Chapter three focuses on the Postal History of the 1930s, up to WW II, a ‘Period of Stability’ for postal services, without change to rates or routes. Whale and Penguin (W&P) definitives were released on 2 September 1929 and withdrawn on 29 March 1938, but unavailable throughout 1933. Likewise, when KGV Silver Jubilee and KGVI Coronation commemorative issues were on sale, equivalent value W&P stamps were off sale at the PO.

Printed Matter Empire rate was ½d per 2 oz, from 25 December 1898 - 13 February 1966

1937 (24 April) - Postcard at 1d rate datestamped SG2 to Stanley

Pesca’s *Harpon II* sailed that day, bound for Buenos Aires with four bags of mail

1937 (10 February) - Postcard at Empire 1d Postcard Rate, datestamp SG2

*Discovery II* departing from South Georgia to Stanley arriving 19 February 1937 continuing next day carried by SS *Lafontia* to Montevideo
During October 1930, Grytviken Post Office suffered a shortage of both ½d and 1d postage stamps, two of the top three most popular values. The problem was resolved by the initiative of the Acting Magistrate who took it upon himself to authorise bisecting of 2d stamps thereby alleviating the emergency, each half to do duty as 1d.

½d or 1d stamps were required for both Empire 1 oz letter and postcard rates

**1930 BISECT**

Sender of this postcard reported from “Grytviken, South Georgia, 9 Oct 1930 …Have run out of ½d & 1d stamps”

**1930 (10 October) - Postcard with bisected W&P 2d tied by datestamp SG1**

Postcard [Heyburn AD2-2-adz] was sent by a member of the over-wintering maintenance gang using a half of a bisected 2d stamp to pay the 1d Empire postcard rate to Twickenham. Despite the comment “mail leaves tomorrow”, available shipping records do not list any such vessel or departure

Only two postcards are known franked with a bisected 2d, both datestamped by SG1, 10 October 1930
Between the two visits p.a. (typically) by Stanley’s SS *Fitzroy*, SG - FI mail travelled mostly at Pesca’s courtesy

1936 (October 27) - Cover inward at 1d internal rate from Fox Bay, datestamp FB.1

Brought from Stanley by SS *Fitzroy* setting out on 29 October 1936 arriving Grytviken on 2 November

1931 (January 10) - Cover at internal rate to Stanley, datestamp SG2; arrival PS.1, 22 JA 30 [year error for 31]

*Don Ernesto* [Pesca whale-catcher] departed 15 January with 50 bags of mail brought from England by RRS *William Scoresby* for Stanley arriving 21 JA 31, outbound 23 JA 31, return to Grytviken
Mid-season overseas mail was often taken by ships of opportunity; supply ships, tankers, were often selected.

1930 (11 December) Cover “Per SS Pecten” at Empire 1d rate, SG2 datestamp

*SS Pecten* was a tanker supplying whaling stations with fuel oil, logged outbound 11 December with mail

1936 (11 February) Whaling Cover at Empire 1d rate, datestamp SG4

Mail taken by Salvesen’s tanker *Peder Bogen* sailing on 15 February 1936 bound for Las Palmas with two bags of mail
3. Period of Stability

3.3 : SHORTAGE of DATESTAMP for YEAR “32”

Datestamps were equipped with two sets of insertable slugs, one for months (‘JA’ to ‘DE’) of a year and the other numbered ‘1’ - ‘31’ for use as days of a month and year, last two digits but limited to (19)31; no later. From 1 January 1932, mail could not be cancelled meeting UPU regulations without some corrective action.

Cover with 1932 datestamp SG2, JA 9 2; first solution - use of a single ‘2’ for year ‘32’

Local mail was backstamped SG1, 10 JA 2 [See scan at 80%]
This format of SG1 only seen on 10 January 1932.

Overseas mail not backstamped.
Taken by RRS Discovery II on 9 February, arriving Stanley 13 February, thence by SS Lafonia departing 13 March for Montevideo and onward by a RMS steamer to England.

This cover pair show the one day only’2’ for ‘32’ for datestamp SG2, JA 9 2 and similarly: 10 JA 2 for SG1.
3. Period of Stability

3.3 : SHORTAGE of DATESTAMP for YEAR “32”

Another 32 slug in a different font was fortuitously insertable, aided by a file, into SG2 datestamp year slot

1932 (28 March) Cover datestamped with early usage of second solution inserted in SG2

This arrangement was deployed almost all the year in datestamp SG2.
Dartmouth, Devon 2 MY 32 arrival marking

1932 (12 November) Cover with late usage of second solution in datestamp SG2

This registered (label type SG5) double rate cover was delayed 12 November - 24 December, before collection by SS Fleurus for passage to Stanley. Held until 14 January 1933, when despatched by SS Lafonia to Montevideo.

Last known date of the second solution - 19 December (19)32

“32” Year slugs were received by the Grytviken Post Office in November 1932
3. Period of Stability

Mail in transit from South Shetlands was registered at Grytviken as required, the service not being offered at source. Only one overseas mail in 1930s from Stanley was shipped to Montevideo, routed via South Georgia.

TRANSIT MAIL FROM STANLEY, FI FOR HARROGATE, ENGLAND

1937 Cover; Stanley PS.1A datestamp, (30) OC (37) sent an unusual route to England. SS Lafonia set out that day, with Falkland overseas and SG inbound mail, with a stop-over at Grytviken to offload SG bags and collect five more overseas bags. She left on 2 November bound for Montevideo to deliver the bags for onward shipment to Liverpool.

IN TRANSIT SOUTH SHETLANDS MAIL REGISTERED AT SOUTH GEORGIA

1930 Cover Empire, 1d + 3d registered rate, datestamp SS.2, MR 8 30 to South Africa. Taken by unknown vessel to South Georgia, transit stamped SG1, 11 MY 30 and registration completed affixing SG label type 4A, despatched 9 June by SS Fleurus to Stanley, and onward shipment on 17 July to London by MV Loriga.
3. Period of Stability

3.5 : DOUBLE RATE MAIL

Double rate/weight mail cost twice as much, but the current UPU rate charged only 1½d per each extra ounce

EMPIRE & INTERNAL RATES: 1d, plus 1d per additional, or part, ounce, 1 October 1907 to 30 April 1948

1932 (5 March) Cover Empire 2oz (1d x 2), rate; tied by datestamp SG2 with 32 (filed ‘32’) year slug

SS *Fleurus* left 19 March for Stanley with mail; whence onward transmission of UK mail routed via Montevideo

1937 (15 January) OHMS Cover, Empire 2oz (1d x 2) rate, datestamp SGI

Taken that day by HMS *Ajax* returning with mail to Stanley
From there, UK mail was despatched onward by ship via Montevideo to Liverpool
The LT Jones correspondence emanated from AG Nelson Jones, Magistrate’s Clerk and Assistant Postmaster.

1930 (March 3) Empire, 2oz Registered rate, 1d x 2 + 3d, tied by datestamp SG1

Provisional Registration label, type SG4A, in use in February - August 1930

UPU RATE: 2½d, plus 1½d per additional, or part, ounce, 1 January 1926 to 31 August 1940

1931 (31 December) Whaling Cover, UPU 2 oz rate, tied by SG2 datestamp

By Discovery II on 8 February 1932 to Stanley whence onward via Montevideo; Tønsberg arrival datestamp, 6.II.32
Whaling technology advanced so that by mid 1920s Whaling Expeditions could operate Floating Factory (FF) ships pelagically in international waters free of any land services, without national control or taxation.

PELAGIC WHALING MAIL, 1931

**FF ANGLO-NORSE II**

Licensed by the Falkland Islands Government to fish pelagically off the South Sandwich Islands, FF Anglo-Norse II completed two profitable seasons, 1929–30 and 1930–31, with Edward Beveridge Binnie on board, appointed the Expedition Secretary.

1931 (March 7) Whaling Expeditionary Cover at 1d internal rate, datestamp SG1

Sent by Edward B Binnie to his elder brother, Thomas Binnie; probably transferred from FF Anglo-Norse II by an off-duty whale catcher on a mail run to Grytviken.

From there was taken by SS Fleurus on to Stanley, logged inbound 2 April 1931.

The first Anglo Norse ex Montcalm, built 1897, operated at the South Sandwich whaling ground for 1927–28 and 1928–29 seasons.

The second Anglo Norse II, ex Maricopa built 1914, worked the same whaling ground for the next two seasons.
During more than 25 years (1925 ~ 1951) of pioneering work, Committee’s research ships collected vast amounts of data published in 38 volumes, contributing greatly to the knowledge of southern regions. Particularly extensive was the new data on South Georgia. *Discovery I* (Scott’s ship), *William Scoresby* & *Discovery II* played a vital role.

### ‘DISCOVERY’ EXPEDITION

**1933 (6 March) ‘Discovery’ Expedition Cover datestamp SG2**

![Image](image1)

‘Discovery’ Expedition.

Carried at Empire 1d postcard rate by SS *Fleurus*, departing 17 April to Stanley, docking on 22 April

**1933 (27 December) Postcard ex RRS *Discovery II* datestamp PS.1A**

![Image](image2)

*Discovery II* at that time was at Stanley, inbound from South Georgia, shortly to sail for Auckland NZ. With oval “Royal Research Ship / Discovery II” cachet, sent at Empire 1d rate, taken by SS *Lafonia* on 6 January 1934, cleared for Montevideo.

**1929 (5 November) Registered cover from Stanley, datestamp PS.1B**

![Image](image3)

Sent from RRS *William Scoresby*, docked at Stanley 3 until 8 November when she left for South Georgia. Arrived Dartmouth, 17 DE 29
Committee ships RRS *Discovery* (Robert Scott’s ship), William Scoresby & *Discovery II* played a vital role.

‘DISCOVERY’ COMMITTEE

1936 (Possibly 21 October) Cover at 1d Empire rate datestamp SG4

Addressed when R.R.S. *Discovery II* was at Grytviken to FH Harper, Secretary of Discovery Committee

1937 (18 January) Cover at Empire 1d rate, datestamp SG2

Written by James Marr, a Biologist aboard SS *Discovery II* to his fiancée, later to be his wife. In 1943 Lieutenant Commander James S Marr RN was appointed Expedition Leader of Operation Tabarin
3. Period of Stability

3.7: ARGENTINE TAXED MAIL

Argentine authorities deemed FI Centenary stamps unacceptable, such covers were judged unpaid and thus taxed, Argentine markings on reverse

UPU SURFACE

1933 (December 30) Cover to Buenos Aires, datestamp SG2, taken by SS Sevilla early January 1934

Part copy of cover’s reverse (50% size) showing many Argentine markings including boxed $050 tax mark, 31 ENE 34 calculated for an ‘internal’ letter

1933 (December 30) Cover to Captain of SS Tijuca, Pesca cargo barque, at Registered (label type 5) UPU rate, datestamp SG2

Part copy of cover’s reverse (80% size) showing Buenos Aires arrival datestamp, 17 ENE (January) (19)34 and $0.90 (for registered letter) tax mark, 18 ENE 34

Sender AGNJ [Alfred George Nelson-Jones, SG Magistrate], initials at lower left.

Very few covers with Centenary stamps and taxed by the Argentine are known from South Georgia
3. Period of Stability

3.8 : UPU SURFACE MAIL

Mid-season despatch of overseas mails was at the mercy of ‘ships of opportunity’ eg returning supply ships.

1933 (December 30) Whaling Cover at UPU rate, 2½d, datestamp SG2

Sender KM Henriksen, a Pesca employee, “Grytviken, Syd Georgia”, Arrival Sandefjord 13.II.34 datestamp

1936 (25 November) Whaling Cover at UPU rate, 2½d, datestamp SG1

Sender HJ Henriksen, H/B [Whale catcher] Bouvet 3 servicing FF Salvestria
The Hansen - Mobraaten whaling correspondence sent from Leith Harbour spanned three seasons between 1934 and 1937, including one overwintering (May to October 1935). Initially he wrote to Frk Mobraaten, his girl-friend, but later his letters were addressed to Fru Astrid Hansen Mobraaten who by then was his wife.

1935 (February) Cover at 2½d UPU rate datestamped in England by PAQUEBOT / POSTED AT SEA

On 17 February 1935, Salvesen’s tanker Albuera II left South Georgia cleared for Las Palmas and on to England with two bags of mail, and this letter, but was it processed outside Grytviken PO? En route, however, on arrival at an English port PO, it was sorted and ‘Paquebot’ stamped.

RRS Discovery II set course from South Georgia with the mail on 12 November 1936 to arrive at Stanley, 17 November. SS Fitzroy, departing on 20 November, transported the resorted overseas mail to Montevideo for onward carriage by ship to England, resorted and thence Norway.

1936 (4 November) Cover at 2½d UPU rate to Norway datestamp SG2

Hvittingfoss is an inland village not far from the town Holmestrand in northern Vestfold County, South Norway.
3. Period of Stability

3.8: UPU SURFACE MAIL

Normal/abnormal mail treatment applied to another whaling correspondence at Salvesen’s Leith Harbour

1937 Pair of covers to Norway, both ex Nilsen correspondence

Upper sent through South Georgia mail system, SG2 datestamp, 1 MR 37 and Tønsberg receiver, 1.IV.37; Lower bypassed Grytviken Post Office but datestamped on arrival at Port of Tønsberg, 19.IV.37, and local receiver, Nøtterøy, 19.IV.37 (Nøtterøy is the old way of spelling Nøtterøy)
Sorting of the outbound mail for despatch was simple - local bag (Stanley), overseas either Argentina and other South American countries or London for all other countries, plus similar group of bags for registered.

**RETURNED TO SENDER**

**1934 Cover to Norway not datestamped at South Georgia**

Datestamped (on back) on arrival at Oslo, 6.1.35; not delivered hence endorsed “Ukjendt / Inconnu” (also on back) meantime on the front - “RETUR” with Oslo machine datestamp, 14.1.35 plus, en route, London, 28 JA 35

**REGISTERED to AMERICA**

**1930 (21 June) Cover Registered (Provisional Label SG4A) to USA datestamp SG1**

Taken by SS *Fleurus* to Stanley (6 June) and onward 20 July by SS *Falkland* to Montevideo; Detroit arrival August 28
3. Period of Stability 3.8 UPU SURFACE MAIL

Bryde and Dahls Hvalfangereiskap A/s, a Norwegian company, processed their whale carcasses with off-shore Floating Factory ships, Aviemore (1908 ~11); Admiralen (1909 ~ 10) and Thor I (1910 ~ 17 and again 1922 ~ 29) supported with limited on-shore facilities.

WHALING MAIL - GODTHUL HARBOUR

1929 (5 March) Cover, at 2½d UPU rate, datestamp SG2

Letter dated 4/3-29 enclosed, mail taken by FF Orwell returning to Norway, departing Grytviken 10 March 1929 with two bags of mail. Transit stamped Sandefjord, 18.IV.29

Thoralf Hystad worked on board the whale catcher Thor Senior feeding FF Thor I, anchored in Godthul Harbour, and wrote not infrequently to his fiancée. Whenever Thor Senior returned to South Georgia he would take the opportunity to mail his letters to Gudrun

Before the Thoralf Hystad - Gudrun Abrahamsen correspondence surfaced in 2013, surviving mail from Godthul Harbour was unknown
WHALING MAIL - UNFRANKED AND TAXED

1930 (17 November) Cover unfranked but datestamped SG2

Taxed in blue crayon “T 50c” (equal to Norwegian 60 øre)

Reverse of cover, reproduced at 80% size
Tax collected with two Norway 30ø definitives, tied by “T” within circle and Sandefjord 27.XI.30 datestamp
Sender T Olsen, SS Shoma (a Salvesen whale catcher), LH (Leith Harbour)

Much of the Olsen correspondence suffered when the stamp was cut out and replaced, but this cover not so!
3. Period of Stability

3.9: REGISTERED MAIL

More months, February to August 1930, without true SG registration labels was resolved by free hand SG4A

PRINTED MATTER

UPU Rate of ½d per 2 oz from 25 December 1898 to 30 June 1953

1930 (9 April) UPU Printed Matter, registered, ½d + 3 d rate, tied by datestamp SG2

Provisional Registration label, type SG4A, in use in February - August 1930 a time of label shortage between labels type SG4 and SG5; taken by SS Fleurus, departing 22 April for Stanley with mail

EMPIRE MAIL, SINGLE REGISTERED RATE

1935 (25 December) Cover at Empire registered, label type 5, 1d + 3d, rate tied by datestamp SG4

Taken by Pesca’s Harpon bound for St Vincent, departing 30 November with three bags of mail
This early Airmail philatelic cover, sent by favour, was flown by the pioneering French airline ‘Compagnie Générale Aéropostale’, which established air routes between Paris and South America from the mid 1920s overflying Africa and the Atlantic Ocean. Montevideo was the nearest city / airport so connected.

AIRMAIL

1930 (21 June) Airmail Cover, Registered with Provisional Label SG4A datestamp SG2

This cover was taken firstly by sea to Stanley where the route endorsement was added by the hand of Maude Carey, Colonial Postmaster, and the conventional Stanley type 5D registration label was affixed to replace the provisional type SG4A (now partially erased) and thence, again by sea, to Montevideo. Transferred to the Airport, the journey - flown over Brazil to St Louis, Senegal, to Paris - ended in London.