

ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY LONDON

Polar Group Display

31 May 2018



Dear Collectors of Polar Philately,

It seemed only natural for me to invite you to the Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL). After all, for many years, you have proved - as if there were any need - that this branch of philately fully deserves its place among the other disciplines.

Through the various exhibitions organised at international level, including the very successful one at MonacoPhil 2015, Polar Philately has certainly earned its stripes. All of this convinced me, once and for all, that a polar exhibition should be dedicated to it here - under this same roof. I have to admit though that my personal strong interest in the Belgian presence in Antarctica influenced this decision too...

I greatly look forward to seeing your collections from all over the world in London and the RPSL will once again try to prove that it is the ideal place to promote lesser known aspects of our hobby.

Patrick Maselis RDP FRPSL
President of the RPSL

*To Max, Fred and Hans Werner **



* Max Koesling, Fred Goldberg and Hans Werner Helfenbein were three great polar collectors and real friends. They had displayed during the International Polar Philatelic Exhibition in Monaco in December 2015. They would have liked to be present today to exhibit but life decided otherwise. Today, this polar group display at the Royal Philatelic Society London is dedicated to them.

What is Polar Philately?

Polar Philately

Polar philately focuses on materials related to the Arctic (North Polar) and Antarctic (South Polar) and those adjacent places defined as polar philatelic like sub-Arctic and sub-Antarctic. Although much of the material exhibited in the polar philately area has features similar to that in one of several other categories, e.g., postal history, illustrated mail, aerophilately, military postal history, marcophily, etc., it is the intent and orientation of the exhibit that places it in a polar division rather than one of the other established categories. There are subtle differences that further distinguish the polar exhibit as described below.

Polar Philatelic Areas

Expeditions. This material documents a variety of expeditions from the earliest period until now. The expedition can be for geographical and/or scientific exploration, social political or commercial purposes, as well as for adventure or tourism.

Flights and Aviation. Polar flight and flight related material documents actual or attempted aero events in the polar regions including balloon flights, rocket launches, trans-polar flights, leaflet drops, expedition support flights, etc. Any polar part of a flight qualifies the entire flight as polar. Any material from legs or parts (including positioning flight of a record flight) of an actual, attempted, or planned polar flight, whether or not along a polar route, are constituents of a polar flight and eligible for inclusion in a polar aero exhibit. Ancillary material associated with a planned, attempted, or actual polar flight event, (e.g. commemorative covers), can be, but need not be, part of the aero story. Non-flown associated mail may be used to help postally document a polar event's aero activity, where no flown mail exists to record its flight history. Flown polar items include both air mail and communications flown partially or entirely outside the postal system.

Military. Material from, to, or associated with conflict or non-conflict military activities and situations in either of the two polar areas is considered polar military in nature. This includes maritime, aerial, and land activities of both uniformed and quasi-military (privateers for example) postal documentation. Civil conflict matters such as revenue enforcement, fishing and sealing protection also qualify.

Themes. Exhibits that concentrate on telling a story about a person, event, or subject that is polar associated, can qualify under the theme category of polar philately. Some examples are Admiral Byrd, Ernest Shackleton, search for and/or historic transits of the Northwest Passage, sledge dogs, whales and seals, submarines-under-ice, "via Siberia" routed mail, Hudson's Bay Company, etc. Polar themed exhibits can employ stamps, covers or both, and usually also benefit from judiciously included related collateral material.

Geographic. Geographic, as a polar sub-category, focuses on material from, to or about polar geographic entities. These national and sub-national areas are identified in *Essence of Polar Philately*. They could be a polar country or state/province (e.g. Greenland, Alaska), as well as a philatelically polar defined sub-national region (e.g. Arctic Scandinavia, Finnish Lapland, Ross Dependency, French Southern and Antarctic Territory [TAAF], etc.). Geographically oriented polar exhibits often have the same approach as exhibits that examine postmarks, stamps, and stationery. It could also be similar to some illustrated mail exhibits, if showing cachets on mail or first day covers. A polar research station or enclave study could include cachets/first day covers, stamps/stationery (if issuing postage), and/or marcophily.

Additional Considerations

The nature of communications associated with certain polar activities (e.g., Russian polar exploration flight, remote research station occupation or site, unavailability of official mail service, etc.) often permits in polar exhibits a wider scope of material types like “courier” mail, QSL cards, telegrams, leaflets, cairn notes, messages, etc.

Condition of material can be less of a concern in certain types of exhibits depending on the items’ scarcity and the situation they naturally endured. So-called archival material (i.e. commercial covers of a type that might be found in an archive or museum collection that was not primarily intended to be a collectible) often is accepted in whatever condition it might be found.

Balance often must be considered in light of a topic or sub-topic’s importance and the availability of material in an exhibit’s various parts. Much pre-Modern Era expeditionary mail exists in a single or very few examples, while a handful of other important expeditions or flights can have many more pieces for showing. The expeditions and flights with a usually robust postal history would be expected to have that shown, even where the surrounding events only display one or two items each.



Frame	Exhibitor	Title
1-4	Richard Hindle	Amundsen's Northeast Passage Expedition 1918-25
5-6	Christian Murguet	Nobu Shirase and the Japanese Antarctic Expedition 1910-12
7	Patrick Maselis	Expédition de Gerlache 1897-1899
8-10	Trevor R. Cornford	Captain Robert Falcon Scott, RN
11-12	David Wiskin	Shackleton. The British Antarctic Expedition 1907-09
13	Hal Vogel	The Wilkes Antarctic Expedition: Its Many (often unfavorable) Facets
14-16	Daniel Bringer	Swedish South Polar Expedition 1901-04
17-19	Siegfried Nicklas	Early German Antarctic Expeditions
20-22	Steve Allen	The Heroic Age of Norwegian Polar Exploration
23-26	Jiri Kraus	Search and Discovery of Antarctica
27-29	Hugh Osborne	South Georgia Postal History from 1883
30-31	Marc Hammond	Bouvet Island
32	Serge Kahn	Dumont d'Urville Helps Reveal Antarctica
33	Daniel Bringer	Scottish National Antarctic Expedition 1902-04
34-35	Frank Blechschmidt	The British Antarctic Territory 1962-1980
36-38	Robert F. McMillan	Norwegian Whaling Mail
39-42	Claudio Manzati	North Pole Russian Drifting Stations: NP1 to NP16
43	Pierre Losserand	France during the IGY in Antarctica and on Sub-Antarctic Islands
44-46	Christian Murguet	The Antarctic expeditions 1897-1913
47-48	Serge Kahn	French Participation in the 2nd IPY 1932-33
49-51	Hal Vogel	Pre-WWII Polar Lighter-Than-Air Flights
52	Hugh Osborne	South Shetlands Postal History to 1934

Amundsen's Northeast Passage Expedition 1918-25

Richard Hindle

This display examines the postcards produced for the expedition and the North Star Airmail, which was a late and unsuccessful addition to the project.

The cards were produced for sale in either booklet or individual formats and the display identifies the sources of the five picture designs, the formats and the three printings of the cards which took place in 1913, 1917 and 1918. Three forms of each of the five cards were made for simultaneous printing. The display then investigates, by "plating", the various inscription and progressive varieties of these formes.

An examination of the cancellations follows including one of the two sets of "proof" cancels and also looks at the "White", "Black" and the combination of them of the ship's name, *Maud*, within the cancel. Examples of the machine canceller deformation are shown, followed by some of the uses of the cards including those bought in Panama in 1913 on Amundsen's exploratory voyage to Seattle and expedition mail.

The next section is the North Star Air Post "Assistance Labels" and examples of the flown mail.



Set of "proof" cancels comprising the hand cancel, machine canceller No 1 and machine canceller No 2, which broke and was never used.

Nobu Shirase and the Japanese Antarctic Expedition 1910-12

Christian Murguet

Here is the story of the least known Antarctic expeditions, that of the Japanese Nobu Shirase (1861-1946) and his ship *Kainan-Maru*.

On 29 November 1910 the ship leaves Shinagawa port (Tokyo) with 26 men, and on 8 February 1911 arrives at Wellington port, New Zealand.

On 14 March 1911 an ice gorge prevents further progress at 74°16'S and 172°7'E (near Coleman Island, Ross Sea), so they had to turn back.

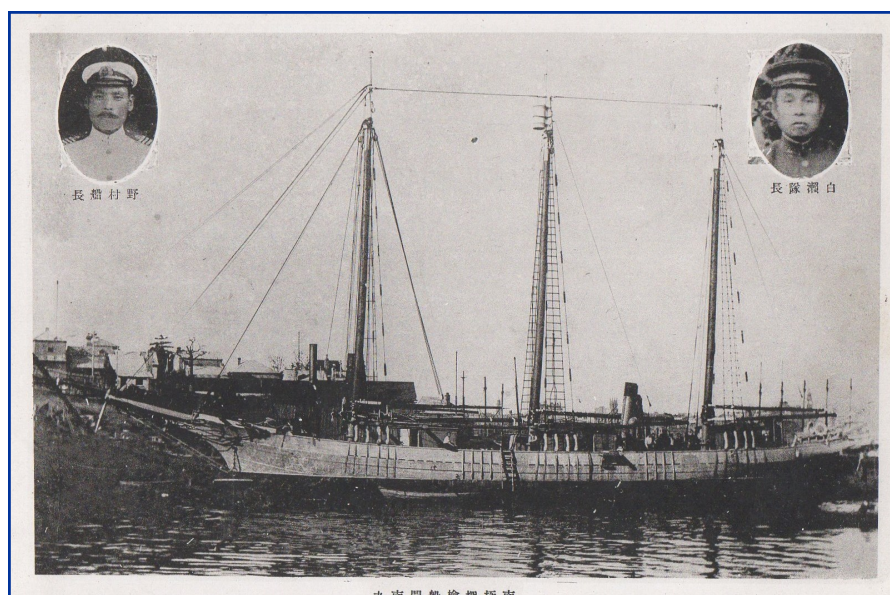
On 1 May 1911 they arrive at port in Sydney, Australia, and on 19 November 1911 they changed the intent of the expedition from walking to the South Pole to scientific research. Upon leaving Sydney, Shirase presents his precious Samurai sword to Professor David of the University of Sydney.

On 16 January 1912 *Kainan-Maru* arrives at the Bay of Whales, Ross Sea.

On 26 January 1912 *Kainan-Maru* advances to 76°6'S and 151°20'W, and on 28 January 1912 they set the flag of the rising sun inland at 80°5'S and 156°37'W, and name the area Yamato Yuki-hara.

On 4 February 1912 *Kainan-Maru* leaves the Bay of Whales, and heads home, arriving 20 June at Shibaura port after a long trip of 29,827 miles over 19 months. Nobody died or was injured. He is welcomed as a hero by an enthusiastic crowd.

For information, only Antarctic postcards from the Japanese Antarctic Expedition 1910-12 are known. Actual expedition-related mail has never been seen by me, but perhaps it may exist (most of the known documents are in the Shirase Antarctic Expedition Memorial Museum in Nikaho, Japan).



The ship *Kainan-Maru* with inset portraits of (left) Captain Naokichi Nomura and (right) expedition leader Nobu Shirase.

Expédition de Gerlache 1897-1899

Patrick Maselis

Since early childhood, Baron Adrien de Gerlache de Gomery (born on 2 August 1866) had been fascinated by the sea and navigation. He combined his studies with long voyages as a sailor (South America, Cape Horn) and graduated as second lieutenant in the navy in 1888. He was employed soon after by the Belgian navy. After growing tired of this routine job, he decided to organise an expedition to the South Pole. He contacted the Belgian Royal Geographical Society, which was immediately prepared to sponsor his project. In order to raise funds for the expedition, the society organised a national subscription.

Adrien de Gerlache purchased in Norway a 336-tonne whaling ship called *Patria*, which he renamed *Belgica*. Also in Norway, it was also refitted in preparation for the expedition.

Adrien de Gerlache recruited 10 crew members and 8 well known international scientists. The expedition left Antwerp on 16 August 1897 and headed towards the west coasts of the Antarctic Peninsula, before suffering storms in the Tierra del Fuego and almost running aground on a reef. A sailor called Wiencke was washed overboard by a wave and drowned. The ship became trapped in the ice a few weeks later and drifted in the Bellingshausen Sea for the next thirteen months. The expedition was therefore the first to spend the winter in the Antarctic region. The expedition members lived under very harsh conditions, but were still able to collect a large quantity of scientific data. After drifting for months, the ship managed to break away from the ice and arrived in Belgium on 5 November 1899. The expedition of *Belgica* goes down in history as the very first scientific research expedition to Antarctica.



Letter with Christmas wishes mailed from Punta Arenas, Chile (canceller Magallanes)

to Antwerp in Belgium on 11 December 1897 and written by Adrien de Gerlache (on his own stationery) during the first Belgian Antarctic Expedition.

Captain Robert Falcon Scott, RN

Trevor R. Cornford

Captain Scott led two fully staffed and equipped exploring Expeditions to the Ross Sea area of Antarctica between 1901 and 1913.

Partly Government, partly Institutional, partly public and partly privately sponsored, they attracted enormous interest.

Arguably providing some of the most important scientific and geographic results of the early 20th Century. Not until the advent of mechanized vehicles and flight in the latter 1920s and into the 1930s was more achievement possible.

The bonus for collectors and students of these Expeditions was despite having legal publication agreements with Press and funding organisations, he was remarkably relaxed about members writing to family and friends on news of progress.

He trusted them and recipients not to divulge details before appearing via official channels - a good example is Levick's registered cover 1913 with 'Caution' notice!

This also means there is more postal material available than on many other contemporaneous expeditions, from a wide range of members including Royal Navy Officers, able seamen, scientists and many crew in between. It has provided an insight where messages survive with their covers and postcards (see that from Len Burgess 1904). Add menus, ephemera, official reports, books written and you have a very complete picture.



This envelope links Scott and Shackleton Expeditions from 1901 - 1913.

Amazingly Kinsey appears to have entrusted the rare registered - of which only 3 known - *Discovery* envelope of 1903 to the post for a backstamp in NZ 1909 during the *Nimrod* Expedition of Shackleton. It is written by Shackleton while with Scott on *Discovery* - a great link! It was also used on all 3 voyages aboard *Terra Nova* on Scott's Last Expedition 1910 - 13.

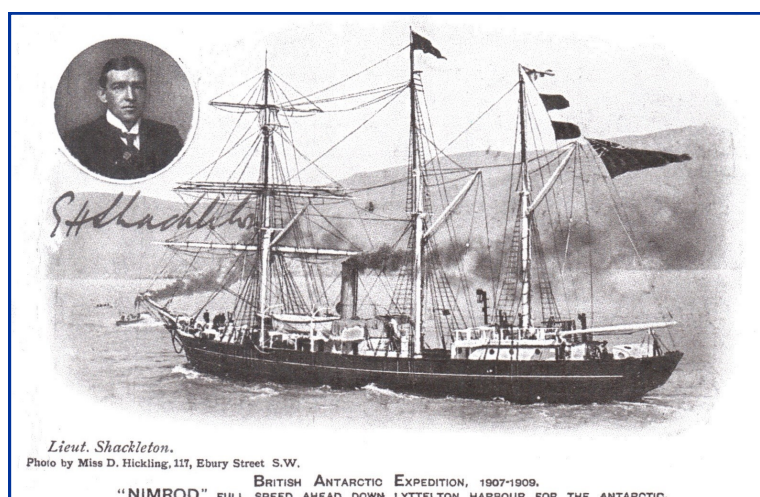
Shackleton. The British Antarctic Expedition 1907-09

David Wiskin

Ernest Henry Shackleton was an Edwardian hero. A contemporary of Captain Robert Falcon Scott, he sailed with Scott's *Discovery* South Pole expedition of 1901. Shackleton then went on to mount three Antarctic expeditions of his own: in 1907 when he reached a new "farthest south"; in 1914 the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition aboard *Endurance* ended in an epic boat trip and rescue of all his men, and finally the journey south on *Quest* in 1922.

At various times he was to be involved in journalism, politics, lecture tours, manufacturing, shipping and a gold mine, but none of his business ventures were successful. Shackleton was a leader, a man's man and social adventurer, a pursuer of wealth and fame. He was the stuff of legend. To fully categorise him would be difficult. When his school, Dulwich College, listed its famous old boys by profession, he was classified simply as "Shackleton".

This display is part of a larger collection, which tells the life story of Shackleton. Chapter 5 from the collection covers his second visit to the Antarctic in 1907. His ship on this expedition was *Nimrod*, which was towed to the Antarctic ice edge, as it could not carry enough coal for exploration and the return trip, alongside all the other equipment that had to be stowed. Another first was the New Zealand 1d postage stamp overprinted *King Edward VII Land* in green, for use on letters sent back from the Antarctic, via the tow ship *Koonya* and *Nimrod*. Shackleton hoped to make a profit on the stamps that remained by selling them on his return to the UK. As a leader of this expedition he was to show courage and an ability to get the best out of his men. It was to be his most successful expedition bringing him fame and a knighthood. It also enabled him to earn his living for a time by lecturing on tours of Europe and America. His most famous expedition, on *Endurance* in 1914, was still to come; but that is another story.



A postcard printed to raise funds for expedition showing *Nimrod*, Shackleton's portrait and if you paid more, his signature.

The Wilkes Antarctic Expedition: Its Many (often unfavorable) Facets

Hal Vogel

Nobody knew that when the 1838-42 "Wilkes Antarctic Expedition" was approved for modest funding in 1836, that it would become so famously historic and productive for its nascent republic. However, en route to becoming astonishingly important in US and Antarctic history, it also would be one of the more controversial in polar history.

The ill-equipped US Navy squadron under Lt. Charles F. Wilkes would (in January 1840) be the first to confirm Antarctica as a continent -- and name it! This was by an expedition that almost did not get underway.

Its enemies almost had the leader to kill it. He was tyrannical, liked by few of his men and hated by the rest. His vaingloriousness caused snickers among his officers, many of whom he relieved and sent back to the States during the expedition.

However, returning to the States after four difficult years at sea was scientific results that virtually overwhelmed the new Smithsonian Institution. The expedition's boxes of items and records became then the majority of its collection.

This exhibit uses contemporaneous archival material to postally portray the life of the "Wilkes Antarctic Expedition" from its initial funding and organizational difficulties, to its sly departure, long cruise, fantastic discoveries, controversial return and afterlife. Hardly any other material exists to postally document one of the most important Antarctic expeditions.



"Wilkes Antarctic Expedition" leader Lt. Charles F. Wilkes writes in the Pacific Ocean off Singapore

on 20 February 1842 an unpaid folded letter predicting accurately to his wife when he would return as he is on the homeward leg of his four-year global exploratory cruise that included confirmation and naming of Antarctica. It was given to a passing ship that was assumed would arrive in the United States before his USS *Vincennes*. Its various markings, however, indicate that he paid a hefty 45-¾ cents for its receipt in August 1842 -- well after the squadron commander already had returned to the USA (10 June 1842). This is the only known mail from or to Wilkes during the expedition's cruise.

Swedish South Polar Expedition 1901-04

Daniel Bringer

The name Nordenskjöld is not one that tends to be heard at collector's meetings. Baron A.E. Nordenskiöld (1832-1901) was the first to navigate the Northeast Passage aboard *Vega* in 1878-80 and his nephew, Otto Nordenskjöld (1869-1928), led one of the classic Antarctic Expeditions from 1901 to 1904.

The Swedish South Polar Expedition was well prepared and was a privately financed expedition. Otto Nordenskjöld purchased the sealer *Cap Nor* and renamed it *Antarctic*. As captain of the ship, O. Nordenskjöld chose the experienced Carl A. Larsen.

Antarctic left Gothenburg on 16 October 1901 and arrived at the South Shetland Islands in January 1902. The ship sailed between the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula and Joinville Island through a passage that Nordenskjöld named Antarctic Strait, now Antarctic Sound. In February 1902 Nordenskjöld's scientific party of six landed at Snow Hill Island where they erected a prefabricated hut.

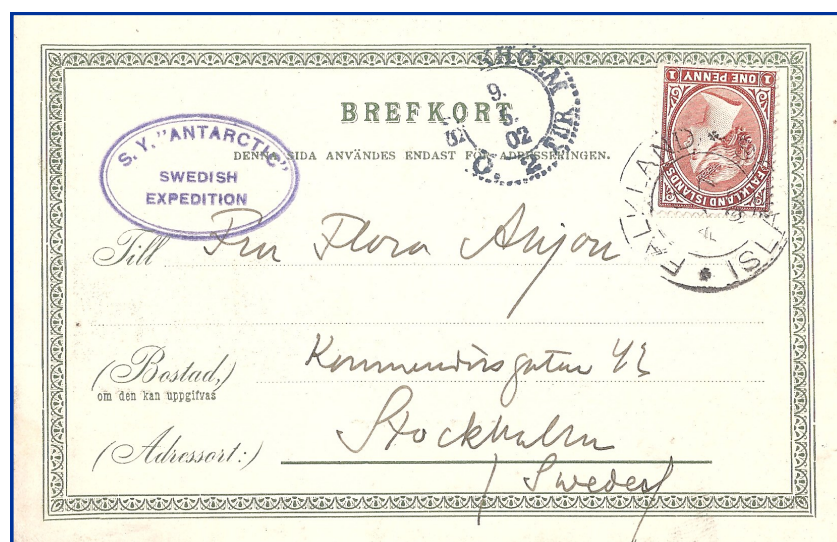
Antarctic headed back to Ushuaia, Argentina, and Falkland Islands after dropping off Nordenskjöld and his party. Their ship spent most of the time at Port Stanley and South Georgia during the 1902 winter and picked up Gunnar Andersson.

On 5 November 1902 she left Falkland Islands for the return trip to pick up the wintering party, when she sank on 13 February 1903.

Larsen's party struggled for 14 days and jumping from ice floe to ice floe, reached Paulet Island on 28 February 1903. French, Swedish and Argentinean rescue missions were set in operation. Captain Irizar sailed from Buenos Aires aboard *Uruguay* on 8 October 1903. *Frithiof* left Stockholm on 22 August 1903.

En route back to Argentina on 15 November 1903 the successful rescue nearly ended in tragedy. During a severe storm C.A. Larsen managed to save *Uruguay* after Captain Irizar had voluntarily handed over command of the rescue ship. The ship was received with a heroic welcome at Buenos Aires on 2 December 1903.

Postcard from Otto Nordenskjöld to his sister, deposited at Port Stanley, Falklands, 7 April 1902, during one of the ship's stays there (28 March-11 April 1902). The expedition vessel's official oval cachet is stamped to the left of the card's 9 May Stockholm receipt stamp.



Early German Antarctic Expeditions

Siegfried Nicklas

The display begins with the earliest period of German scientists travelling with foreign expeditions into the region of Antarctica (Georg Forster, Dr. Klefeker onboard *Arcona* on Kerguelen, Eduard Dallmann). Carl Weyprecht and Georg von Neumayer campaigned for an international and systematic based exploration of the polar areas using fixed stations.

German contribution to the 1st International Polar Year is documented with some covers. From the German scientists in the south at South Georgia are some documents from Montevideo after their return there.

The Tiefseeexpedition (Deep Sea Expedition) 1898-99 is en route documented with mail before reaching and after the return from the Antarctic sea.

The First German South Polar Expedition 1901-03 consists of two groups. The main group with the expedition ship *Gauss* reached a lot of harbors and meets the Kerguelen group on the Kerguelen Islands. The journey there and the return voyage is documented with mail and telegrams from some harbor arrivals. The mail of the main group normally shows the circular cachet.

The mail of the Second German South Polar Expedition shows covers and cards from the journey there and the return voyage. Highly desirable are the pieces with the two line postmark "Paid at South Georgia". One card is from South Georgia when the expedition came back from the Weddell Sea. There is also mail from the arrival of *Deutschland* at the Argentine's South Orkneys station in 1913.

The Atlantische Expedition 1925-27 (Atlantic Expedition) with the research ship *Meteor* on her "profile" V had an excursion into the Antarctic. Beside the mail with her ship's postmark there can be documented mail with postmarks from the South Shetland Islands and South Georgia.

Up to now there is no mail from the Third German South Polar expedition. A pouch tag from the transfer of mail from the expedition ship *Schwabenland* to a whale

factory ship is the only known postal evidence from this expedition.



Letter send by Dr. Wilhelm Goeldel of the 2nd German Antarctic Expedition. Franked 2 ½d (2) tied by type SG1 DE 16 11, registered London 6 JA 12, Berlin W 23.1.12, redirected to France. Registered label partly removed and "Falkld" in red pencil inserted. One of ten known registered letter from this expedition.

The Heroic Age of Norwegian Polar Exploration

Steve Allen

Considering Norway's geographical location, it is natural to assume that the country always played a part in the exploration of the "polar regions". However, there is no unbroken tradition of Norwegian activity in the Arctic. Before the second half of the 19th century Norway had only taken part sporadically in polar exploration and research. There was a clear understanding that the costly exploration of the earth's ice-covered surface was reserved for the great nations. This attitude, however, would soon change.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, Norway emerged as one of the leading polar nations and the spectacular expeditions led by Norwegians caused worldwide sensation. Fridtjof Nansen made the first crossing of Greenland in 1888 and reached a new farthest north in 1895. Although he retired from exploration after his return to Norway, his techniques of polar travel, and his innovations in equipment and clothing, influenced a generation of subsequent Arctic and Antarctic expeditions. Eivind Astrup revolutionised polar travel with the use of dogs and skis in Greenland with Peary in 1892. Between 1898 and 1902 Otto Sverdrup and his expedition to Canada were able to chart a total of 260,000 square kilometres - more than any other polar expedition. Roald Amundsen was the first to navigate the North West Passage in 1906, the first to reach the South Pole in 1911, a navigator of the North East Passage, the first to fly to latitude 88°N in 1925, and the first to fly across the Arctic Ocean in 1926.

This display highlights philatelic material from the Norwegian polar expeditions and explorers that contributed to this period.



The only known cover sent from *Fram* and carried by Fridtjof Nansen when reaching farthest north during the First Fram Expedition of 1893-96.

Search and Discovery of Antarctica

Jiri Kraus

This exhibit shows the history of the discovery of “Unknown Southern Land” - Antarctica. It describes the course of successive expeditions sailing to the southern hemisphere and their search and discovery of new straits, islands, coves, bays and new lands.

These explorers were the heroes of that time, because they didn't only acquire new territories, but also, in the interest of science, published all their knowledge so that they could provide their sovereigns, statesmen and their homelands with the most complete information about this part of the world. These were times in which a lot of these expeditions came into situations that exceeded human abilities and it is a wonder that the bulk of the expedition participants survived, considering what hardships and adversity they encountered.

This exhibit contains the first preserved letters from the beginnings of Antarctic whaling and sealing expeditions. In the early 19th century the first expeditions discovered Antarctica. This period finished with a race to reach the South Pole, which was achieved on 14 December 1911.

In the course of these expeditions there were sent letters, telegrams and postcards.



Headed H.M.Ship *Erebus* letter sent by Richard Wall from Port Louis, Falkland Islands, to his wife in England. Concessionary Soldier's and Seamen's 1d prepaid rate to Great Britain (1795-1850). London General Post single ring Paid 11 FE 1843 marking + octogonal PD FE 11 1843 marking.

This is the earliest known concessionary letter from the Falkland Islands and one of the earliest known letters from Antarctic expeditions.

South Georgia Postal History from 1883

Hugh Osborne FRPSL

South Georgia, discovered by Capt. Cook in 1775, remained uninhabited until Norwegian Carl Anton Larsen established the first commercial whaling station at Grytviken in Cumberland Bay, late 1904. Administered as a Falkland Island Dependency, the first Magistrate, Postmaster also, John Innes Wilson arrived in November 1909, the Post Office opened in December that year. Whaling technology and labour was largely Norwegian but the first factory / processing station was funded by Argentina and known as Pesca.

Stamps were current issue Falkland Islands, rates and practises likewise. Cancellers were bespoke South Georgia although not initially available when a combination of Falklands (F.4D) and a 'South Georgia' handstamp were used to datestamp mail until June 1910. Located off established shipping routes, the big issue was the uncertainty of mail in terms of inbound and outbound mailships. Pesca (based in Buenos Aires, Argentina) ships carried much of the mail in the early years. Exacerbated by remoteness, some stamp and label supply problems occurred, solved with short term solutions: bisects, surcharges and use of alternative registration labels, suitably amended or not!

Location and Pesca generosity made Grytviken a preferred departure port for Antarctica for many expeditions. The first expedition, German, part of International Polar Year 1882-83 stayed for a year at Royal Harbour but no expedition mail from SG is known. Mail from the German Imperial Navy Corvette *Marie* that relieved the Expedition is known from Montevideo the first homebound port of call.

Sir Ernest Shackleton is buried at Grytviken and the display includes incoming mail, and letter, awaiting the return of the British Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, together with a later postcard reporting his death. The WWI censored cover to Argentina uniquely examined and resealed at Grytviken forms part of this reduced display. The five frame exhibit gained a Gold medal and Polar Grand Prix at Vejle, Denmark in October 2017.

Uruguayan postal stationery
3 centavos postcard dated
Montevideo, 4 October 1883,
cancelled Montevideo 9 OCT 83
taken by Orenoque to Lisbon,
1 NOV 83 arrival Nuremberg, 5.11.



Bouvet Island

Marc Hammond

The island was discovered on 1 January 1739 by Jean-Baptiste Charles Bouvet de Lozier, who named it Cape Circoncision. Captain Cook aboard *Resolution* couldn't find the island in January 1773. The island was seen by whalers in different recorded positions and renamed Lindsay, Liverpool and Thompson island.

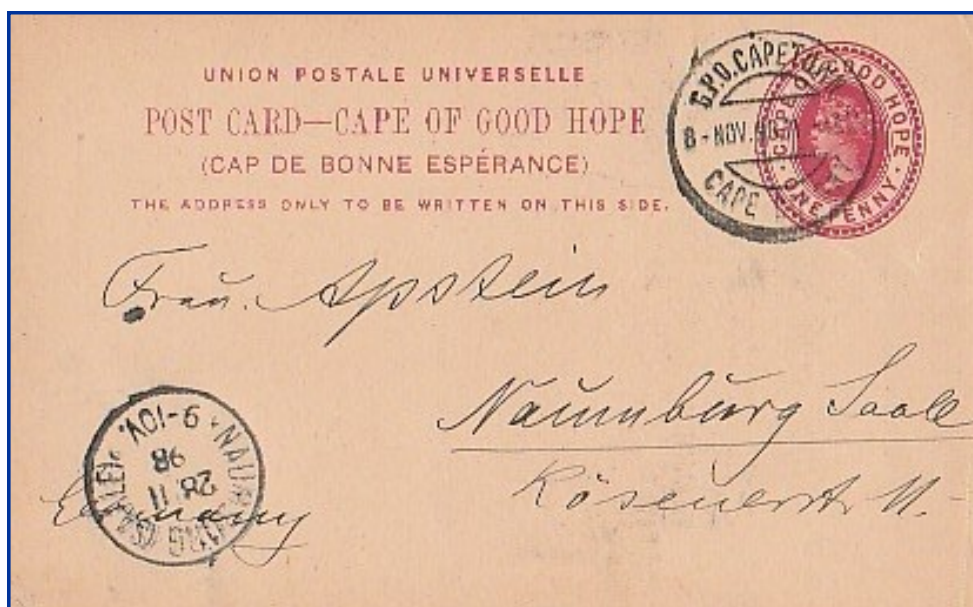
It was only late 1898 that the oceanographic ship *Valdivia* could determine for the first time the exact position of the island (54°26'S, 3°24'E).

Carnegie in January 1916 and *Meteor* in February 1926 made a lot of scientific observations there. At the end of 1927 *Norvegia* arrived at Bouvet. This was the first of the four expeditions organized by the Norwegian owner Christensen. He was looking after new whaling grounds. In January 1928, Bouvet was annexed with ban on hunting fur seals and sea elephants.

Vice Admiral Sir E. Evans was testing his new ship HMS *Milford* by sailing up to Bouvet which was reached in February 1934. Permission was granted by the Norwegian consul to sail and also to overprint Norwegian stamps. The values of øre 5, 7, 10, 20, 30 were overprinted **BOUVET OYA**.

Diminishing resources have changed interest in and around the island. It was the intention of South Africa to establish a meteorological station there. Ships were sent for scientific investigation.

A few years later, the Norwegian Polar Institute is working together with the German Wegener Institute and the South African Polar Institute to bring - at least once a year - *Polarstern* or *Agulhas* close to the island with concrete research programs and/or the renewal of the automatic weather station and the oceanographic buoys. In January 2014, a new well equipped research station was erected.



Postal stationery written during a cruise including Bouvet by *Valdivia* zoologist Carl Apstein to his mother. 8 NOV 98 Cape Colony cancellation. 28 11 98 Naumburg arrival postmark.

Dumont d'Urville Helps Reveal Antarctica

Serge Kahn

Up until January 1840 Antarctica as a continent was suspected but not proved.

Jules Sébastien César Dumont d'Urville's second South Pacific exploratory expedition (1826-29) sighted several south polar islands. Ten years later his third South Pacific exploratory expedition (1837-40) discovered a wedge of what later that month was confirmed by the "Wilkes expedition" (1838-42) to be the continent of Antarctica.

This display shows postal and correspondence documentation of the two south polar voyages (1826-29 and 1837-40) led by Captain Dumont d'Urville that contributed to the discovery of Antarctica as the world's last known continent.

Its material is among the most important in polar philately and surprisingly only was discovered a few years ago in two separate findings thousands of miles apart. All are "discovery" pieces, among the earliest known material from the earliest period of polar exploration.



Opened out folded letter from Madame d'Urville (manuscript dated 20 September 1838) to Montrol discussing her husband's expedition.

Paris delivery stamped at noon, 24 September and postage due 15 centimes.

Scottish National Antarctic Expedition 1902-04

Daniel Bringer

The expedition leader is William Speirs Bruce (1867-1921). His father Samuel, born in Scotland, was a physician who had moved to London and his mother was Welsh.

The family expected Bruce to follow his father's profession and he was enrolled in the medical school at London University. His real inclination was to natural sciences and he moved to Edinburg University under Professor Patrick Geddes who introduced him to biology and oceanography.

His studies in Edinburgh brought him together with H.R. Mill who later became the very distinguished librarian of the Royal Geographical Society.

In 1892 Bruce abandoned his medical studies and joined the Dundee Whaling Expedition to Antarctica as a scientist assistant aboard *Balaena*.

This was followed by Arctic voyages to Novaya Zemlya, Spitsbergen, and Franz Josef Land (Jackson-Harmsworth Polar Expedition) aboard *Windward*.

In 1899 Bruce, by then Britain's most experienced polar scientist, applied for a position aboard *Discovery* of the British National Antarctic Expedition, but failed to receive a reply from Markham.

Bruce then decided to organise his own expedition, the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition (1902-04) aboard *Scotia*.

The observations made by this remarkably successful expedition completely changed the way Antarctica was seen, from a geographical point of view, as well as the way the surrounding islands were seen from a zoological perspective.

A new area Coats Land, named in honour of the Coats brothers who had bankrolled the expedition, was discovered.

Included is a congratulatory letter from Nansen, "You have indeed a very successful expedition, and you have as far as I can make out, been able to solve the chief problems of the Weddell Sea".



Expedition scientist Robert Rudmose Brown sends a postcard to his father in the first mail from the newly opened (20 February 1904) Orcadas del Sud (Laurie Island meteorological station under Argentine administration) post office.

Additional 1d stamp at left tied by Cape Town Alfred Dockyard MY 11 04.

The British Antarctic Territory 1962-1980

Frank Blechschmidt

The British Antarctic Territory is a British Overseas Territory in the Antarctic. It was claimed on 21 July 1908 by the United Kingdom and managed until 1962 as a subsidiary area of the Falkland Islands. On 3 March 1962, it was formed as the British Antarctic Territory from the Falkland Island Dependencies, Grahamland, South Orkney Islands and South Shetland Islands. The territory covers the Antarctic area south of 60°S and between 20° and 80°W. In addition to a sector of the Antarctic mainland to the South Pole including the Antarctic Peninsula, the archipelagos of the Southern Orkney Islands and the Southern Shetland Islands are part of the BAT. The current political status is regulated by the Antarctic Treaty, which came into force in 1961, which grants citizens of all Nations free access to peaceful purposes. Except for the researchers at the stations, there are no permanent inhabitants. The postal service takes place with ships and airplanes. In recent years, of course, the Internet is increasingly used. Mail exchange is mainly with the homeland. Post of stations among each other is known, but rare. The main stations all carry a postmark, which is usually managed by the radio officer as representative of the Royal Mail.

The collection includes the period from 1962, giving a review of the time before. The focus is on the stamp issues and various perforations and watermarks are shown. Gutter Pairs and marginal pieces can also be seen. The postal use of the individual issues and special cancellations have been taken into account as far as possible. Postage-correct letters were not always possible, since individual postage rates were then partly not available.



Cover from the 2nd Norwegian Antarctic Expedition 1947-48 aboard *Brattegg*. Cancelled at Deception station. Postmark used between 1922 and 1931, again in 1947 and 1948. The year 1948 never appears in the postmark.

Norwegian Whaling Mail

Robert F. McMillan

Excessive whaling occurred in the North Atlantic causing a serious reduction in the whale population. It was realised that there was a vast population in the Southern Ocean. As a result, the Sandefjord ship owner, Christian Christensen sent the *Jason* under Capt. C.A. Larsen to the Antarctic to consider establishing a whaling fleet in 1892. As a result the Compania Argentina de Pesca, jointly owned by Norwegian and Argentine interests, was formed operating from Grytviken, South Georgia, in 1904. In 1911, there were 15 whaling companies operating in the Ross Sea as well as the Weddell Sea.

Whaling products were much in demand. Carriers transported products, supplies and mail to and from Norway and the Antarctic. Many routes were taken.

In 1925, Britain claimed sovereignty over all Antarctic islands in the whaling area and whaling factories were dependent on obtaining permits from the Crown. This led to disputes between Britain, Norway, Argentina and Chile. Britain increased the export duty on whale oil and threatened to withhold Norwegian concessions. To overcome this, the Norwegians developed floating factory ships.

After the Second World War stocks were seriously depleted and prices plummeted. The International Whaling Commission was formed in 1946 to manage whale stocks and conserve species. A quota to preserve the whale population was set. Norway ceased whaling during the 1967-69 seasons. Uncertainty of whale populations led to a "moratorium" on commercial whaling in 1986 which remains in force today.

This exhibit shows examples of whaling mail between 1911 and 1958.



Letter from Øivind Eskedal, South Georgia to Minde, Bergen.

North Pole Russian Drifting Stations: NP1 to NP16

Claudio Manzati

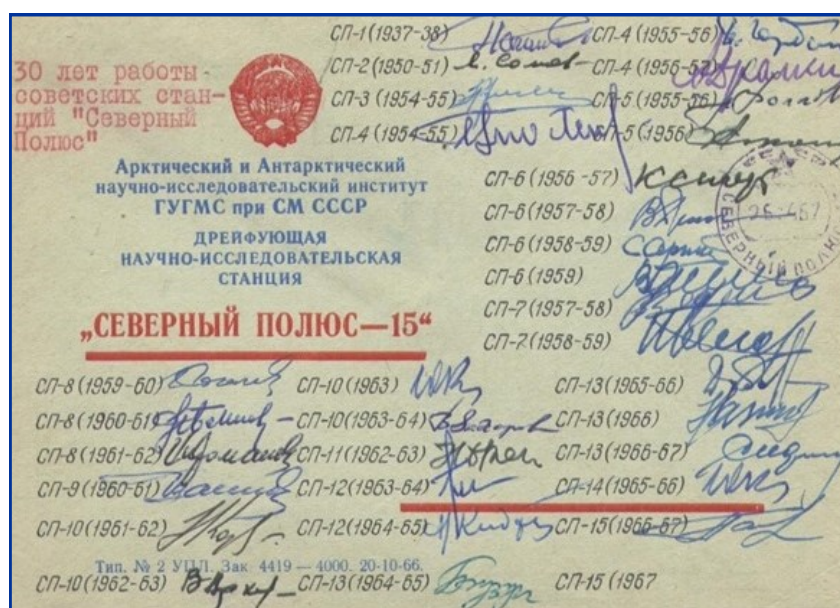
Men at the North Pole after the tragic mission of Commander Nobile in 1926 returned with a secret Russian mission named NP 1, with four men and minimal equipment: a tent and a radio transmitter. They sat on a block of ice drifting for eight months from 21 May 1937 to 18 February 1938. The mission had a scientific aim (meteorological and medical) but it was mostly military, in order to test the mental and physical behavior of the men in extreme conditions and make scientific experiments. The first mission was led by Ivan Papanin with E. Krenkel, Y. Fyodorov and P. Shirshov.

Mail service at floating stations started with NP4, nevertheless, also the stations NP1, NP2, NP3 sent and received some correspondence, even if lacking a postal office. The postal service was managed under Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute's responsibility. The cancel was given by the Post Office Department to AARI, which sent it to the station leader. He was responsible for the proper use of the cancel and, after the evacuation of the station, he immediately gave it back to the Post Office Department. All postal cancels up to NP21 were circular, with the abbreviation CCCP and five-pointed star with hammer and sickle on the top. After NP21 the cancel of each station became pictorial. No postal documents from first NP stations except broadcasts and manuscripts; only from mission NP 4 started regular mail. NP bases were provided with stamps and the post was regularly canceled by the radio operator. The cancellation devices were the same for all missions, differentiated only by their numerical designation from NP4 to NP21.

This exhibit presents postal documents from North Pole Russian stations from NP1 to NP16, showing: postal documents, manuscripts, radiograms and original photographs. The documents are presented in chronological order from the opening of the station.

Official service envelope of NP 15 type 1B, 26 April 1967, on which it was typed in red at the top left "30 years of work on the Soviet stations at the North Pole" and all tours of all the Soviet stations printed with the dates and signatures of the commanders of the tours.

First is NP 1 with the signature of Papanin, followed by NP 2 with Somov and NP 3 with Tryoshnikov.



France during the IGY in Antarctica and on Sub-Antarctic Islands

Pierre Losserand

The International Geophysical Year (IGY 1957-58) was the greatest scientific co-operation of the 20th century, during yet the « Cold War », with many important repercussions. In fact, the IGY was the third International Polar Year (IPY).

Karl Weyprecht (1838-1881), who discovered the Franz Josef archipelago, suggested coordinating the scientific research in stations around the two poles. The first IPY took place from 1 August 1882 to 1 September 1883 (concentrating on meteorology). Eleven countries took part, among them France was established in Baie Orange (Cape Horn).

Joannes Georgi, 50 years later, suggested a second IPY on a much larger scale, which began on 1 August 1932 and ended on 31 August 1933 (particularly interaction with solar activity). Forty four countries took part. Among them, France set up his base at Scoresby Sound, east coast of Greenland, chosen by Jean-Baptiste Charcot.

In 1950, in USA, during a dinner, with Dr. James Van Allen and Pr. Sydney Chapmann, the idea of a third IPY was born, to be named IGY. For more productivity, the IGY was increased from 1 July 1957 to 31 December 1958. Sixty seven countries took part and among them, 12 countries had stations in Antarctica : South Africa, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, Great-Britain, France, Japan, Norway, USA, USSR and New Zealand. Fourteen disciplines were covered.

France was one of the countries that built a station (Charcot) on the Antarctic Continent. France also built a base (Dumont d'Urville - DDU) on the coast of Adélie Land and used the Kerguelen and Amsterdam stations for IGY.



Set of three FSAT stamps issued for IGY cancelled 31 December 1958, the last day of IGY. Boxed IGY cachet (left) and boxed TERRE ADÉLIE / STATION CHARCOT (right) signed by René Garcia, station leader. Paul-Émile Victor and Torstein Torgersen, captain of *Norsel*, signed this cover carried from Adélie Land aboard *Norsel*.

The Antarctic expeditions (1897-1913)

Christian Murguet

Using picture postcards, this study shows the chronological story of some Antarctic expeditions during the last period of the Heroic Age of polar exploration during which they conducted geographical explorations and scientific studies.

Indeed this period is the golden age of the picture postcard where this means of postal communication has seen its most renowned publishers and produced his finest achievements.

Here are shown six Antarctic expeditions:

- Adrien De Gerlache expedition (1897-99).
- Robert Falcon Scott first expedition (1901-04).
- Jean-Baptiste Charcot first expedition (1903-05).
- Jean-Baptiste Charcot second expedition (1908-10).
- Roald Amundsen expedition (1910-12).
- Robert Falcon Scott second expedition (1910-13).

Initially postcards were published with the address side used solely for the address and any message had to be written on the picture side.

However, gradually the address side of the postcard became divided by a central vertical line. The address was written to the right of this line and any message was written to the left of the line. The divided back was accepted over a period of time; 1902 United Kingdom - 1904 France - 1905 Germany.

In June 1906 the Universal Postal Union congress in Rome accepted the principle of the divided back for all postcards but it was not introduced in the USA until 1907.

For information we can also see some Antarctic postcards with nothing on the back side (homemade antarctic postcards or others).

Only two Antarctic postcards books have been published, both by Margery G. Wharton (the first in 1998 and the second in 2007) entitled *Postcards of Antarctic expeditions a catalogue: (1898-1958)*.

Postcard showing the crew members of *Français* (1903-05), signed by the scientific staff: Charcot, Pléneau, Gourdon, Rey, Matha and Turquet.



French participation in the 2nd International Polar Year 1932-33

Serge Kahn

The mostly unknown Arctic attracted French attention from the early 19th century. Adventurous men and those of science launched expeditions to its farther reaches. Sometimes their public and governmental support matched the scarcity of the postal documentation they left behind.

In 1928 Admiral Dominik, a successor of Neumayer at the Deutschen Seewarte, proposed to celebrate the jubilee of the first International Polar Year (1882-83) by repeating the undertaking in 1932-33. The suggestion has been received with general approval and the International Meteorological Conference which met in Copenhagen in 1929 undertook to organize a second Polar Year, while the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics at their General Assembly in Stockholm approved the scheme and promised financial aid.

To achieve the 2nd International Polar Year, an International Commission has been set up and a preliminary program of work is issued, based on the establishment of a number of observing stations in both polar regions and all countries are invited to take part.

This exhibit tells the story of the most important of the 20th century French activities in the Arctic prior to WWII, using only material contemporary with this expedition.

Material used includes a variety of types accepted in international polar philately, to include letters, envelopes, cards and telegrams.



Postcard written and signed by Charles Maurain in Scoresby Sund on 28 July 1932.

Message reads: "We are in Greenland for five days after un excellent trip..."

A Danish ship that is going from here to Iceland will take this postcard..."

Mail given to the Danish ship *Gertrud Rask* from Greenland to Iceland and then aboard an other ship to Belgium (Antwerp) and by rail to Paris.

TPO postmark "Erquelines à Paris" of 22 August 1932.

Pre-WWII Polar Lighter-Than-Air Flights

Hal Vogel

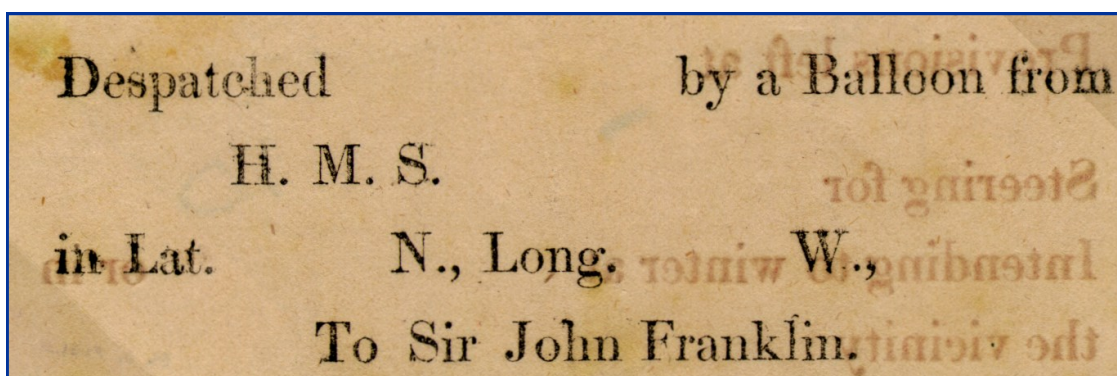
This is a first for polar aerophilately exhibition. It is the only time that anyone has attempted to show a flight exhibit consisting just of material from balloon and dirigible flight events during polar exploration's pioneer period.

This includes contemporaneous ballooning related material from the first appearance of flight in either polar region (1850), through early balloon attempts at the high Arctic and fringes of the known Antarctic, into nascent attempts at motorized airships attempting the near impossible -- and often failing. The exhibit closes prior to WWII (1936) with the first and only Arctic balloon triumph of the Gordon Bennett balloon competitions.

Much of the material was flown on actual lighter-than-air flights. Where no flown mail is known, equally challenging ancillary expedition material is shown to document the event, such as a personal posting from Monaco's Prince Albert on his 1899 Arctic oceanographic cruise that used a tethered balloon for scientific investigation.

A number of the pieces are unique, including a balloon-dropped leaflet pleading for help that was lofted during the unfortunate 1901-02 Baldwin-Ziegler North Pole Expedition and the first posted documentation of flight in the Yukon Territory (1905). Some other pieces that are not quite one-of-a-kind, still are extraordinary. Examples are the several Franklin Search Expedition balloon-lofted leaflets and personal mail from Andr  e's 1896 and 1897 ill-fated, manned balloon North Pole attempts.

Just about every polar lighter-than-air pre-1939 flight is documented which has a known postal documentation.



This ordinary-looking silk slip contains quite a bit of important aerophilatelic history.

On the reverse is a message for any 1845-47 "Franklin Northwest Passage Expedition" survivors directing them [sic] to where provisions might be found. But there already were no survivors when a free-floating balloon conveying this leaflet for dropping inland was launched from HMS *Assistance* in August-September 1850 -- becoming the *first* aerial message flown in either polar region.

South Shetlands Postal History to 1934

Hugh Osborne FRPSL

The South Shetlands archipelago is situated deep in the South Atlantic Ocean. From 1908, the islands (1,200km south of Stanley, FI) were administered as a Falkland Islands Dependency until 1962 when they became part of British Antarctic Territories. Like neighbouring South Georgia (1,390km South east of Stanley, FI), the Dependency came into prominence as a base for whaling, but slightly later.

A post office operated to meet postal needs of whalers, first opening briefly in March 1913, and seasonally thereafter until closing permanently on 6 March 1931, a consequence of contemporary financial turbulence which led to the dominance of pelagic whaling over land based enterprises. Stamps were current issue Falkland Islands, but South Shetlands employed a couple of dedicated cancellers, oval at first (1914 - 1924) and then circular (1922 - 1931). A straight line 'PORT FOSTER' was used for 1913 together with Falklands' cds [F.4E or F.6] applied in Stanley.

Whaling began after the sea ice melted and ended shortly before the sea froze again, at best from November to May, but the season was typically some three months, mid/late December onwards.

A number of Antarctic Expeditions including the German *Meteor*, called into the whaling station on Deception Island, a famous caldera accessed via Neptune's Bellows. Mail is shown both pre-dating (1911) and post-dating the post office - from the 1934 visit of the Second Ellsworth Trans Antarctic Expedition of 1934-35. The exhibit also includes commercial whaling covers, postcards and registered mail, completed later at South Georgia or Stanley.



1930 Empire 1 oz rate, tied by SS.2 DE 16 30 to Cambridge Noble Prize winner, Prof Sir Frederick Hopkins from Dr HO Nolan, a chemist, sent using "s/s Melville, owner N Bugge, Tønsberg" stationery.

Notes

Notes

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