4. Years of Disruption

1938 and 8 months of 1939 were quiet, before the storm of WW II broke affecting even remote South Georgia

1938 (January 28) Whaling cover, 2½d UPU rate to Nötterö, Norway datestamp SG1

Taken by SS Coronda bound for Dakkar on 29 January. Tønsberg transit, 12.III.38
Sent by R Danielsen aboard FF Sourabaya, a Salvesen factory ship

1938 (28 July) Whaling cover, 2½d UPU rate, to Teie, Norway datestamp SG1

Sent by Karl J Gjertsen, from Leith Harbour
Capt Gjertsen of the Norwegian Navy had been CA Larsen’s ice pilot aboard Sir James Clark Ross first season off the ice shelf, Ross Sea in 1923. Larsen died aboard his ship in the Ross Sea, November 1924.
Peace time regulations continued through 1938 and 1939 but very soon after the Declaration of War restrictions and censorship were enforced. Mail could be censored at source and in transit. South Georgia appointed its own censors using local markings. Internal mail was not exempt but equally not all internal mail was examined.

Christian Salvesen’s whaling station was sited at Leith Harbour, South Georgia. The envelope flap bears an oval impression of “Falkland Islands Company Limited, Stanley”, owner-operators of SS Fitzroy, [inter-island steamer, cargo and passenger transporter], inter alia visited South Georgia 12 - 15 October 1941, bringing 3 bags of mail.

Consignee’s mail was that sent by, or to, owners, charterers, or consignees of a vessel, inbound or outbound, to owners, shippers or consignees of any cargo transported by that vessel.

Local mail rates applied, irrespective of the country of origination.

This is the only handstamped “Consignees Letter” cover known from the Falkland King George VI period.
4. Years of Disruption

4.3: Censor Mail

With the loss of several Norwegian whale factory ships to German raiders in January 1941, and the German invasion of Norway April 1940, censored whaling mail to Norway is seen only from the 1939-40 season.

MAIL CENSORSHIP AT SOUTH GEORGIA

WW II Censorship was authorised by the Governor throughout the period 25 August 1939 to 31 July 1945.

The Censor was equipped with two handstamps: “Opened by Censor”, and “Passed Censor”. Markings were mostly in shades of mauve/violet ink, but only a few known in black ink, so rare.

1939 (December 17) Censored Cover sent at 2½d UPU rate to Norway, datestamp SG3

An early example of South Georgia censored mail with the ‘Passed Censor’ [Upright ‘P’] marking. Carried by Pesca’s Harpon leaving South Georgia with four bags of mail on 5 January 1940 for Stanley.

Norwegian whaling expeditions did not resume until after cessations of World War II hostilities.
EMPIRE POSTCARD RATE - 1d rate, January 1892 to 13 February 1966
1940 (5 April) SG Censored [Leaning ‘P’, Passed Censor] Postcard to Great Britain datestamp SG3


UPU POSTCARD RATE - 2d rate, 1 September 1940 to 30 June 1953
1940 (30 October) Censored (in Britain) Postcard datestamped SG3, via UK to New York

Taken by SS Lafonia departing with three bags of mail on 2 November 1940, returning to Stanley
KGV Whale & Penguin 2d was invalidated 30 September 1951

Above the only censored Empire, and below the only censored UPU, Postcards known to the Exhibitor
The “Opened by Censor” marking had a brief life - October 1939 to October 1940. It is usually found tying brown tape applied by the censor on South Georgia to reseal the envelope after being opened for examination.

**1939 Censored Cover at 1d Commonwealth rate to Edinburgh, SG3 datestamp**

Classic example from a whaling correspondence, believed to be cancelled in 1939

**1939 (December 17) Censored Cover to London, datestamp SG3**

Incorrectly franked paying 2½d UPU rate in place of the 1d Empire rate; despatched on 5 January 1940 per SS *Harpon* destination UK
“Passed Censor” marking applied by South Georgia censors is seen in two states, with ‘P’ of ‘Passed’ either upright or sloping. Usage throughout the war in mauve ink has been recorded and occasionally in black ink.

1941 (14 October) Censored Cover to Stanley; datestamp SG3

Upright ‘P’ marking in black, a rare cover. Taken next day by SS *Fitzroy* ex Grytviken making for Stanley

1940 25 April) Censor Cover, Leaning ‘P’ marking in mauve, datestamp SG3; Stanley arrival PS.2, 6 MY 40

SS *Fitzroy* left Stanley and returned on 6 May 1940 inbound from Montevideo via South Georgia
4. Years of Disruption

4.3: CENSOR MAIL

“Paquebot” mail censored at South Georgia and posted from South Atlantic whaling grounds to Norway

FF Vestfold leaving Grytviken on 20 November 1939, worked pelagically for her last season in the South Atlantic between longitude 0° and westward towards South Georgia / South Shetlands with some expedition mail taken to Bergen, bypassing Grytviken, perhaps by a returning tanker transporting refined whale oil.

1940 Censored Whaling ‘Paquebot’ [Hoskin No 323] cover to Norway

Date stamped on arrival in Norway at Bergen, 27.2.40
Sent by E Edvardtsen, a South Georgia whaler working on FF Vestfold (her last whaling season) to his wife

FF Vestfold left the whaling grounds for Montevideo, arriving 10 March 1940 en route to Halifax, Canada to join Convoy HX 38 departing 26 April 1940 as an oil tanker. Torpedoed by U 268 on 17 January 1943 on convoy HX 22, New York to Clyde, with 17,386 tons fuel oil; nineteen of her 75 crew lost their lives.

A unique combination of markings, no other similar Paquebot cover is known to the exhibitor.
80

4. Years of Disruption 4.3: CENSOR MAIL

“POSTAL SERVICES SUSPENDED / RETURN TO SENDER”

Germany invaded Norway on 9 April 1940 and the ensuing occupation lasted until the end of World War II

For obvious political reasons, mail en route to Norway was deemed undeliverable, and returned to sender.

1940 (20 February) Registered whaling cover from Stanley, Falkland Islands datestamp PS2

The cover was censored *en route* in England, and resealed by “Opened by Censor 259” label after examination. Postal services to Norway were suspended; a result of the invasion by German armed forces, and mail in transit was thus handstamped for RETURN TO SENDER by Royal Mail.

This British World War II marking is not known on mail from South Georgia

[Around five examples recorded on mail from the Falkland Islands]