fortune to save any lives.*

*I beg also to offer my grateful acknowledgments to His Lordship the Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

The four men who lost their lives were:

1. **James Andrew GRIMMOND**, age 34, tailor & native of St Martin le Grand, London, England.

- James was married to Georgiana Shorthouse SIMPSON (not in the Falkland Islands) and their son Stanley Kerr GRIMMOND was born in Stanley 2 February 1877 and baptised by Holy Trinity Church 14 May 1877. James was buried 20 June 1877 (no grave number recorded).

2. **Edmond Arthur "Frenchy" DUCQUAIKER**, age 27, seaman & native of Dunkerque, France.

- Edmond was not buried by either Holy Trinity Church or by St Mary's Roman Catholic Church and there is no grave number recorded for him.

3. **Peter SIEVEWRIGHT** or **SEABRIGHT**, age about 28, seaman & native of Scotland.

- Peter was buried 20 June 1877 (no grave number recorded).

4. **Thomas CAREY**, age 16, son of Maurice & Catherine Carey, Stanley, Falkland Islands.

- Thomas was born 13 February 1861 in Stanley, in a house occupied by J M Dean, to Maurice and Catherine Carey, formerly McDonald and baptised 7 August 1862 by Holy Trinity Church. His father's occupation was recorded as Miner and a note in the Church Register says that Maurice Carey is "now at the mines in South America". Thomas was buried in Grave Ai200.



Headstone of Thomas Cary



# G P Smith & Johnsons Harbour

**George Patterson SMITH** was born 11 August 1838 in Blackesdale, Dumfrireshire, Scotland. George came to the Falkland Islands with his family on board the barque *Record*, arriving in Stanley 28 September 1852—a voyage that took 101 days. His father and older brothers came out on contract to the Falkland Islands Company Limited and the family were first based at Hope Place.

George worked as a shepherd for the Falkland Islands Company Ltd and when he finished working for them 24 July 1861 he was on a monthly wage of £5-17-0.

On 21 January 1863, age 24 and living in Stanley, George married **Mary Ann (Marianne) Hogan**, age 19 and from Ireland living in Stanley. On the 31 July 1865 George bought Crown Grant 34 for £15 being half an acre fronting on the north to Fitzroy Road. On 1 September 1865 he purchased Crown Grant 8 for £165 bounded on the south by Fitzroy Road with buildings. By 1867 George was working the dairy at Port Louis and by 1876 he was living at Johnsons Harbour. On 7 April 1887 he went into partnership with Thomas Sharp at Johnsons Harbour Station. George died 20 June 1909 and is buried in Grave Ei708. Mary Ann died 3 July 1915, age 69, and is buried in Grave Ei792.

George and Mary had nine children, seven of whom married, and still have descendants in the Falkland Islands today. His family tree is on our website under People—19th Century Families—S to Z—Peter & Wiliamina SMITH.

DEATH OF MR. G. P. SMITH

WE regret to record the death of Mr. George Patterson Smith, of Johnson's Harbour, which took place in Stanley, on June 20th.

By the death of Mr. Smith a very familiar figure has been removed from our midst. He came to the Falklands in 1852 in the Barque "Record", was for some years at the Dairy at Port Louis and eventually took up in partnership with Mr. T. Sharp the lease of a sheepfarm at Berkeley Sound which, under his management became one of the most successful in the Colony.

Any local institution for the benefit of the community always found in Mr. Smith a ready supporter,—we understand that he was one of the original members of the Stanley Benefit Club, and the respect in which he was held was exemplified by the large attendance at his funeral. We are assured that it will be many a long day before "G. P. S." is forgotten. (Communicated).

FIM July 1909

On 17 July 1911 Mrs Smith & Sons purchased the land leased to Messrs Sharp & Smith, 36,000 acres in total, for £5,352 with the final instalment made 31 December 1944. The Smith family continued to farm Johnsons Harbour into the 21st Century.

## Loch Head Shanty

The shanty was built from the wreck of the *Carlton* which ran ashore at Cape Carysfort 9 August 1855 and was originally situated at Cow Bay. George Patterson Smith dismantled the shanty and rafted it up Loch Head Pond and re-erected it as a boundary rider's house.

## Johnsons Harbour

Situated to the north of Berkeley Sound and originally called Berkeley Sound Station it was known more commonly as Johnsons Harbour after a Danish seaman called John Johnson known locally as Pirate Johnson as he was rumoured to be the sole survivor of a treasure burying party in Berkeley Sound. John was from Elsinore and stated that he was in the merchant navy before arriving in the Falkland Islands 4 May 1841 as a seaman on board the sealing schooner *Montgomery*. John, age 42, died 30 October 1853 from the effects of drink.

The first lease of Berkeley Sound Station was in 1867 to William Alexander HILTON for 6,000 acres at £5/annum. In 1875 Timothy ROBSON, Thomas SHARP and George SMITH were in partnership for the Cape Carysfort section. On 7 April 1887 George SMITH & Thomas SHARP entered into a partnership for Berkeley Sound Farm which now consisted of 36,000 acres. Thomas retired to Scotland in 1900 and died in 1917. His daughter Mary, who had married John LUXTON in 1895, stayed and their descendants still live in the Falkland Islands.



Loch Head Shanty