



SOUTH GEORGIA POSTAL HISTORY 1841 - 1945 INCLUDING VISITING ANTARCTIC EXPEDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

South Georgia (SG) Postal History begins in 1841 with an entire with a report of sealing at South Georgia. CA Larsen returned in 1904 to build the first whale oil refinery at Grytviken, fed by whales harpooned

by company catchers. Technology and labour were Norwegian but funding Argentinean. The venture prospered, rivalry and variants evolved using off shore and pelagic factory ships. Administration as a Dependency of the Falkland Islands (FI) was by Falklands' Colonial officers applying British law. SG's only post office (PO) opened at Grytviken in 1909, adopting FI postage rates, practises and stamps (until 1944). The exhibit includes Polar Expeditions stopping en route to the ice, and ends as peace returns post WWII.

PURPOSE & SCOPE

This postal history exhibit focuses on mail, initially predating Grytviken PO followed by mail franked by loaned FI datestamp and then by a 'South Georgia' unit (SG1). It evolves with mail from whalers and other users of PO services: within the FI colony (internally), Empire or 'UPU', overseas where Universal Postal Union rates applied; registered, airmail etc, plus markings and labels applied locally or in transit, worldwide. The SG PO suffered supply issues, solutions are shown. It ends in 1945 - SG in crisis: Norwegian Government restored, men and ships scarce, all whaling stations, except Pesca, shut but to open shortly.

PLAN

(Chapter)	(Pages)
1. Years of Isolation, 1841-1909	
1.1 Earliest SG Entire ex Sealing Expedition	2
1.2 Expeditions: Earliest Mail	3
1.3 Swedish South Polar Expedition, 1901-03	4
1.4 Project 'PESCA'	5 - 6
1.5 Inward Mail Routes, 1905 - 11	7 - 8
1.6 Early Mail Originating South Georgia	9
2. Pioneering Era; 1909 to 1913	
2.1 "South Georgia" Handstamped Mail	10 - 12
2.2 First "South Georgia" Datestamp	13 - 24
2.3 Inward Book Post	25
2.4 Datestamped at New Island	26
2.5 Early Mail Originating South Georgia	27
2.6 'Paid at/At South Georgia' Provisionals	28- 33
2.7 German South Polar Expedition (GSPE)	34 - 36
2.8 SS <i>Imberhorne</i> , & Private Mail, Leith Harbour	37 - 39
3. A Time of Importance; 1913 to 1929	
3.1 South Georgia Stamps	40 - 41
3.2 Expedition Mail	42 - 44
3.3 Postcards	45 - 49
3.4 Internal & Empire Mail	50 - 51
3.5 Censor Mail	52 - 57
3.6 UPU Mail	58 - 63
3.7 Provisionals	64 - 67
3.8 Registered Mail	68 - 74
3.9 Transit Mail	75 - 77
3.10 Postal Stationery	78 - 81
4. Era of Stability; 1929 to 1938	
4.1 Postcards	82 - 84
4.2 Internal & Empire Mail	85 - 88
4.3 Shortage of Datestamp for Year "32".	89 - 90
4.4 UPU Surface Mail	91 - 95
4.5 Transit Mail	96
4.6 Double Rate Mail	97 - 98
4.7 Postal Stationery	99
4.8 Expedition Mail	100 - 105
4.9 Telegrams	106
4.10 Registered Mail	107 - 110
4.11 Argentine Taxed Mail	111
5. Years of Disruption; 1938 to 1945	
5.1 Consignee's Mail	112
5.2 Pre-War Mail	113 - 115
5.3 Censor Mail	116 - 122
5.4 Postal Stationery	123
5.5 Operation Tabarin	124
5.6 The South Georgia Dependency Era	125 - 128



PLAN STRUCTURE & CONTENT

The exhibit is structured chronologically in five chapters, each of which has first page header box grey shaded. Their content is listed in 'PLAN'. C indicates an expert certificated item.

RARITY & HIGHLIGHTS

Rarity is based on personal, auction and specialists' records compiled over many years as a 5,000+ FI and SG cover index. Important items, most mounted within red boxes are listed below

1 - Years of Isolation (Frame 1; Sheets 2-9)

1841 Entire, the earliest known item of SG mail, 1883 German Postcard from first IPY Expedition to SG; 1902 Swedish Antarctic Expedition Postcard, earliest written in SG waters & 1904 Argentine Postcard en route to SG both from CA Larsen; 1909 Postcard to Norway written on SG and posted in Argentina.

2 - Pioneering Years (Frames 1 to 3; Sheets 10-39)

1909 Postcard with large 'SG' handstamp, from first mail from SG; 1910 Cover with small 'SG' handstamp; 1910 Postcard with Earliest datestamp SG1; 1910 Earliest possible Registered Cover; 1911 KEVII 2½d bisect tied to piece, unique; 1911 Postcard GSPE to Germany, taxed, four known; 1912 'Paid At' covers - EBB initialled at 1d Empire & JIW at 1d printed matter, both unique rates; 1911 Taxed postcard stamped 'Insuf./ Postage / 1d.'; 1912 Private Mail between whaling stations, Husvik to Leith Harbour.

3 - Time of Importance (Frames 3 to 6; Sheets 40-81)

1915 Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition postcard sent by L Hussey, Inward cover, 1922 Postcard telling of Shackleton's death; 1917 Cover Censored at SG, unique; 1928 Provisional Surcharge Cover to Norway; correctly rated, rare; 1923 Bisects on cover to USA - 2½d unique & 6d, another known; 1920, 1923, 1924 & 1929 Registered covers, and parcel piece, with provisional registration labels; 1918 & 1920 Covers sent from Tristan da Cunha in transit at SG.

4 - Era of Stability (Frames 6 to 8; Sheets 82-111)

1930 2d Bisect postcard (only two known); 1930 Cover sent unfranked duly penalised with Norway postage dues; 1931 FF 'Anglo-Norse' Expedition cover; 1932 Cover with short year slug (2 for (19)32 cancel) 1929 Whaling cover ex Godthul Harbour, recent discovery; 1930 Covers with provisional registration markings; 1933 Two covers to Argentina, taxed as Centenary stamps unacceptable.

5 - Years of Disruption (Frame 8; Sheets 112-128)

1939 & 1940 Censor postcards; 1941 'Consignee's Letter', unique; 1940 Censor 'Paquebot' cover to Norway, unique; 1940 Cover to Norway with 'Postal Services Suspended etc' marking; 1944 Operation Tabarin Official covers, 1945 Censor Cover to Red X.

PERSONAL STUDY, RESEARCH & REFERENCES

Visitor to SG, many times to FI, researcher at 'Jane Cameron' National, Stanley and local PO Archives plus SG and England; publisher of Articles and Findings in magazines at international, national and club level, in English and French; Author of "South Georgia Provisional Paid at/At Handstamp, 1911-12" pub. 2013; and editorial team member for Specialised Stamp Catalogue of FI & Dependencies, to which reference is made in the exhibit.

REFERENCE

PESCA by Ian B Hart, published 2001, revised 2021.
Whaling in FI Dependencies, 1904~31, by Ian Hart (2006)
The Island of South Georgia by Robert Headland (1984)

SYNOPSIS FOR LIBEREC 2022

1. Years of Isolation, 1841-1909

NEW YORK
NOV 27
SHIP
Francis S. Matthews
of Hingham
Connecticut
W. S. A.

TARJETA

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE

URUGUAY

NÜRNBERG

Herrn W. Trostsch, Magistratsdiurnist
Nürnberg
Germany

UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
Cap-Vert
CARTE POSTALE

13-1

14110

Frl. Sigrid. Bang.
Maurer.
Via Linsberg.
Königsberg
Frankfurt

Desde lado só se escreve a direcção.
Côté réservé à l'adresse.


2. Pioneering Era: 1909 to 1913

Union postale universelle.
TARJETA POSTAL — CARTE POSTALE.

Fran W. Minstorf.
Leipzig bei Altona.
Germany

Hella Brandt.

En este lado debe escribirse únicamente la dirección.


 S. R. Batis
 Buenos Aires.
 Argentina.
 Progreccion 15-27.

3. A Time of Importance; 1913 to 1929

POST CARD

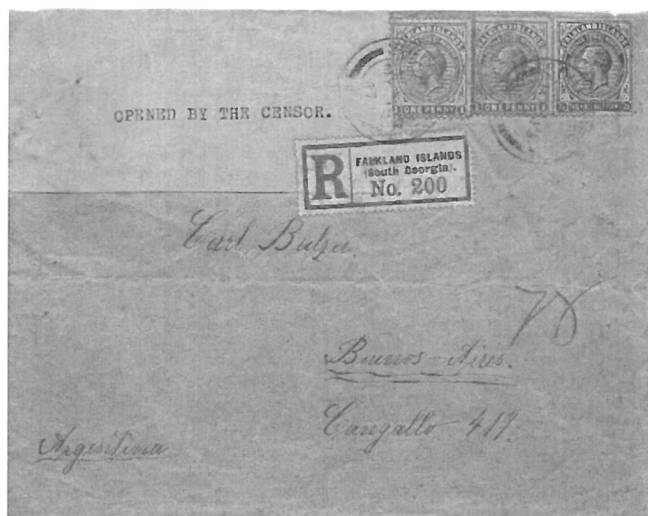
For inland use only. This card may now
be used for foreign communication.

161, York Road, London E.C. 4

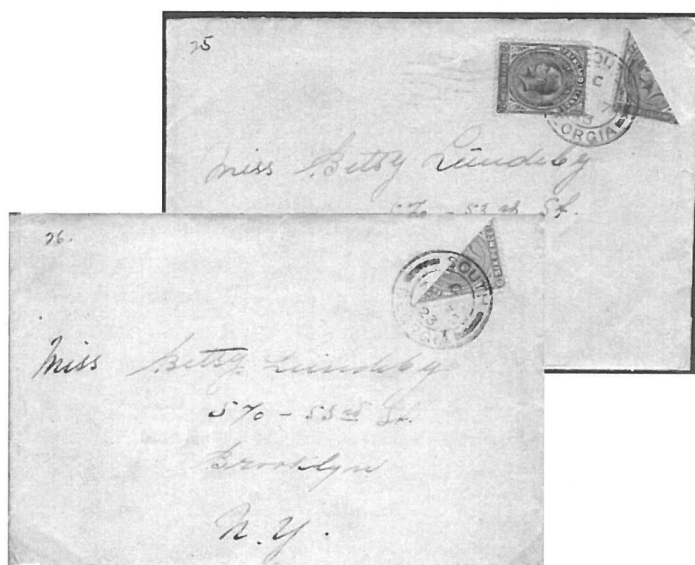
Mr & Mrs. Mussey
80 Mt. Pleasant Rd.
Tottenham
London N.

ENGLAND

1915 Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition postcard sent
by L Hussey.



1917 Cover Censored at SG, unique
1922 Postcard telling of Shackleton's death; 1928
Provisional Surcharge Cover to Norway; correctly rated



1923 Bisects on cover to USA - 2½d unique & 6d,
another known;

1920 - 1929 Registered covers, and parcel piece, with
provisional registration labels; 1918 & 1920 Covers sent
from Tristan da Cunha in transit at SG.

4. Era of Stability; 1929 to 1938

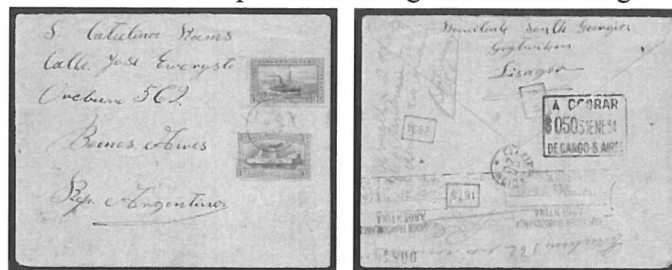
The post-depression era is extended to the end of 1937,
profitable times for whaling, especially pelagic. Postal
rates were stable, but with the odd shortage. Argentina
deemed the 1933 Centenary stamp set 'unacceptable',
taxing mail as if unfranked. Some of 'era highlights' -



1930 2d Bisect postcard

1930 Cover sent unfranked receiving Norway postage
dues; 1931 FF 'Anglo-Norse' Expedition cover; 1932

Cover with short year slug (2 for 1932 cancel) 1929 .
Whaling cover ex Godthul Harbour, recent discovery;
1930 Covers with provisional registration markings

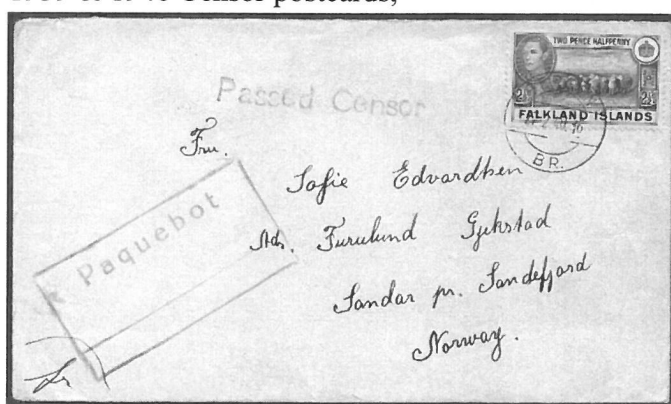


1932 2 Argentina taxed covers, deemed unpaid.

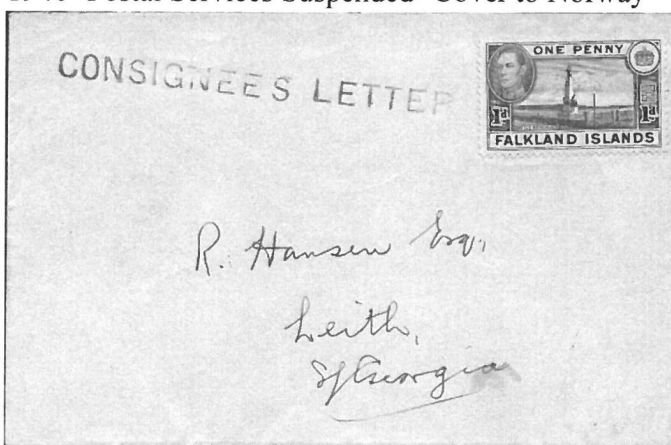
5. Years of Disruption; 1938 to 1945

The last chapter covers WWII and the two prior years of
increasing disruption. Whaling ceases at all but one
station from the start of the 1940 - 1941 season, and
Norway invaded. A selection follows :

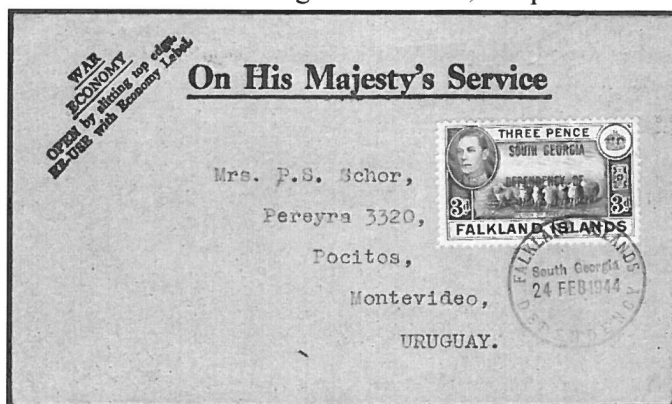
1939 & 1940 Censor postcards;



1940 Censor 'Paquebot' cover to Norway, unique;
1940 'Postal Services Suspended' Cover to Norway



1941 'Consignee's Letter', unique



1944 Official Operation Tabarin covers,
1945 Censor Cover to Red X ends the exhibit as WWII gives
way to peace. Whaling enters a new phase, short of resources,
and tighter regulations with declining whale populations.