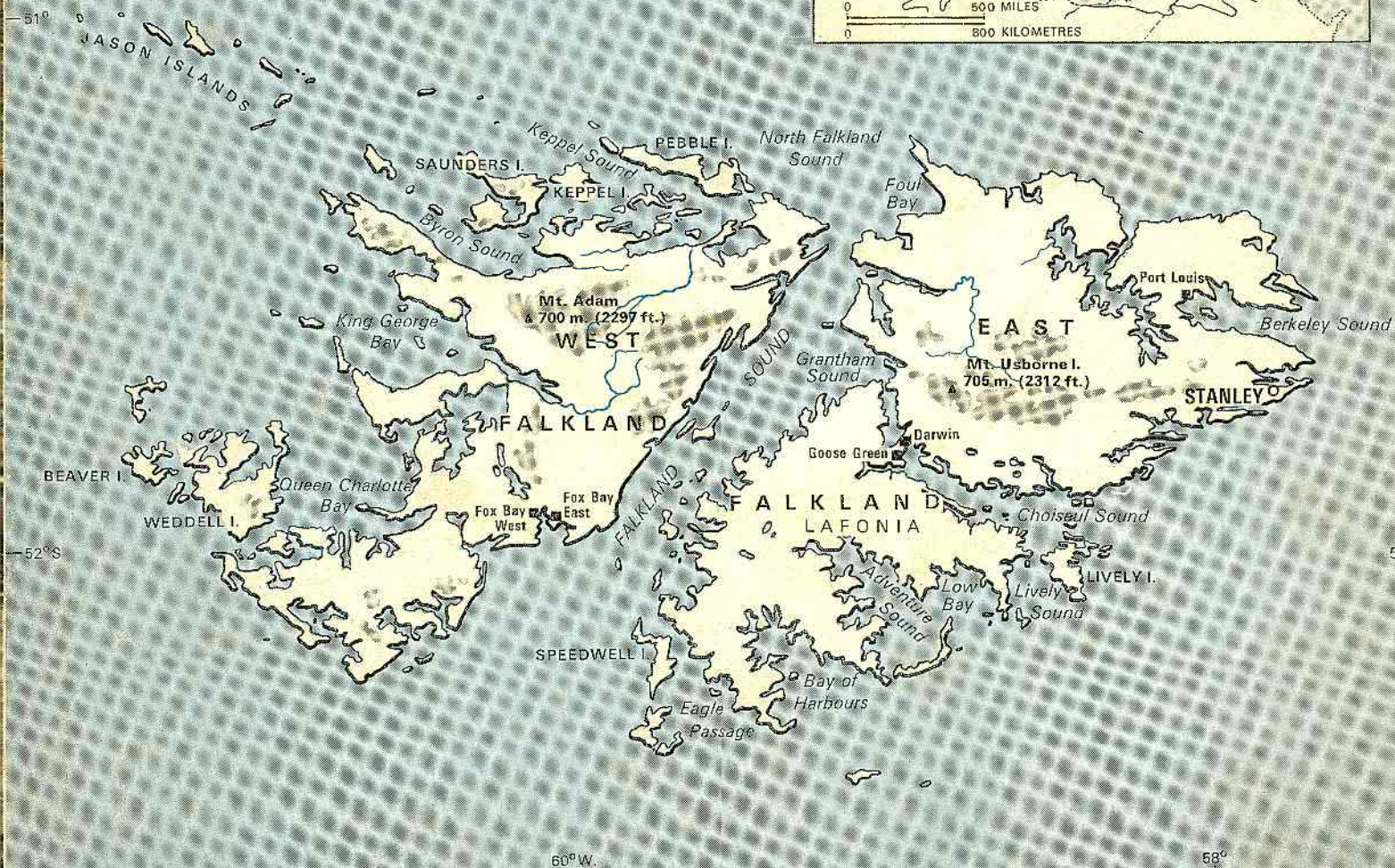


# The Falkland Islands and Dependencies







# The Falkland Islands and Dependencies

## The Falkland Islands

### Location and Area

The Falkland Islands lie in the South Atlantic, some 480 miles (772.5 km) north-east of Cape Horn, between longitudes 61° and 57° west and latitudes 51° and 53° south. The islands number some 200, with a total land area of about 4,700 square miles (12,173 km<sup>2</sup>).

### Geographical Features

There are two large islands, East Falkland and West Falkland. The coastline is deeply indented and affords several good anchorages. The surface everywhere is hilly except in Lafonia, the southern half of East Falkland; the highest points are Mount Osborne in East Falkland, which rises to 705 metres (2,312 feet), and Mount Adam in West Falkland, with a height of 700 metres (2,297 feet). There are no large inland waters. A characteristic feature of the treeless moorland scenery is the 'stone runs' – long 'rivers' of angular quartzite boulders.

### Climate

The main feature of the Falklands' weather is the wind which blows for much of the year.

Climatic figures for Stanley are:

Mean annual temperature .. .. .	5.6°C (42°F)
Mean annual wind speed .. .. .	17 knots
Mean annual rainfall .. .. .	635 mm (25 in)
Annual maximum temperature around .. ..	21.1°C (70°F)
Annual minimum temperature around .. ..	–5.6°C (22°F)

The weather, in fact, is by no means as bad as these figures indicate. The islands are on the same latitude south as England is north and enjoy more hours of sunshine than is registered in an average year at Kew Gardens. The sunlight indeed tends to be stronger than in Britain on account of the very clear atmosphere.

### Population

At 31 December 1973 the estimated population was 1,874, nearly all of British descent. About 80 per cent were born in the islands; most can trace their origins in the territory back to the nineteenth century and more than 1,000 to 1850 or earlier. In 1973 the birth rate was 20.79 and the death rate 6.4 per 1000 inhabitants. English is the language of the islanders. There are Anglican, Roman Catholic and Nonconformist churches.

Stanley, the capital (population 1,081 at 1972 census), is the only town. In the Camp, the countryside other than Stanley, the largest settlement is at Goose Green on East Falkland where there are some 100 residents.

N.B.—This fact sheet is intended to be used for reference purposes. It may be freely used in preparing articles, speeches, broadcasts, etc. No acknowledgement is necessary. Please note the date of preparation.

### History

The Falkland Islands were probably sighted by the English captain John Davis in 1592 but the first authenticated sighting was that of the Dutch sailor Sebald de Weert in 1600. The first known landing was in 1690 by Captain John Strong, who gave the islands their English name after Viscount Falkland, Treasurer of the Navy. French seal hunters, who were frequent visitors to the area in the eighteenth century, called the islands 'les Iles Malouines', from the port of St Malo; hence the Spanish designation, las Islas Malvinas.

In 1764 a small French colony, Port Louis, was established by de Bougainville in East Falkland. Three years later the settlement was handed over to Spain on payment of a sum equal to about £24,000. The Spaniards renamed the settlement Puerto de la Soledad. Meanwhile a British captain, John Byron, had made a comprehensive survey of West Falkland in 1765 and noted the fine anchorage in Saunders Island, which he named Port Egmont. In the following year Byron's subordinate, Captain Macbride, established a British settlement of about a hundred people at Port Egmont. When in 1770 a Spanish force compelled the British settlers to leave, this brought Spain and Britain to the verge of war, but in 1771, after protracted negotiations, the Spaniards handed back Port Egmont to Britain, which re-established the settlement but withdrew it again in 1774 on grounds of economy. The British claim to sovereignty was, however, maintained and, as was then customary, a leaden plaque left, declaring the Falkland Islands to be the 'sole right and property' of King George III. The Spanish settlement on East Falkland was withdrawn in 1811.

In 1820 the Buenos Aires Government, which had formally declared its independence of Spain in 1816, sent a ship to the Falkland Islands to proclaim its sovereignty. A settlement was established at Puerto de la Soledad in 1826 under the leadership of Luis Vernet, whom the Buenos Aires Government appointed Governor, despite British protests. Five years later, however, a United States warship, the *Lexington*, destroyed the fort at Soledad as a reprisal for the arrest of three American vessels by Vernet, who was attempting to establish control over sealing in the islands. Captain Silas Duncan, the commander of the *Lexington*, declared the Falklands free of all government and they remained once again without visible authority. In December 1832 a British warship visited the settlement; the Argentine garrison left under protest and the British occupation of the islands was resumed. The islands were at first put in charge of a naval officer, but in 1841 a civil Lieutenant-Governor was appointed, and in 1843 an Act of the British Parliament put the civil administration on a permanent footing and the Lieutenant-Governor's title was changed to Governor. The first Executive and Legislative Councils were set up in 1845.



Although there was a majority of official members in the Legislative Council until 1951, nominated unofficial members played an increasingly important part, and in 1949 members elected by universal adult suffrage were introduced to the council.

A grant in aid of the settlement was approved in 1841 and continued until 1880. A grant in aid for a mail service continued until 1884-85, since when the territory has been self-supporting. The development of the islands has been closely linked with the growth of the Falkland Islands Company, founded in 1851, which is now the largest landowner and trading company.

## Government

The present constitution of the Falkland Islands came into force on 21 September 1964. The government is administered by a Governor (at present Mr Neville Arthur Irwin French, MVO) aided by an Executive Council which is composed of two *ex officio* members, two unofficial members appointed by the Governor and two elected members of the Legislative Council elected by that council's elected and nominated independent members, and a Legislative Council composed of two *ex officio* members, two nominated independent members and four elected members.

Elections are by universal adult suffrage, Stanley being represented by two elected members and East and West Falkland by one each. General elections were held in 1971.

During 1975 a Select Committee of the Falkland Islands Legislative Council recommended certain changes in the territory's constitution. These are currently being considered by the British Government.

### The Judiciary

The judicial system of the colony and its dependencies is administered by a Supreme Court (there is a non-resident Supreme Court Judge), a Magistrates' Court presided over by the senior magistrate, and a court of summary jurisdiction, presided over by a bench of magistrates composed of two or more Justices of the Peace. On 1 July 1965 there was set up a Court of Appeal for the territory, sitting in London.

### Defence

Service in the Falkland Islands Defence Force is voluntary and part-time.

## The Economy

The grasslands of the Falkland Islands have in the past proved the only natural resource capable of effective economic exploitation. Cattle introduced by the French settlers of the eighteenth century ran wild and increased rapidly, being estimated in 1840 to number between 50,000 and 100,000. During the early years of the colony, the principal economic activity was the sale of beef to visiting ships. Within ten years, however, sheep began to replace the wild cattle, which were systematically slaughtered until, by 1880, they had been virtually exterminated.

During the period 1870-1900 sheep-farming developed rapidly, and between 1893 and 1899 there were more than 750,000 sheep in the islands. Since then the numbers of sheep have declined, largely because of deterioration of the richer grazing areas caused by overstocking. It was estimated that in 1971-72 there were over 634,000 sheep in the islands. In recent years scientific studies have been made of

methods of improving pastures and the sheep-farming industry. During 1973 the colony's first five-year Development Programme (covering the period 1973-78) was drawn up, and Britain is contributing to this plan at an annual rate of £50,000. Over half the funds required for its implementation will be met from British development aid: in 1973 development aid funds totalling £300,000 were allocated to boost developments in the sheep-farming industry and tourism and to build up the colony's infrastructure.

The Government is currently attempting to diversify the colony's economy. It is hoped to exploit the extensive beds of seaweed which are a feature of the colony's coastline, with a view to the production of dried milled kelp, or even the manufacture of calcium alginates. The possibility of establishing a viable fishing industry is also being investigated. There is a growing interest in tourism, stimulated by the introduction in 1972 of a weekly air service to and from the mainland. The colony's wild life provides the main attraction, but cruise ships also call and a brisk business in duty-free luxury goods is done by Stanley shopkeepers. The completion of a permanent airfield at Cape Pembroke Peninsula in 1976 is expected to give a further boost to the tourist industry and to the economy in general.

All land is freehold, except for some 28,100 acres (11,372 hectares) of Crown reserves which can be rented. Most land is divided into a few large farms, and nearly half is owned by the Falkland Islands Company.

No field crops are grown, except for a small quantity of oats grown for hay. Most householders grow their own vegetables.

### Labour

About half the male population of the colony is employed in sheep-farming. In Stanley the largest sources of employment are government and public services, trading and shipping. There is a periodic labour shortage and it is often necessary to recruit labour from overseas. There is no unemployment.

The only trade union is the Falkland Islands General Employees Union, a general union with some 500 members. Legislation is in force concerning minimum wages, working conditions, compensation for accidents at work, and providing for arbitration procedure in the unusual event of a labour dispute which cannot be settled by direct negotiation.

### External Trade

	Imports £	Domestic exports £	Re-exports £
1969.. ..	508,977	908,751	42,250
1970.. ..	610,435	803,105	22,189
1971.. ..	606,973	676,967	54,069
1972.. ..	651,579	1,118,379	35,081
1973.. ..	570,996	1,540,425	7,531

#### PRINCIPAL DOMESTIC EXPORTS BY QUANTITY AND VALUE

	Wool lb	£	Hides and skins lb	£
1969 ..	4,667,589	877,673	309,116	27,672
1970 ..	4,618,337	771,776	279,540	28,069
1971 ..	2,053,945*	651,955	172,680*	24,362
1972 ..	2,008,012*	1,095,448	115,494*	18,206
1973 ..	2,007,902*	1,462,757	85,110*	17,669

\*Kilogrammes.



Exports from the islands consist almost entirely of wool. The colony's largest imports are foodstuffs, manufactured goods, timber and machinery.

### Public Finance

	Revenue £	Expenditure £
1969-70 .. .. .	394,980	463,687
1970-71 .. .. .	519,688	498,222
1971-72 .. .. .	532,565	521,851
1972-73 .. .. .	609,843	669,439
1973-74* .. .. .	862,176	790,710
1974-75* .. .. .	940,000	908,000

\*Estimated.

The main sources of revenue in the financial year ended on 30 June 1973 were:

	£
Customs Duties .. .. .	56,801
Electricity .. .. .	52,590
Internal Revenue .. .. .	83,741
Post and Telecommunications .. .. .	72,602

and the main items of expenditure in the same year were:

	£
Education .. .. .	67,397
Medical .. .. .	73,929
Posts and Telecommunications .. .. .	54,376
Power and Electrical .. .. .	46,558
Public Works (recurrent and other) .. .. .	62,177
Secretariat, Treasury and Central Store .. .. .	55,070

### Taxation

Direct taxation is in the form of income tax, individuals paying a graduated tax ranging from 15p in every £ of the first £500 of taxable income to 45p in every £ exceeding £4500. Companies pay a flat rate of 35p in the £. A profits tax, levied at either 15p or 20p in the £ for unincorporated or incorporated bodies is payable in addition to income tax but is subject to a rebate or investment allowance of up to 50 per cent. Import duties are payable only on liquor, tobacco, and diesel oil. Since 1962 export duties have been removed from wool, tallow, hides and skins. Arrangements have been concluded with Britain, Canada, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland and the United States for the avoidance of double taxation.

### Currency and Banking

The currency is local coinage (introduced in May 1975) and local £5, £1 and 50p notes which are interchangeable with sterling at par.

There are no commercial banks but funds can be remitted abroad through the Treasury, or through agencies of Lloyds Bank Ltd and Hambros Bank. There is a Government Savings Bank which pays interest on deposits at 3½ per cent per annum. In June 1974 this held deposits of £71,258,761.

### Development

Between 1969 and 1973 British aid to the Falkland Islands and Dependencies totalled £443,000, mainly in grant form. More recently, Britain made a grant of £4.2 million for the construction of a permanent airport at Cape Pembroke, a

few miles outside Stanley: this is expected to be completed during 1976.

During 1974 57 professionally or technically qualified men and women were working in the Falkland Islands, financed under the British aid programme, mainly in the Education and Health Services. There were also six volunteers, mostly in the Education Service.

## Social Welfare

### Education

Education is compulsory for children between the ages of 5 and 15. In Stanley, government schools cater for children in this age group, while in the Camp education is carried on either in settlement schools, some of which are very small, or by itinerant teachers. There is also a boarding school at Darwin, East Falkland, opened in 1956 which can accommodate 42 boarders and caters for as many day pupils as there are in the two nearby settlements: in 1973 it had a total of 56 pupils. In 1973 eight travelling teachers were employed among the 92 children unable to attend the schools in Stanley, Darwin or the other settlements, and a total of 311 children were receiving education in the territory.

Attendance at school is compulsory in Stanley and, in the Camp, for those children living within two miles of a settlement school. There is no system of higher education and no advanced secondary education although, in the government schools in Stanley, a number of pupils stay until their sixteenth year and, in some subjects, reach General Certificate of Education standard. Promising pupils of primarily local parentage can receive higher education in Britain, Argentina or Uruguay through a scholarship scheme operated by the Falkland Islands Government on the basis of a yearly competitive examination. The Argentine Government also issues a number of scholarships tenable at a variety of schools in Argentina. In 1973 40 children were being educated overseas - 3 in Britain, 14 in Uruguay and 23 in Argentina.

Education is free except at the Darwin Boarding School where there is a boarding fee of £36 per year. A lodging allowance of £5.50 a month is granted to the parents of children from the Camp who attend schools in Stanley, and an overseas education allowance of from £282 to £402 is made to the parents of children receiving full-time secondary education at boarding schools overseas. In 1972-73 the expenditure on education was £67,397.

### Health

The commoner ailments in the colony are the common cold, naso-pharyngitis, bronchitis, gastro-enteritis and rheumatism in its chronic form.

The staff of the Government Medical Department includes the senior medical officer and two other medical officers, a dental officer and eight nursing staff; there are no private practitioners. The 32-bed Government general hospital in Stanley is modern and well equipped. Tuberculosis and ophthalmic surveys have been carried out. The Government air service is used extensively for medical transport, and the motor vessel *Forrest* can also be made available to the Medical Department. In 1972-73, expenditure on the Medical Department totalled £73,929.

### Social Security

There is in force a system of family allowances and two old age pension schemes, one contributory and the other non-

contributory, which together cover all persons reaching the age of 65.

### Libraries

There is one lending library in Stanley operated by the Education Department. A Camp library scheme provides a postal service designed to bring library facilities to residents outside Stanley.

## Communications and Services

Communication between the islands and the mainland of South America is now effected by air, following the inauguration of a temporary airstrip in November 1972. A weekly service is provided with *F27* aircraft by the Argentine development line LADE, linking Stanley with Comodoro Rivadavia in southern Argentina. There is a ship on charter to the Falkland Islands Company which makes the round trip to Britain four or five times a year, carrying mail and general cargo. The Government-owned small motor vessel *Forrest* is now used by the Royal Marines and has been replaced by the *Monunen*, a slightly larger vessel on charter to a subsidiary of the Falkland Islands Company. The main purpose of this latter vessel is to carry heavy freight and sea mail to the outlying stations and to collect the wool crop. There is also a small Government-owned internal air service.

There are about 12 miles (19.3 km) of macadamised road in and around Stanley and unsurfaced tracks connect most settlements on the east and west islands, where travellers generally use Land-Rovers, motorcycles or horses, depending on weather conditions. At the end of 1972 there were 568 motor vehicles in the territory, about half of which were used in Stanley. There are no railways.

### Telecommunications

External telecommunications traffic is handled by the Government wireless station in Stanley, which is in daily contact with London, Montevideo and Buenos Aires. Stanley has a telephone system to which most East Falkland farms are connected, and there is a similar service on West Falkland, centred on Fox Bay. Traffic between the main islands and contact with farms on the smaller islands is by radio telephone. Telephone calls can also be made between the colony and the United Kingdom, Argentina and most other countries.

### Broadcasting and the Press

The Government runs a broadcasting station at Stanley and in 1973 there were 638 wireless licence holders in the territory. There is also a Government-operated wired broadcasting service in Stanley, which had 341 subscribers in 1973. Periodicals published in the colony other than the official gazette are *The Falkland Islands Times* (published monthly) and *The Falkland Islands Journal* (published annually).

### Public Utilities

A Government-owned diesel power station with a capacity of 1,280 kW generating at 3.3 kV, 50 Hertz, supplying power to Stanley, was inaugurated in 1973. Elsewhere most of the settlements and farms have their own private generating plant. A water purification and filtration plant near Stanley provides a sufficient supply of clean water for the town.

### Meteorological Services

Meteorological services for the Falkland Islands are provided by a Government Meteorological Department which has its headquarters in Stanley. The service provides forecasts for shipping and aircraft and undertakes some research into the meteorology of the area. Farm settlements provide daily weather details. The British Antarctic Survey also has a meteorological office in Stanley which correlates data received from the Antarctic bases and provides forecasts for the area.

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# The Falkland Islands Dependencies

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The Falkland Islands have as dependencies South Georgia, the South Sandwich Islands, the Shag Rocks and Clerke Rocks. South Georgia lies 800 miles (1,290 km) east-south-east of the Falklands, and the South Sandwich Islands some 470 miles (760 km) south-east of South Georgia.

The Falkland Islands Government is empowered to legislate for the dependencies. A magistrate, who is also the Base Commander of the British Antarctic Survey Station, resides at King Edward Point in South Georgia, where there has been a Government station since 1909.

Those territories south of latitude 60° south which were formerly part of the Falkland Islands Dependencies, namely, the South Orkney Islands, the South Shetland Islands, and the Antarctic Peninsula together with the sector of the Antarctic continent lying between longitudes 20° and 80° west, were constituted a separate colony on 3 March 1962 under the name of the British Antarctic Territory. This

covers all British territories lying in the area affected by the Antarctic Treaty, which was signed in 1959 and came into force in 1961, by which the countries concerned agreed that all territorial claims in the area south of latitude 60° South should be frozen.

The island of South Georgia has an area of 1,450 square miles (3,755 km<sup>2</sup>) and is some 100 miles (160 km) long with a maximum breadth of 20 miles (32 km). The land is very mountainous, rising to 9,625 ft (2,933 m), the valleys being filled with glaciers, many of which descend to the sea. The climate is not entirely Antarctic, but is very severe, the mountains being largely ice- and snow-covered throughout the year. The only indigenous mammals are seals, but there is a large herd of wild reindeer descended from animals introduced in 1911.

The South Sandwich Islands consist of a chain of uninhabited, actively volcanic islands some 150 miles



(240 km) long. The climate is wholly Antarctic. In the late winter the islands may be surrounded by pack ice. The prevalent westerly storms always make landing difficult.

The population of South Georgia comprises the staff of the British Antarctic Survey Station at King Edward Point and numbers about 22.

Whaling and sealing, once carried out extensively from shore stations on South Georgia, have now been abandoned.

Sea communications with the island are dependent on Royal Research Ships *Bransfield* and *John Biscoe*, and the ice patrol vessel HMS *Endurance*, which call there during the southern summer.

## External Trade

All food is imported and there are no exports.

## Public Finance

	Revenue £	Expenditure £
1972-73	28,605	13,700
1973-74	34,722	12,557

# Argentine Territorial Claims

## The Falkland Islands

Argentina has put forward a claim to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands over a long period of years, mainly on the grounds that she has succeeded to rights claimed by Spain in the eighteenth century. The British Government has stated that it has no doubt of its sovereignty over the islands, which have been continuously, peacefully and effectively occupied by Britain since 1833.

The Falkland Islands' position as a non-self-governing territory has been debated regularly in the Fourth Committee of the United Nations and in its special committee of 24 (on colonialism). The elected representatives of the Falkland Islands have explained the population's wish to retain its association with Britain, and not to become independent or associated with any other country. Britain has pointed out that in these circumstances the Argentine claim is contrary to the principle of self-determination.

In 1965 the General Assembly approved a resolution inviting Britain and Argentina to hold discussions with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the problem, bearing in mind the interests of the islanders. Subsequently, discussions between the two governments were conducted through diplomatic channels. In 1968 the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Lord Chalfont, visited the Falkland Islands to explain the aims of the British government in these negotiations. In 1969 Argentina made known its readiness to discuss lifting the ban on direct communications between the mainland and the islands and special talks on promoting communications began in London, in 1970, between Argentine and British delegations, the latter including participants from the Falkland Islands.

In 1971 further discussions were held in Buenos Aires concerning communications between the Argentine mainland and the Falkland Islands. As a result of these agreement was reached over a wide field covering air and sea communications, postal services, educational and medical facilities for Falkland Islanders in Buenos Aires, and customs measures. A third meeting was held between representatives of Her Majesty's Government and the Argentine Republic in Stanley in 1972, and a fourth round of talks was held in April 1973. During the winter of 1972 the Argentine Air Force built a temporary airfield at Stanley; construction of a permanent airfield at Cape Pembroke, financed by a grant from the British Government, is expected to be completed in 1976.

In 1974 Britain and Argentina signed two further agreements relating to the Falklands: one to facilitate trade

and the carriage of goods between the Falkland Islands and the Argentine mainland, and the other to allow the Argentine state petroleum company (YPF) to supply the Islands with petroleum products.

## The Dependencies

Argentina has from time to time put forward claims to the Falkland Islands Dependencies and continues to do so. These claims have at different times been based on proximity to Argentina and alleged inheritance of title from Spain. Argentina first claimed South Georgia in 1927 and the South Sandwich Islands in 1948. The British Government rejects all these claims as without legal or historical foundation. In 1947 and subsequently Britain offered to submit the dispute over Argentine claims in the Falkland Islands Dependencies to the International Court of Justice, and in 1955 the British Government applied unilaterally to the court for redress against encroachments on British sovereignty in the dependencies by Argentina, and also by Chile. Both countries, however, declined to submit to the court's jurisdiction in this matter.

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\*Out of print.

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