SOUTH GEORGIA

PETE and ANNIE HILL

The RCC Pilotage Foundation is grateful to Pete and Annie Hill for allowing us to publish their notes, arising from their cruise to South Georgia in their junk rigged yacht 'Badger', for the information and benefit of others. Any skipper tempted to cruise these waters should note their advice and cautions and only attempt the voyage in a well found vessel with a strong crew. They must be totally self contained and physically and mentally strong enough to cope with the fast changing conditions and the harsh environment. The rewards may be immense but the challenges are great – attention is drawn to the Caution below.

Readers are also referred to 'South Georgia Guide' by Andy O'Grady and Ulla Norlander. Along with other information about the South Atlantic, this may be found on www.rccpf.org.uk

Caution

These notes have been prepared by the authors on the basis of the information they have been able to obtain in the course of their visit to the areas described. In particular, soundings shown reflect the route taken by the authors and the absence of soundings does not indicate that depths are necessarily safe. The notes are in no way comprehensive and refer only to the conditions encountered at the time of the visit. Any plans are simply sketches and do not represent the results of a survey of the places referred to. They should be used with extreme caution. The RCC Pilotage Foundation and the authors has published these notes in the hope that they may be of some help to mariners but the safety of a vessel depends ultimately on the judgment of the skipper who should assess all information, published or unpublished.

To the extent permitted by law, the RCC Pilotage Foundation and the authors do not accept liability for any loss and/or damage howsoever caused that may arise from reliance on information contained in these pages.

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INTRODUCTION

The following notes were made during a cruise to the islands in the summer of 1994-95.

It is hoped that their compilation will make more information available than is contained in The *Antarctic Pilot*, which will be of use to other Members in planning a cruise.

The danger of making such information available is that it does encourage people to go to these places themselves. This is all well and good, provided that they appreciate that conditions in the Southern Ocean can be extreme. Gerry Clark's book, *The TOTORORE Voyage* provides some very sobering accounts of how bad it can be and no-one should venture down to this area without first reading this book. Any yachtsmen sailing in these waters must be totally self-sufficient and prepared to extricate themselves from any eventuality. There are no rescue services and help should neither be sought nor expected from any of the few scientific bases. It should be remembered that it is impossible to replenish either stores or fuel.

As well as being meticulously prepared for sailing in these latitudes, a yacht's ground tackle must be heavy and reliable. Hurricane force winds in apparently sheltered anchorages are not uncommon and adequate ground tackle that will cope with these conditions, should be carried. This will mean that the anchors and chain will seem ridiculously oversized. Your life may well depend on it.

Weather conditions can change with extreme rapidity and a barograph is an enormously useful aid to weather forecasting.

The accuracy of available charts should not be relied upon. A number of rocks and shoals are unmarked and there are also large discrepancies in many areas between the position as indicated and that obtained by GPS.

The sketch charts included in these notes are just that. While I have tried to make them as accurate as possible, they should be treated with caution. In anticipation of the metrication of the relevant charts, soundings are given in metres, to an approximate mean low water springs level. Heights are also in metres.

Of necessity, *Badger* features in nearly all the photographs of anchorages. Not only does this show where we anchored, but it also gives a scale to the picture.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people for the help that they extended to us: Tim and Pauline Carr. Pat and Sarah Lurcock, Rick, skipper of the *Abel-J*, Russ Manning, Sally and Jérõme Poncet.

Suggested Reading

The *Totorore* Voyage	Gerry Clark	ISBN 0-7126-2438-4
The Antarctic Pilot	H M Admiralty	
Southern Ocean Cruising	Sally &. Jérõme Poncet	
The Island of South Georgia	R Headland	ISBN 0-521-42474-7
Log Book for Grace	Robert Murphy	
Seabirds	Peter Harrison	ISBN 0-395-33253-2
Wildlife of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia	Ian J Strange	ISBN 0-00-219839-8
The Great Antarctic Rescue	Frank A Worsley	
Ice Bird	David Lewis	ISBN 0-00-211737-1
Mischief Goes South	H W Tilman	ISBN 0-906371-22-8

Various articles on South Georgia by Tim and Pauline Carr, featured in *Yachting Monthly*, *Yachting World* and *Cruising World*, 1994-95

SOUTH GEORGIA

The island of South Georgia lies between latitudes 53°56'S and 54°55'S and longitudes 34°45'W and 38°15'W. It is very mountainous, with over half its area covered in ice and snow all the year round. The island lies within the Antarctic Convergence which accounts for the severity of the weather. South Georgia is a British Possession.

The island was first sighted by Antoine de la Roche, a London merchant, in 1675, but the first landing and exploration was carried out by Captain James Cook on his second voyage of discovery in 1775.

The first exploitation of the island was in the period of 1786-1802, when sealing was carried out to such an extent that stocks became too depleted to make the continued hunting of Fur seals viable. The next period of exploitation was whaling, which was carried out from 1904 until 1966; again this was discontinued when the animals were almost wiped out.

In 1982, South Georgia was invaded by Argentina at the start of the Falklands Conflict, but was retaken a few weeks later. Since then a garrison has been maintained at Grytviken but in 1995 this is being reduced to a minimum.

Administration

The post of Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands is usually held by the Governor of the Falkland Islands, although they are administered separately.
Before visiting South Georgia permission should first be obtained from the Commissioner by writing to him enclosing a rough itinerary and basic details of the boat and crew:

> The Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
> Government House
> Stanley
> Falkland Islands
> South Atlantic
> via London

There is generally no problem for a cruising yacht. If you are unable to apply in advance, then the boat should proceed directly to King Edward Point, where permission to cruise the island may be sought through the Marine Officer.

There is an entry 'fine' of £44, payable to the Marine Officer on arrival. An English cheque was accepted in payment.

Google Earth

These notes are based on charts. Google Earth provides a satellite overview of the island, and additional photographs.

Anchorages

The jagged nature of the terrain causes much turbulence when the wind reaches gale force and this can produce up to hurricane force williwaws, even in an apparently snug harbour. In the following notes, any reference to shelter refers to the protection given from the sea. Few anchorages are free from violent squalls under certain conditions.

The best weather is to be found on the NE coast between Cooper Sound and the Bay of Islands. The NW and SE tips of the island suffer from a greater amount of overcast and the weather is generally unsettled. The SW coast is open to the prevailing winds and is very exposed with few good anchorages - this coast should be treated with the greatest respect.

Pilot and Charts

South Georgia is covered in the Antarctic Pilot, published by H M Admiralty. The following charts are also available from the Admiralty:

Chart No 3596 General Chart
Chart No 3597 The Island
Chart No 3589 Cumberland Bays, Stromness Bay and Harbour charts Chart No 3585 Bay of Islands and Harbour charts
Chart No 3592 Willis Island, Bird Island and Harbour charts

Fur Seals

The Fur seal population has increased dramatically in the last few years and is now believed to be back to its pre-sealing levels on the Island, Because of this, many of the beaches are packed with Fur seals which can make trips ashore difficult. The worst time is the breeding season, October to early January, when they are particularly aggressive. Unless you have previous experience, your first trips ashore can be alarming.
From our experience, a bodger (a stick of at least four feet) should be carried by each person - a boathook, or an oar for example. Fur seals will often make what appears to be an attack, but pointing the bodger at them usually halts them and a light tap under the chin will deter the more persistent. Fur seals will also be found amazingly far up the hills in tussac grass, so be careful not to trip over one accidentally, as you will both get a fright.
For your first visit ashore, plan to go for only a short while, to get used to the seals. After a time you will become more blase and experienced people hardly bother about them at all. After the breeding season, they become much less aggressive, but are still very inquisitive.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Specially Protected Area
There two SSSIs and one SPA in South Georgia, ie Bird and Annenkov Island and Cooper Island. Full details of these areas will be found in Sally and Jerome Poncet's booklet, Southern Ocean Cruising.

Bases

There are two bases maintained by BAS. Bird Island has a year-round base with three people overwintering and as many as eight people there during the summer. The other site is at Husvik Harbour and is a summer-only base of four people.

KING EDWARD COVE

54º 16'S 36º 30'W Chart 3589, Plan of King Edward Cove

King Edward Cove is in Cumberland East Bay, about half way along the NE coast of South Georgia. The administrative centre and garrison are housed at King Edward Point at the entrance to the cove. At the head of the bay is the disused whaling station of Grytviken.

Yachts normally berth at Grytviken alongsinde one of the wooden docsks. Which are in a poor state of repair. The best place however, is alongside the old whale catcher, *Petrol*, at the S end of the whaling station, which, in the summer of 1994-1995 was holed and resting on the bottom. This berth has been used by Tim and Pauline Carr on *Curlew* for several years, summer and winter. Tie up alongside with the bow facing offshore and take a breast line ashore o the wooden jetty to the N. This will enable you to haul off Petrel in the case of an E wind and to ride out a blow in relative comfort. There is a depth of 3m, amidships, alongside *Petre*l.

The second choice is to tie up in the bight of the old plan, between the two piers and alongside the N one. Tie up facing E (offshore) and take a breast rope ashore to the S jetty (in poor condition), again to enable you to pull off in an E wind.

A third option is to tie up alongside either of the two wooden docks which have approximately 3m depth. It is advisable to set an anchor offshore, either to pull the boat off the pier in an E'ly or to assist in leaving the jetty in an E blow when it may well be untenable alongside.

The dock at King Edward Point has a depth alongside of 6m, but it is inadvisable to remain there except in settled weather. Even with a wind out of the E, the swell makes it uncomfortable for a yacht. During E'ly winds, a sheltered anchorage will be found in the bight of King Edward Point, in a depth of 8m, clear of the kelp.

Being the administrative centre of the island, King Edward Cove should be the first stop in South Georgia. The Marine Officer will call once the boat is secured and deal with the formalities.

There is a very good whaling museum in the old Manager's House at Grytviken. It has a small shop selling postcards and souvenirs.

King Edward Point has a post office. Mail is delivered by air at intervals of approximately two weeks. This is air-dropped into the Cove by an RAF aeroplane, sent from the Falklands. Surface mail and outgoing mail is sent via the supply ship at intervals of about two months. Incoming airmail should normally take around one month from Great Britain. South Georgia stamps with the King Edward Point frank are regarded as collectors' items.

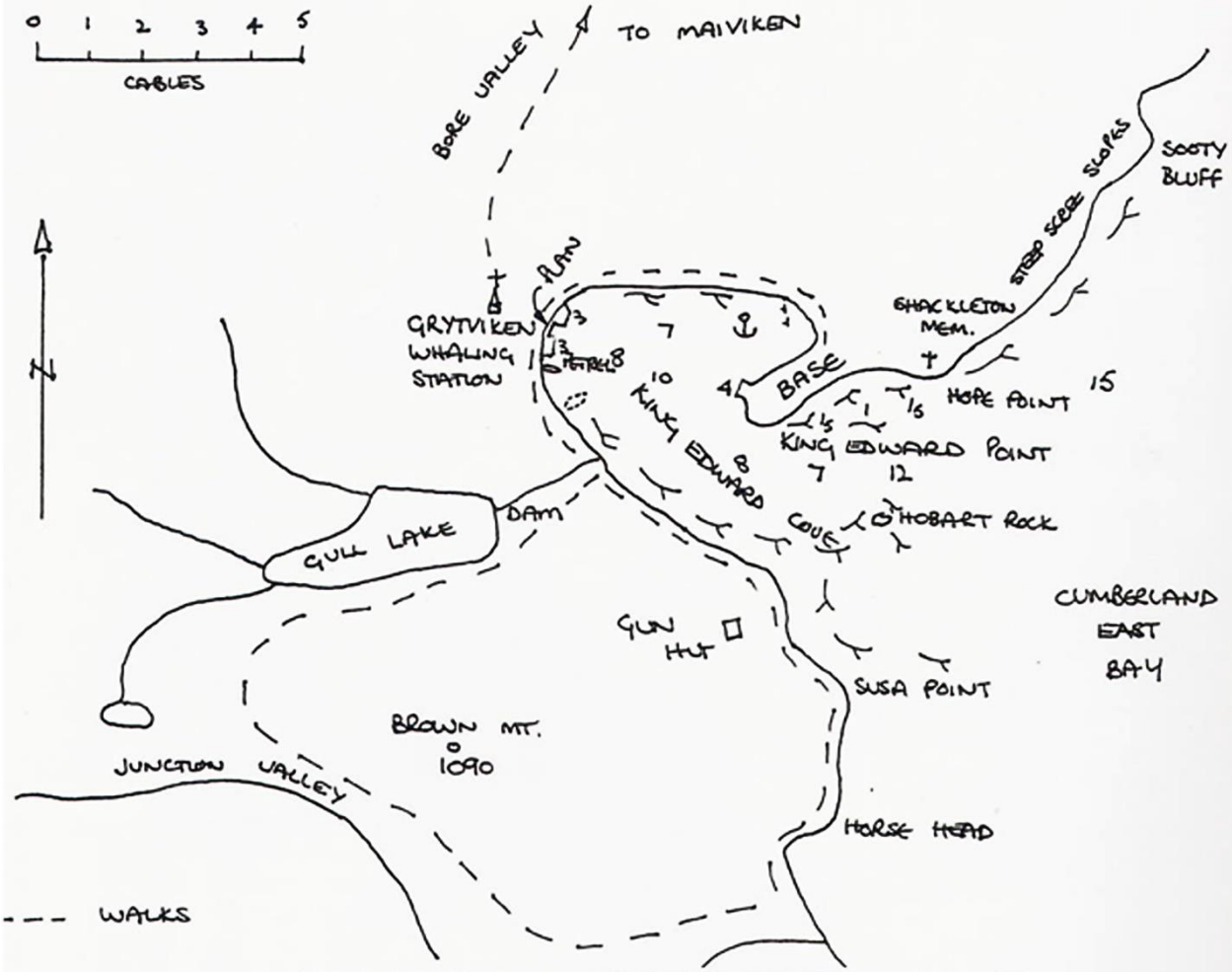
Water is obtainable from the stream inland of Petrel, with a grassy bank giving easy access. The big guano shed alongside the stream provides a good place to dry laundry. Water can also be obtained from a pipe near the shore, close to the Museum.

There are no other facilities on South Georgia.

The pecked line, on the sketch chart shows some good walks from Grytviken.

Sir Ernest Shackleton died of a heart attack on board the Quest at Grytviken, in 1922. The conspicuous white cross above King Edward Point is his Memorial. He is buried in the graveyard to the S of Grytviken.

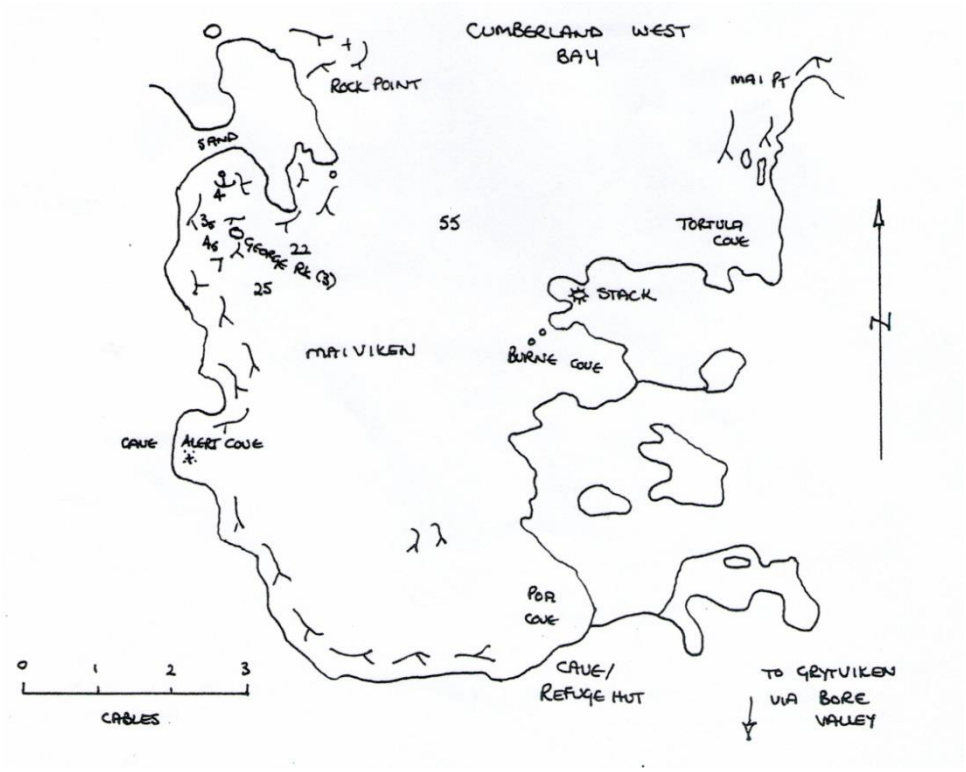
- South Georgia -



KING EDWARD COVE, LOOKING N TOWARDS GRYTVIKEN

CUMBERLAND WEST BAY

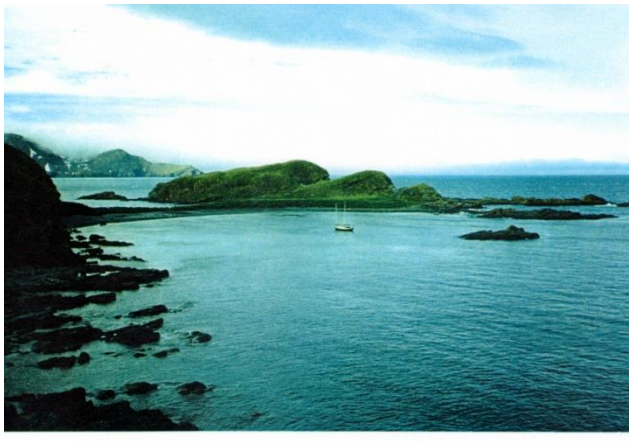
This is a large bay, with three glaciers at its head, namely the Neumayer, Geike and Lyell Glaciers. Small pieces of ice are often observed drifting out of the bay, most of which come from the Neumayer Glacier, the largest of the three



MAIVIKEN

54°14'S 36°30'W Chart 3589, Maiviken

Situated at the southern entrance to Cumberland West Bay, Maiviken is a sheltered anchorage. The best protection is to be found in the N part of the bay. Anchor N of George Rock, in 4m, where it will be possible to find a patch that is clear of kelp.
On the two occasions that this anchorage was used by Badger, no swell or ice was encountered.



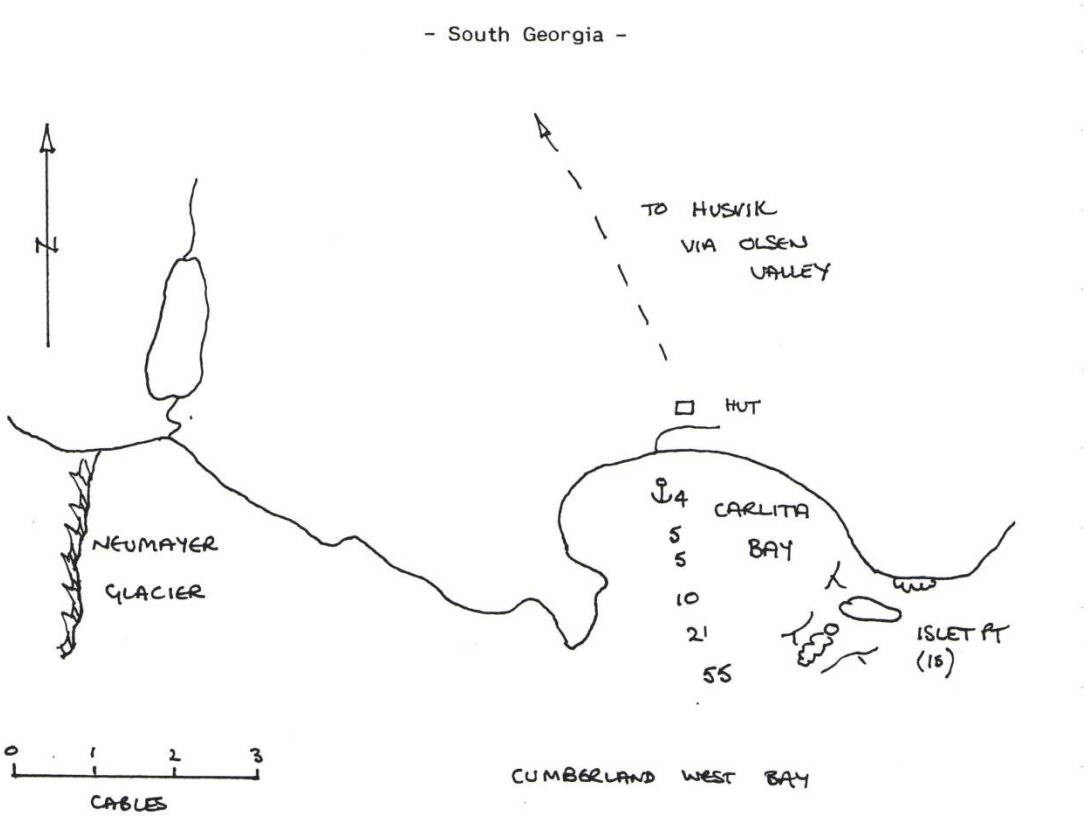
MAIVIKEN, LOOKING N, WITH GEORGE ROCK ASTERN OF BADGER

It is possible to pass either side of George Rock. The W passage is wider, but has more kelp than the one to the E.
In Alert Cove, which is half way down the W shore, there is an old sealers' cave, a short way back from the shingle beach.
There is a refuge cave with emergency supplies in the SE corner of the bay. This is stocked and used by the garrison at King Edward Point. It is a 2 mile walk from the cave to Grytviken along the Bore Valley.

CARLITA BAY

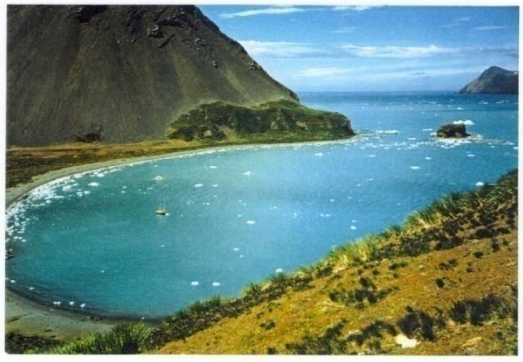
(Horseshoe Bay on old charts)

54°14'S 36°39'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Stromness and Cumberland Bays



During the whaling era, the Postman delivered the mail to the stations in Stromness Bay by rowing across Cumberland West Bay from Maiviken to Carlita Bay, and then walking over the col to Husvik and on to the other two stations. At one time, there was a Postman's refuge hut, but this has now gone. Instead there is a newer hut, built by BAS in the early 60's. It is used as a refuge hut by the Garrison and is stocked with emergency supplies. When we visited in 1995, the hut had been damaged by storms with the floor, walls and roof all having been displaced from one another. Unless it is repaired, it will probably not last long

CARLITA BAY, LOOKING E



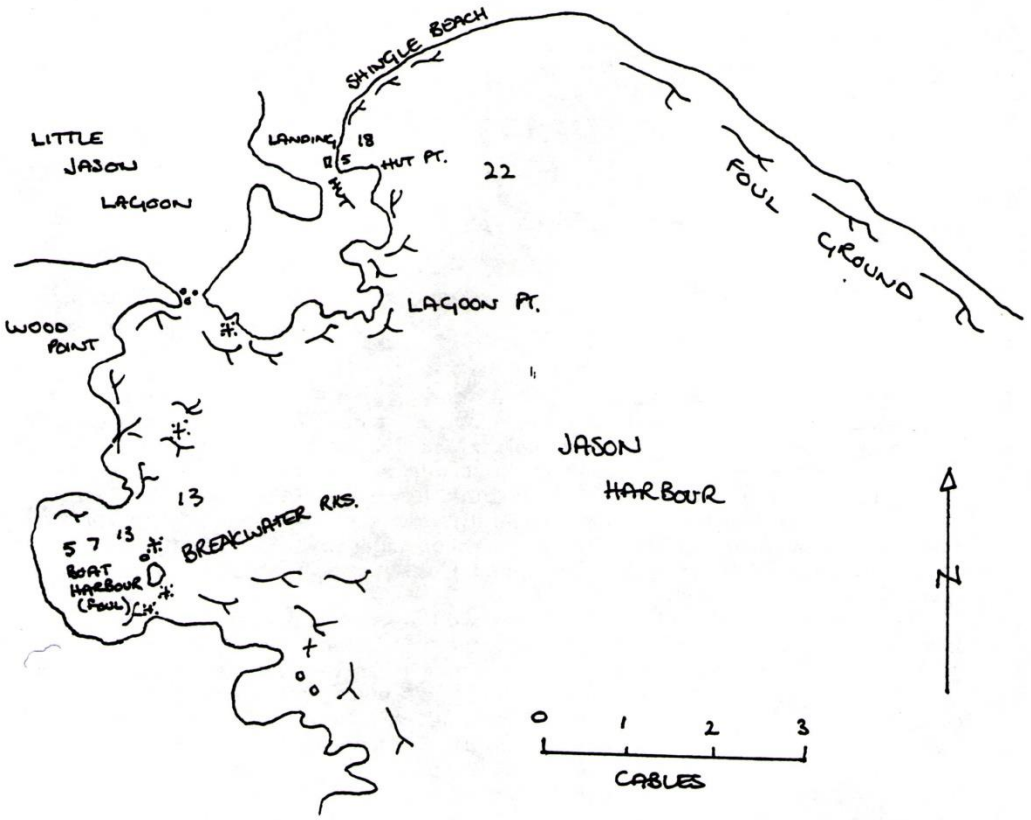
The approach to Carlita Bay might well necessitate a certain amount of dodging around ice calved from the Neumayer Glacier. Anchorage was found off the hut, in 4m, mud with no kelp. The bay is well sheltered from the W through N to NE. On the occasion of Badger's visit, there was quite a lot of ice in the anchorage and because of this, it would not be advisable to leave a yacht unattended or to anchor overnight in this bay.

From Carlita Bay, it is a fairly easy 2½ to 3 hour walk to Husvik. A good view of the Neumayer Glacier can be obtained by climbing the hill to the W of the bay.

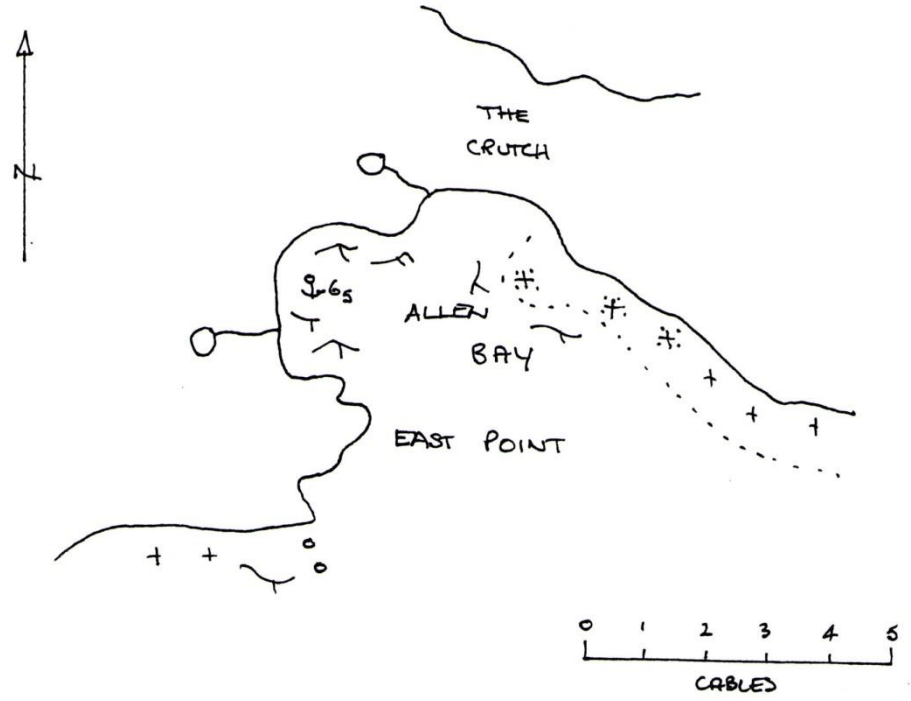
JASON HARBOUR

54°12'S 36°35'W Chart 3589

Badger visited Jason Harbour with the intention of anchoring in the Boat Harbour, but it was found to be completely filled with ice. The possibility of bringing up near Hut Point was also investigated, but depths of 18m were found, close up to the beach.
Apparently, the Boat Harbour is usually clear of ice.



ALLEN BAY
54°11'S 36°32'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Stromness and Cumberland Bays



An anchorage was found in the cove at the W side of this bay, in 6.5m in a clear patch among the kelp. It is sheltered from the SW through W to N.When we entered, the cove was almost ice free, but a few hours later, a bergy bit drifted in and threatened Badger's tranquillity. An alternative anchorage in Maiviken was chosen for the night.

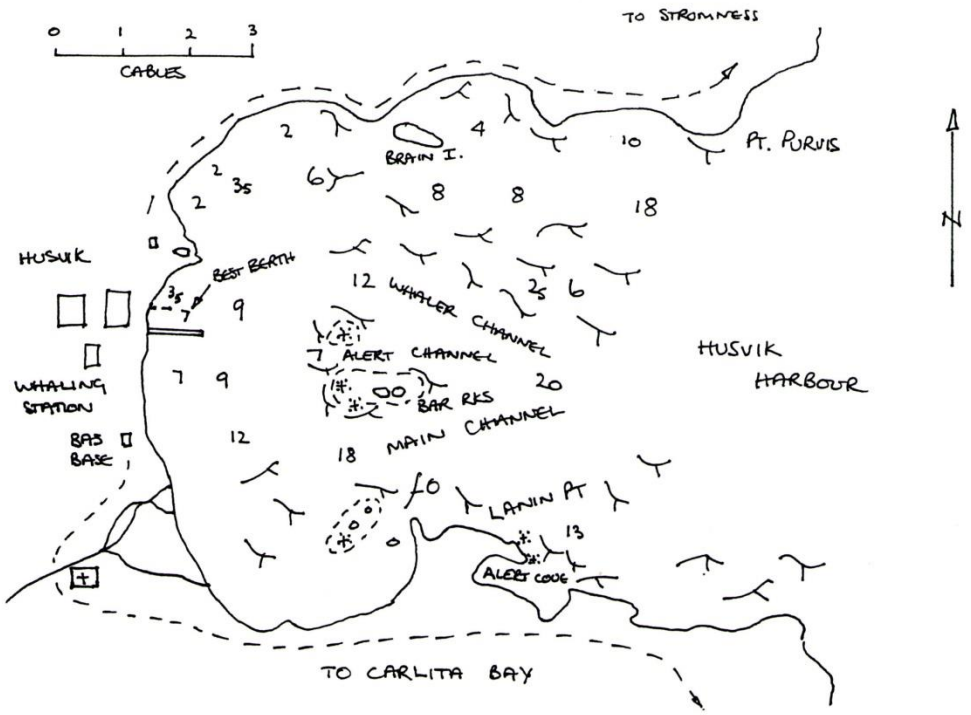
ALLEN BAY, LOOKING S

STROMNESS BAY

This is the next bay N of Cumberland Bay. It has three arms with a whaling station at the head of each bay.

HUSVIK HARBOUR

54°11'S 36°42'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Leith, Stromness and Husvik Harbours



The southernmost arm of Stromness Bay contains Husvik Harbour. The centre of the bay is a mass of kelp with the Bar Rocks marking the S end. The main channel to the S of the Bar Rocks is the more straightforward. There is also a passage along the N shore, but there is some kelp here.

Suitable depths for anchoring will be found at the head of the bay. The wooden pier is in a very poor state, but it is possible to go alongside the N side. About midway along, there is a length of dock with an extra plank to make fending off possible. Prudence would dictate laying out an anchor to the N, in order to be able to pull away from the jetty in winds from this quadrant. The S side of the pier has a railway line; walking along this is the safest way to get ashore, but be very careful when using the jetty as it has many loose, missing and rotten planks. When visited, a couple of terns were nesting on the dock. A very sharp lookout should be kept if there are obviously agitated birds about because neither the egg nor the chick would be easily seen.

There are the remains of a whaling station here, in the usual ruined and vandalised state. Of particular interest is the old whale catcher, KarrakattA high and dry on the beach and used as a steam plant for many years.

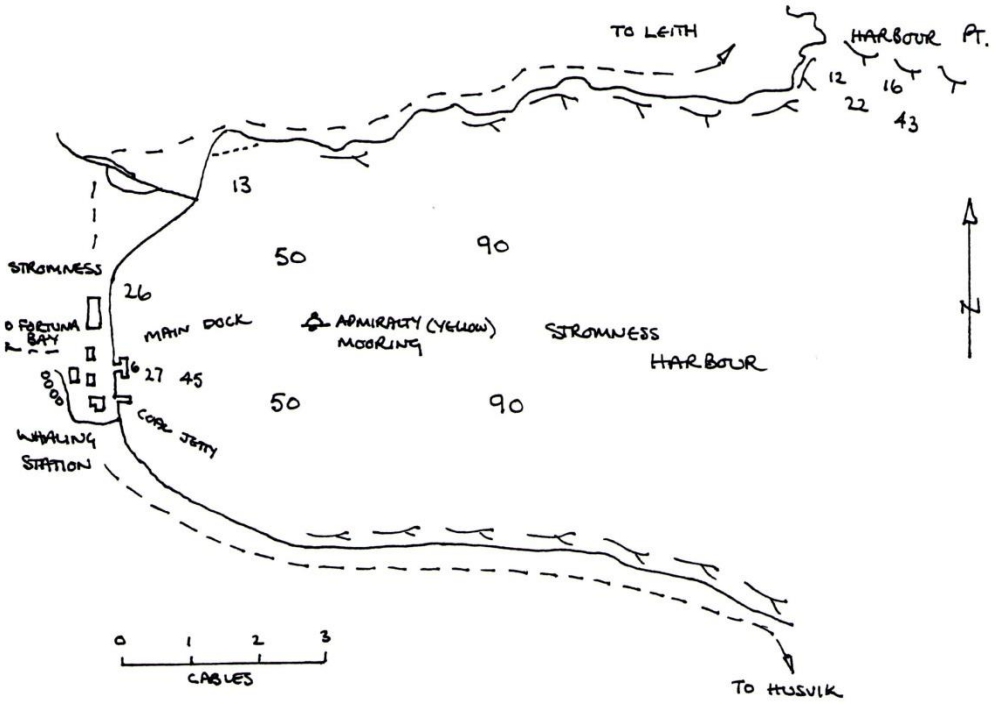
BAS has a summer-only field station at Husvik and there are usually four staff. They live in the house at the S end of the factory. It would be courteous to contact them to avoid interfering with any of their projects or experiments, when ashore. Depending on their workload, offers of hospitality would probably be much appreciated.

HUSVIK HARBOUR, LOOKING SE

Good walking can be enjoyed in the area. A three hour walk, S up the Olsen Valley takes you to Carlita Bay or the Neumayer Glacier. It is possible to walk up the Karrakatta Valley and over to Fortuna Bay, as well as round to Stromness and Leith Harbours.

STROMNESS HARBOUR

54°09'S 36°42'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Leith, Stromness and Husvik Harbours



This is the site of a whaling station, which was latterly used as a ship repair facility for the whaling fleets in the area. The main dock is in a reasonable state of repair and has some newish black, rubber ship fendering in places. There is a depth of 6m alongside.

Curlew reported that they often lie between the main dock and the one to the S of it, with lines to each. It is shallow enough to anchor between the docks until the boat can be tied up.

The bottom drops away sharply from the dock to over 30m, so it would seem impractical to lay out an anchor to hold the vessel off. Although Grass Island protects the bay from the E, there is still a 11 mile fetch, and it would probably be very uncomfortable alongside in a strong E'ly blow.

The station is of interest, but it is falling down and subject to vandalism. The Manager's Villa at the S end of the station, is where Shackleton and his companions arrived after crossing the island. A plaque to commemorate this has been placed outside the house on the land side.

There are walks to Husvik and Leith and a longer one over the col to Fortuna Bay.

The Pilot warns of very strong winds during offshore gales. A large, yellow mooring buoy maintained by the Admiralty, lies in the bay.

If obtaining water from the stream it is advisable to go well up above the tanks, which may be leaking and polluting the water.

STROMNESS HARBOUR, THE MAIN DOCK - LOOKING N

LEITH HARBOUR

54°08'S 36° 41'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Leith, Stromness and Husvik Harbours

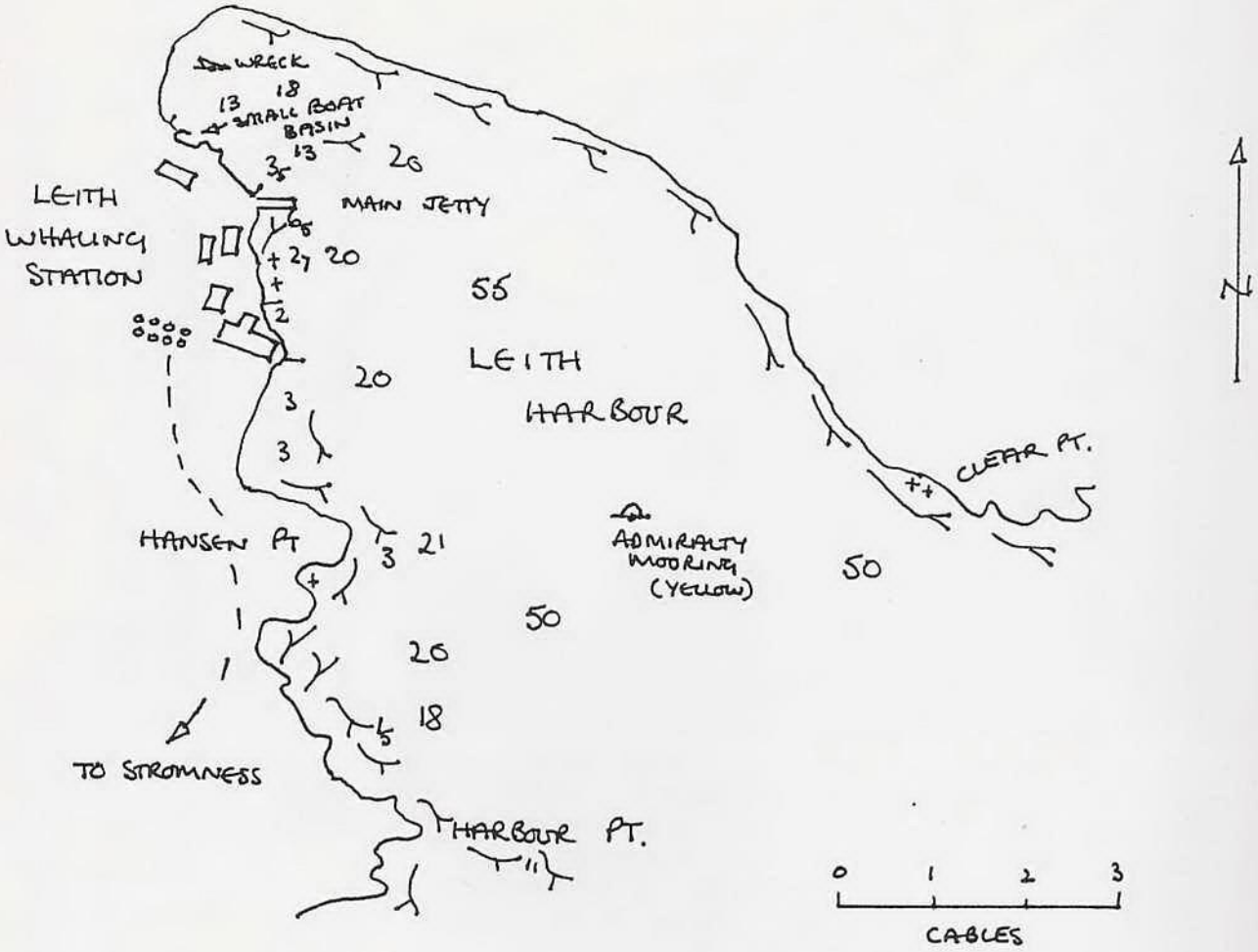
This was another whaling station and is more famous in recent years as the site of the start of the Falklands Conflict, in 1982. An Argentine commercial salvage operation was used to disguise the arrival of military personnel who eventually invaded the island. As a consequence of the salvage work (which was never completed) there is a huge pile of rusting machinery and parts by the main dock. Much more is scattered about making this station probably the worst eyesore on the island. While many of the buildings are still standing, time and vandalism have taken their usual toll.

The main dock is still in reasonable condition, with heavy fendering on the SE side which has a depth of 6.5m alongside. A dense patch of kelp exists between the shore and the SE side of the jetty, which makes it advisable to approach from the NE.

If intending to stay for several days, it is possible to moor in a small basin a short distance NW of the main dock. This offers good protection from the sea from all quarters. The NW corner of the basin is shoal with the remains of a small wooden boat showing at low water. The depth at the SE end is not known, but it is believed to be sufficient for most yachts. NW winds can blow here with extreme violence. Some swell may be experienced in the basin.

A yellow mooring buoy for the use of ships in Leith Harbour, is laid and maintained by the Admiralty.

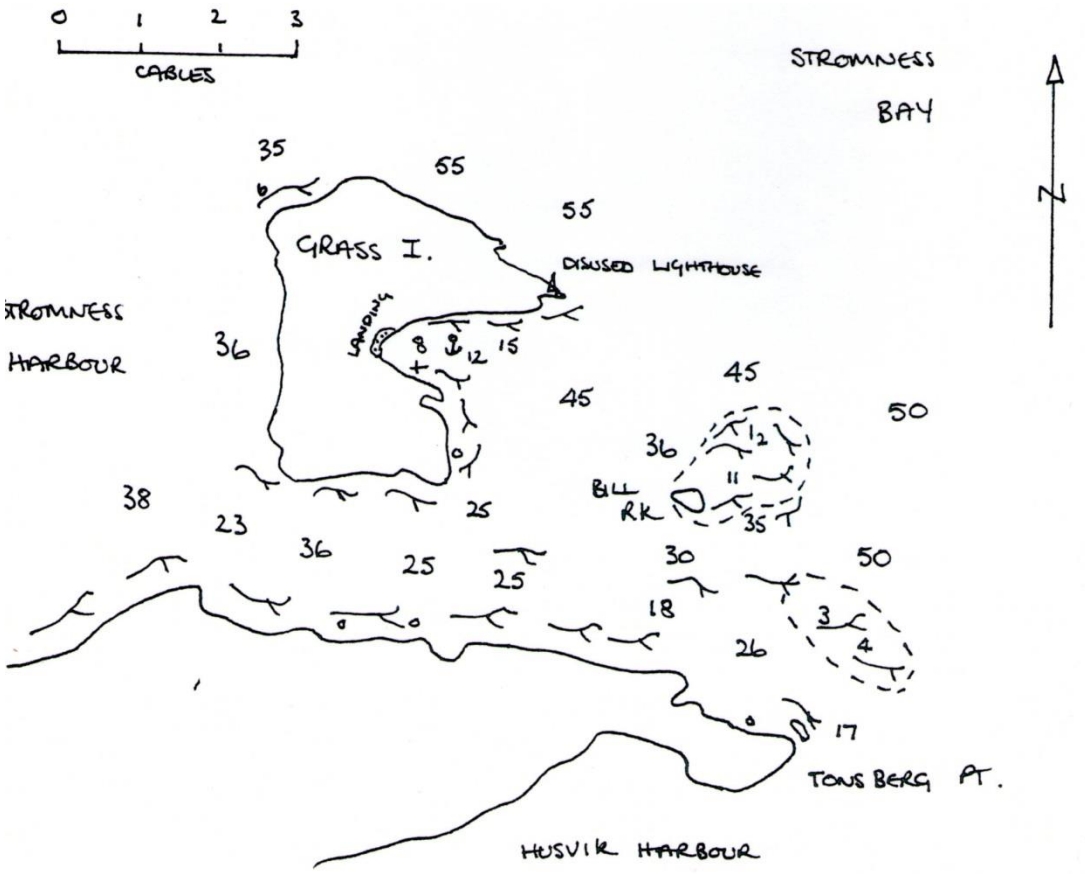
LEITH HARBOUR, SMALL BOAT BASIN - LOOKING E



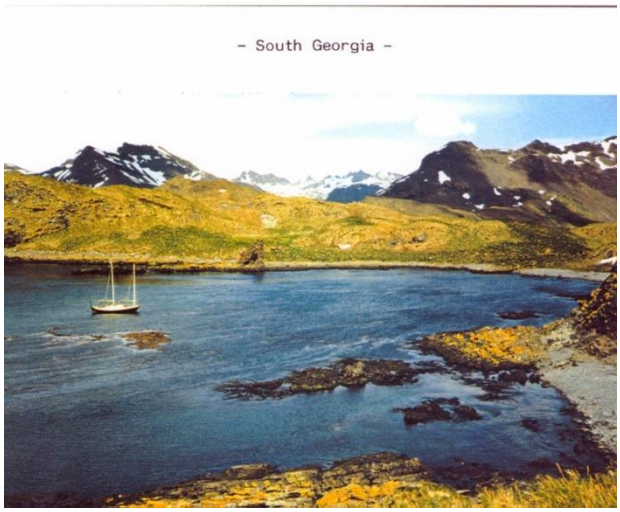
LEITH HARBOUR, THE MAIN JETTY - LOOKING NE

GRASS ISLAND

54°09'S 36°40'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Leith, Stromness and Husvik Harbours

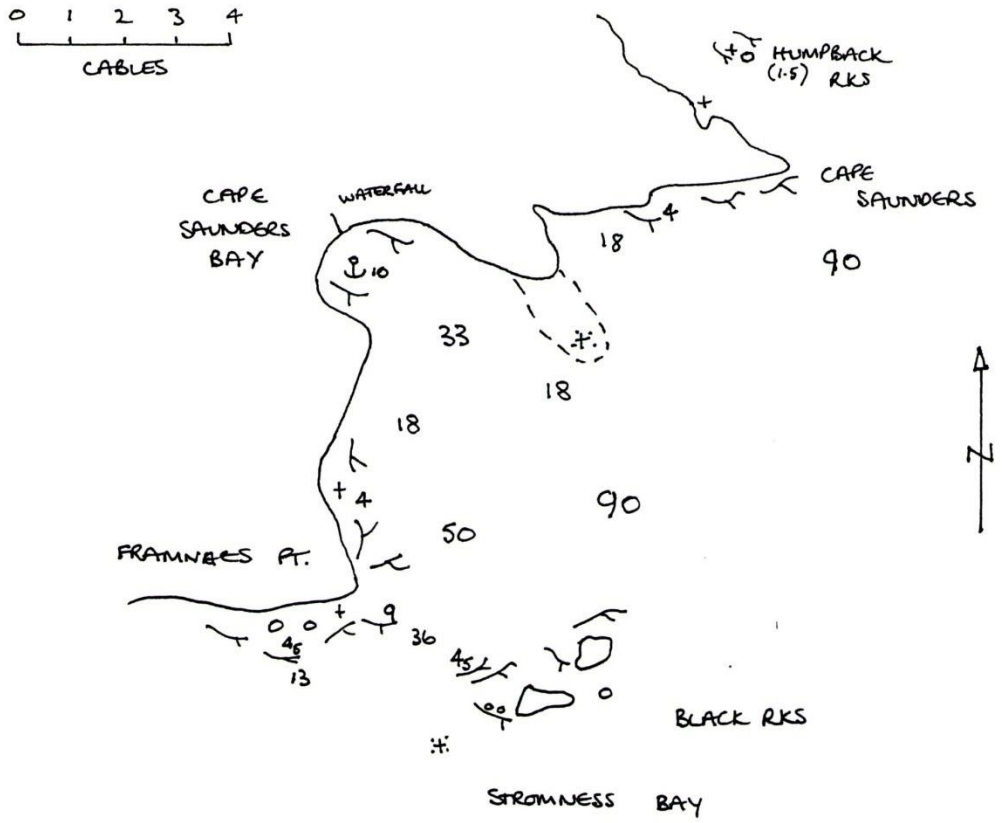


This island guards the entrance to Stromness Harbour. On the E side of the island is an anchorage giving good shelter from the SW through W to N, without the fierce squalls that apparently affect Stromness Harbour itself, in W'ly gales. It is, however, wide open to the E.
Anchor in about 12m in a patch clear of kelp. It is possible to land on the beach to the W of the anchorage. The old lighthouse building on the E point of the island is still in quite good condition.



CAPE SAUNDERS BAY

54°08'S 3639'W Chart 3589, Approaches to Stromness and Cumberland Bays



About ½ mile SW of Cape Saunders is an unnamed bay, offering a good anchorage with shelter from the N and W.

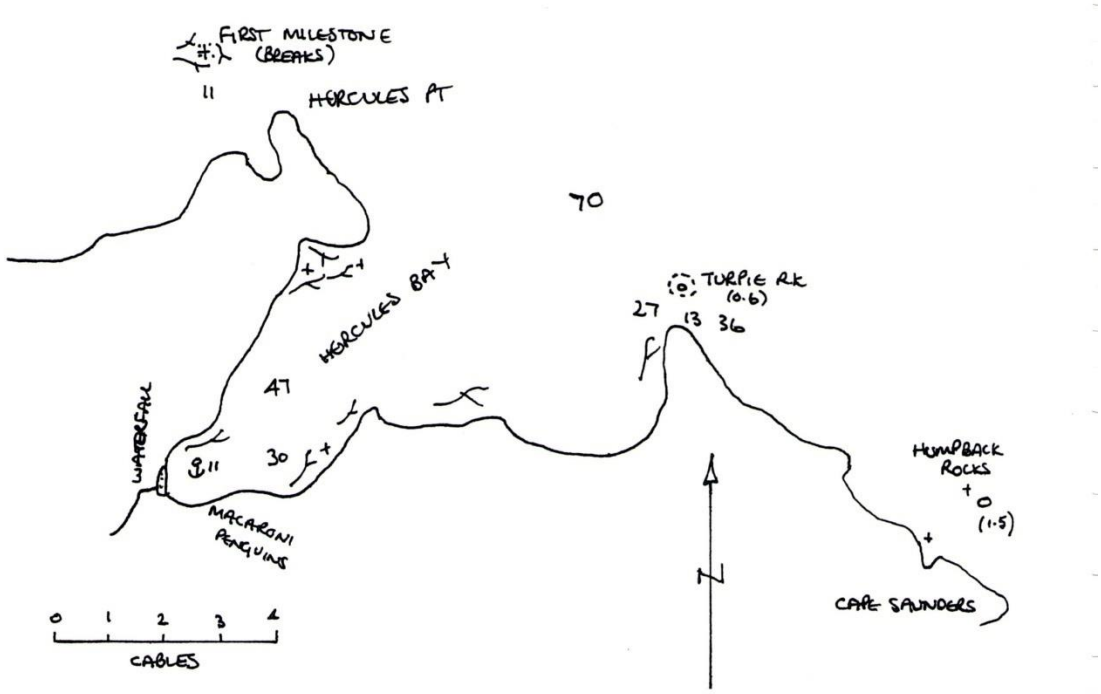
If coming from Leith or Stromness Harbours, it is possible to pass inside Black Rocks, but care should be taken to avoid the drying rock 1½cables W of the western islet. There is plenty of room to tack through the centre of the channel. Note that there is a drying rock, shown on the chart 2 cables S of the headland to the W of Cape Saunders Bay, which should also be avoided.

Anchor near the centre of the bay in 10m, in a patch clear of kelp. The bottom is fine sand, with kelp.

CAPE SAUNDERS BAY, LOOKING NW

HERCULES BAY

54°07'W 36°40' Chart 3589, Approaches to Stromness and Cumberland Bays



The entrance to this bay is situated 1 mile WNW of Cape Saunders. There is deep water inshore of Humpback Rocks and Turpie Rock.

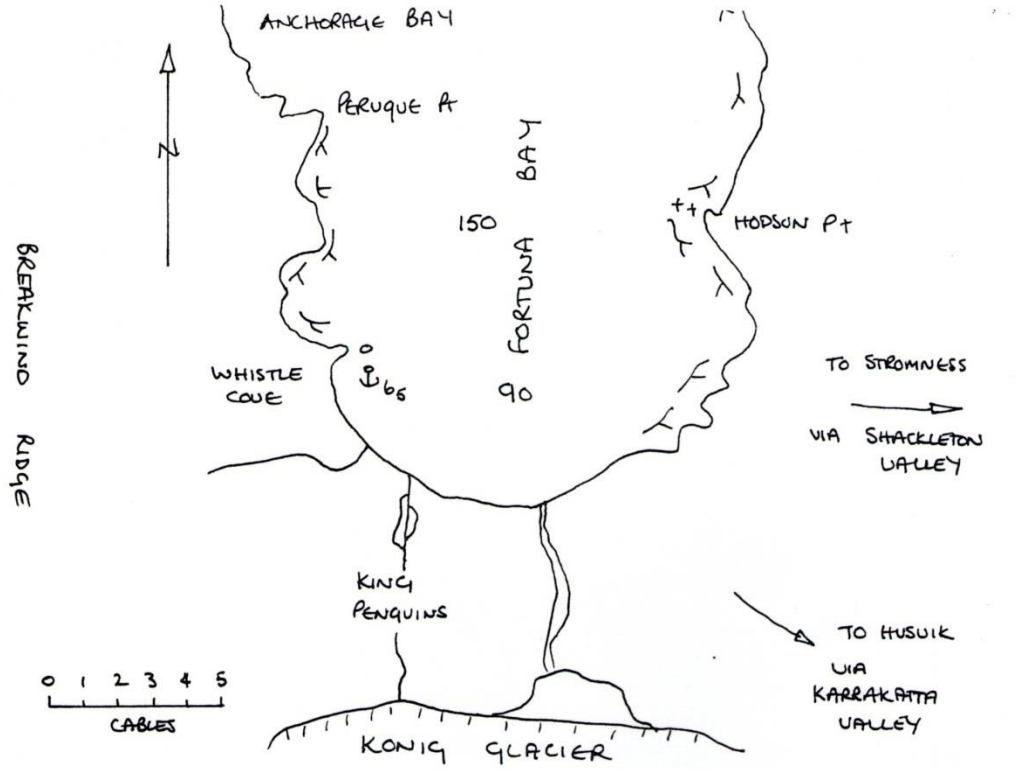
The bay appears to be clear of dangers, except possibly close inshore. At the head of the bay there is a conspicuous waterfall; sail towards this and anchor in 11m. The bottom seems to be clear of kelp. There is good shelter from all directions with the exception of the NE'ly quadrant.

When visited, Fur seals, sea Elephants and King penguins were seen on the beach, in front of the waterfall. On the cliff to the S of this beach there is a large colony of Macaroni penguins.

This is a delightful anchorage and well worth a visit.

HERCULES BAY, LOOKING SW

FORTUNA BAY



This is an attractive bay with the Konig Glacier and the S arm of the Fortuna Glacier flowing towards the bay. Both of these have retreated back from the shoreline. Although the broad expanse of these glaciers may well give rise to strong local winds, none was experienced in the light NE'ly conditions prevailing on the occasion of Badger's visit.
Three anchorages were visited and shelter can be found from all but the North in one or other of these.

WHISTLE COVE

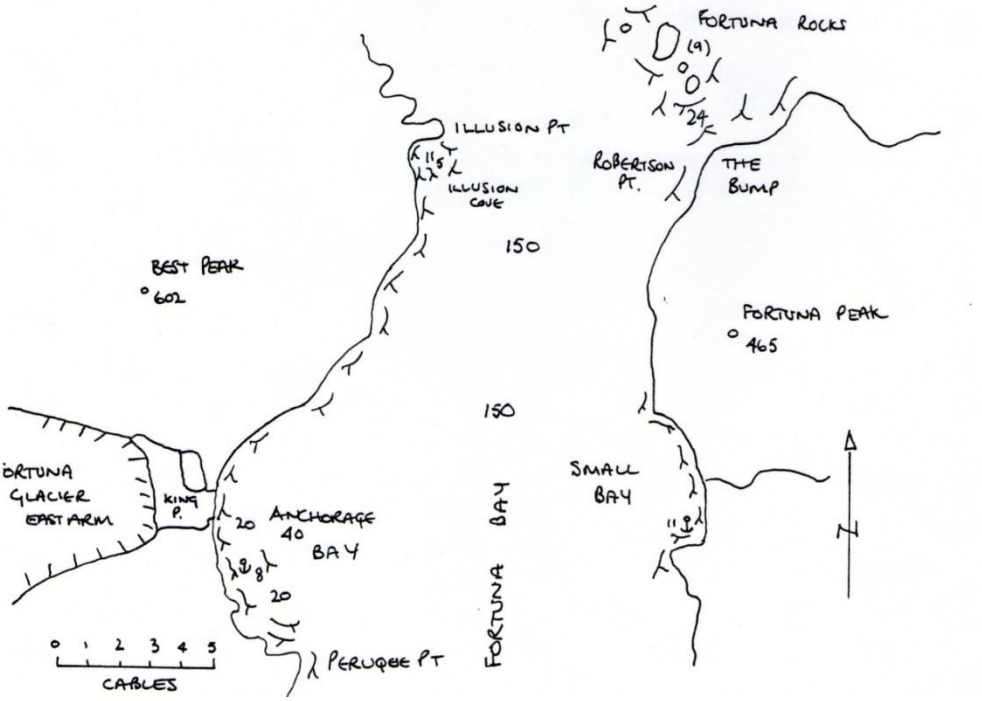
54°09'S 36°49'W 3585, Fortuna Bay

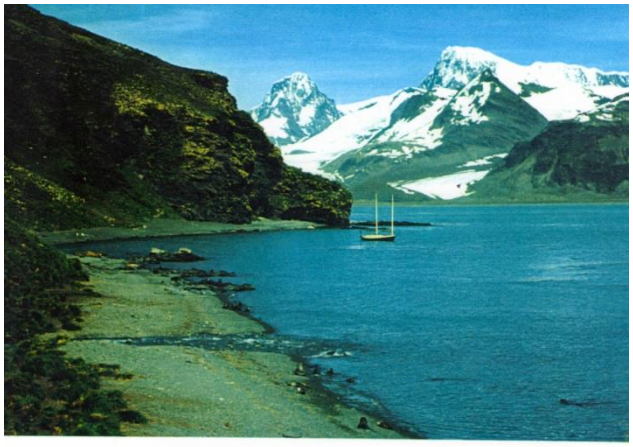
This cove is at the SW corner of the bay and provides a good anchorage from where a visit can be made to the King penguin colony, situated on the moraine at the W side of the Konig Glacier front. Anchorage was found in 6.5m, fine sand, with no kelp. The cove is sheltered S through W to NW.

There were only a few Fur seals ashore here.

SMALL BAY

54°07'S 36°47'W 585, Fortuna Bay





SMALL BAY, LOOKING S

Situated halfway down the E shore of Fortuna Bay, there is good shelter here from the NE through E to SSE. Anchorage was found at the S end of the bay in 11m, in a patch clear of kelp.

ANCHORAGE BAY

54°07'S 36°49'W Chart 3585, Fortuna Bay

Anchorage Bay is by the S arm of the Fortuna Glacier. On the occasion of Badger's visit, it was found possible to anchor S of the southern of the two streams entering the bay. There is a sizeable kelp patch off the beach and clear water inshore of it. Depths are 8m and there is plenty of swinging room. Shelter can be found from NNW through W to S.

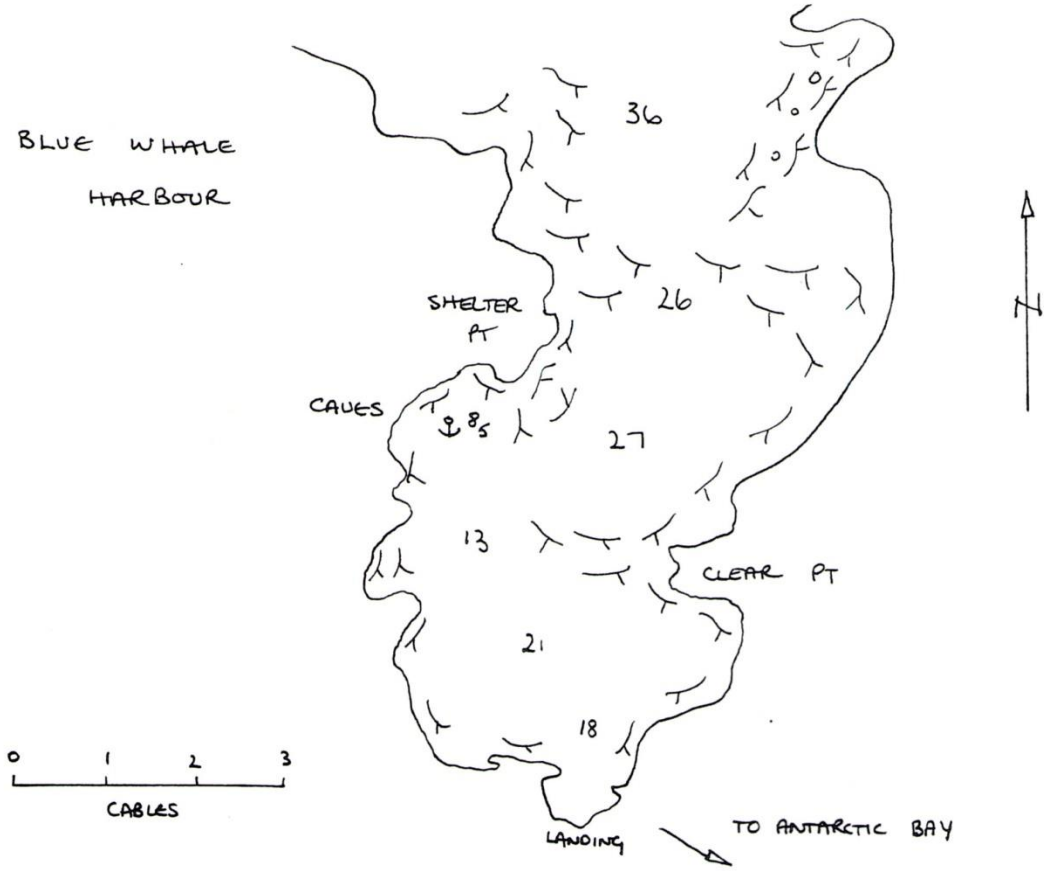
ILLUSION COVE

54°06'S 36°48'W Chart 3585, Fortuna Bay

A small cove is formed S of Illusion Point. There appears to be an anchorage in 11.5m, in a patch clear of the extensive kelp. This ought to give shelter from W and N.

BLUE WHALE HARBOUR

54°04'S 37°01'W Chart 3585, Blue Whale Harbour

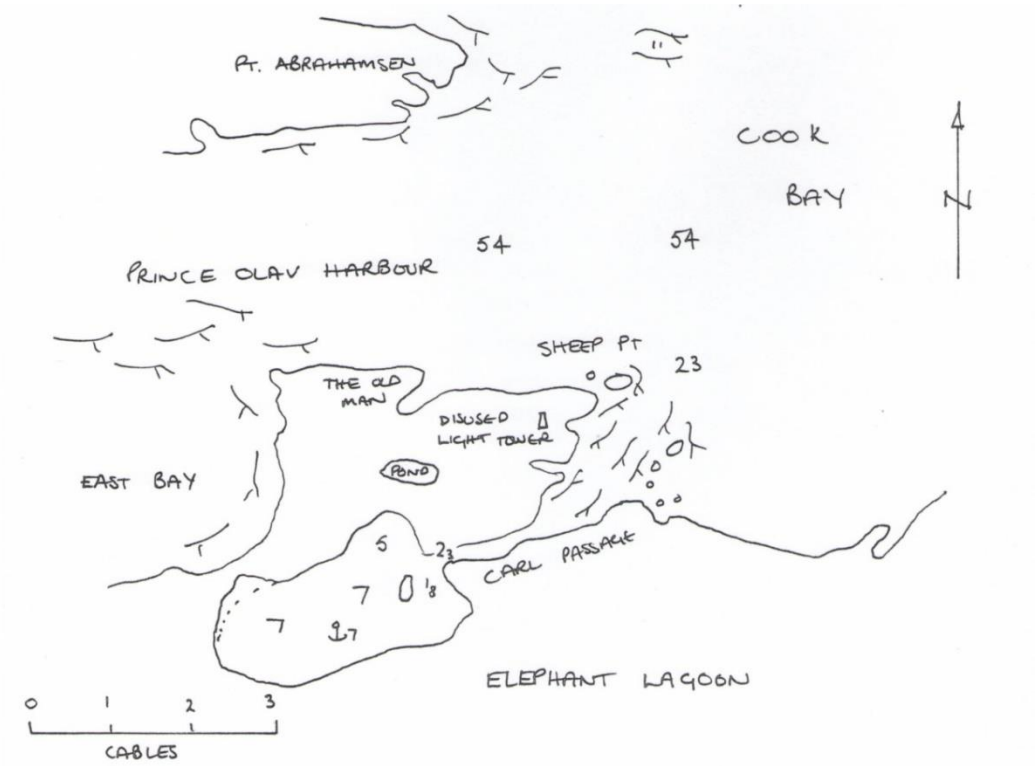


This harbour is situated on the E side of the entrance to Possession Bay and is one of the more sheltered anchorages in South Georgia. The entrance has much kelp in it, but a clear passage can be found by favouring the W side. The best shelter appears to be in the NW cove, SW of Shelter Point and off the caves, in 8.5m, in a patch clear of kelp. Blue Whale Harbour is open only to the N, but in the recommended anchorage, protection from this direction will be given by Shelter Point.

A pleasant and easy walk can be taken to visit Antarctic Bay. This will be found by crossing the low col to the E of the harbour. It is possible to land on the beach S of Clear Point.

BLUE WHALE HARBOUR, LOOKING NW

COOK BAY



Cook Bay is to the North of Possession Bay. The latter has the reputation of being the windiest spot in South Georgia and certainly, on the day on which Badger crossed its mouth, the wind was blowing hard from the glacier at the head of the bay, while until then, the wind experienced had been F3 from NNE. Possession Bay was named by Captain Cook in 1775, when he made the first landing on South Georgia.

ELEPHANT LAGOON

54°03'S 37°08'W Chart 3585, Prince Olav Harbour and Approaches

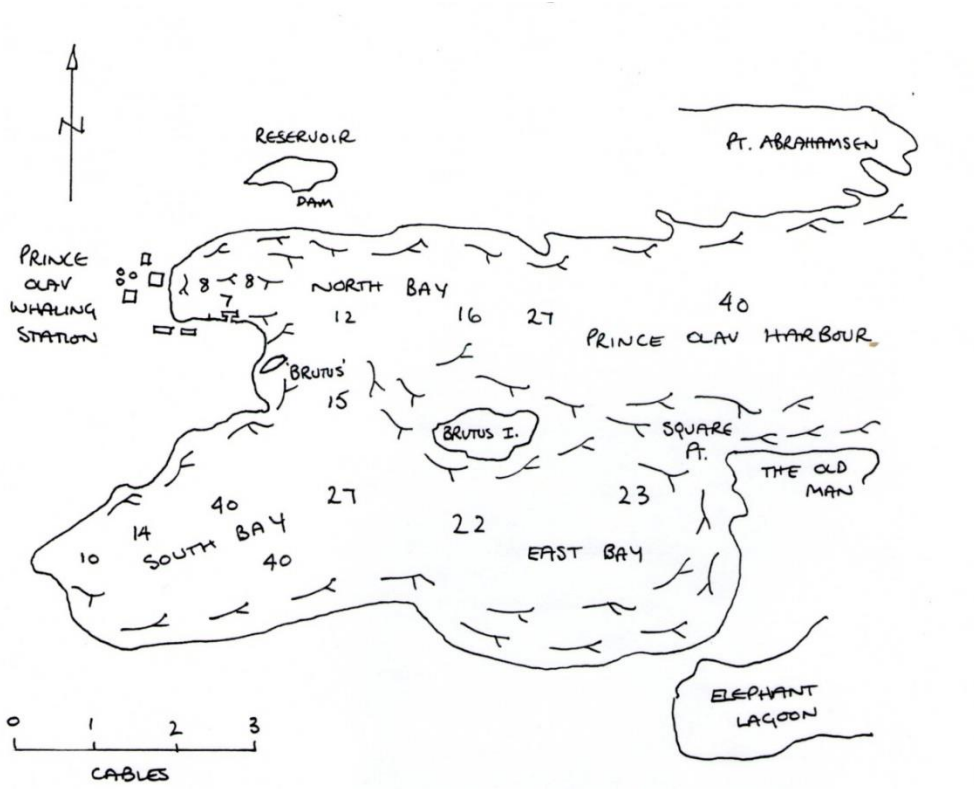
At the S end of Cook Bay, at the entrance to Prince Olav Harbour, is this almost totally landlocked lagoon. The framework of the old lighthouse on Sheep Point makes a convenient landmark to find the entrance. Close S of Sheep Point is the Carl Passage, which is the narrow entrance to the lagoon. There is much kelp around here, but an almost clear lead can be found through it with above water rocks on either hand.

ELEPHANT LAGOON, LOOKING E TO THE CARL PASSAGE

The narrowest part of the channel is just before the lagoon is entered and is approximately 25m wide. The chart indicates a minimum depth of 1.8m and on the occasion of Badger's visit, soundings suggested that this is still the case. A minimum of 2.3m was found, at approximately half tide, near Springs. Most yachts should have no trouble in entering, if they wait for half tide. Anchorage was found in 7.5m, mud. It is possible to land on most places around the shore. South and East Bays are reported to be very windy places, which suggests that Elephant Lagoon probably suffers the same. Recommended in settled weather.

PRINCE OLAV HARBOUR

54°03'S 39°09'W Chart 3585, Prince Olav Harbour and Approaches Prince Olav Harbour, North Bay



The old whaling station is situated in North Bay. To enter this, pass N of Brutus Island (Saddle Island on old charts) and thread your way through the kelp beds. There is really too much kelp in North Bay to consider anchoring. The wooden jetty is in a poor state, but is strong enough for a yacht to tie up to, with 7m of water alongside. There is no fendering on the dock and a fender board would be most useful. The decking on the jetty is very rotten and care should be taken when walking about on it.

PRINCE OLAV HARBOUR LOOKING SE

If intending to stay for more than a brief visit, it may well be worth considering tying up bow and stern between the W end of the dock and a short wooden pier further W. Curlew ties up in this manner when visiting the harbour.

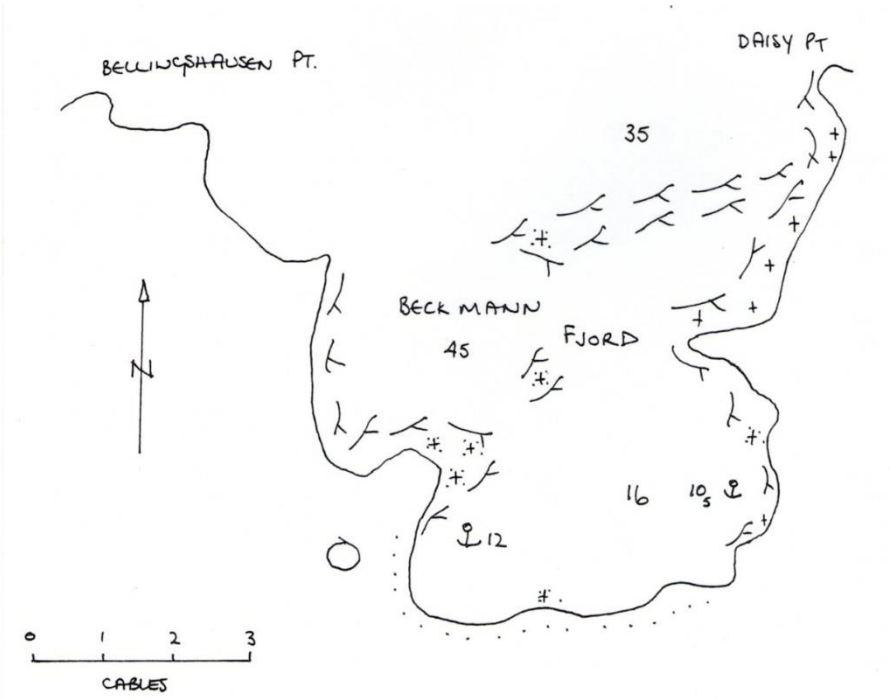
The whaling station was abandoned in 1946 and the buildings are in a poor condition, but there does not appear to have been as much vandalism here as at other sites. Consequently, the station is less depressing than most. The hulk of the Brutus is lying, half submerged, S of Pig Point. She was a three-masted, iron-hulled vessel, 76m long and 1686 tons. She was built in 1883 by J Reid and Co. of Glasgow and was first named Sierra Pedrosa while owned by the Sierra Shipping line of Lima. After coming to South Georgia, she was used as a coaling hulk alongside the jetty, before ending her days on the beach.

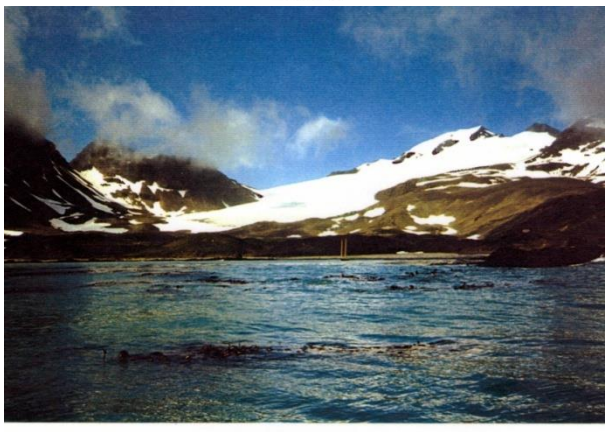
BAY OF ISLANDS

This is an aptly-named bay about 10 miles long and containing within its compass, a number of low, tussac-covered islands. Several of these are nesting sites for Wandering albatross and the big, white birds, dotting the islands, can easily be seen from quite some distance away. It was around here that Robert Murphy, the naturalist on board the whaler, Daisy, spent much of his time when in South Georgia, which he recorded in A Logbook for Grace. He did the initial survey of the area, which was used until quite recently, and named many of the islands and other features.

BECKMANN FJORD

54°03'S 37°11'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance





BECKMANN FJORD, LOOKING S

This fjord lies at the E end of the Bay of Islands and provides two anchorages. There is a long line of kelp extending from the E shore across the entrance; pass to the W of this. Various other patches of kelp have to be avoided once in the fjord. A drying rock lies about 200m off the small headland separating the SW and the SE extremities of the fjord.

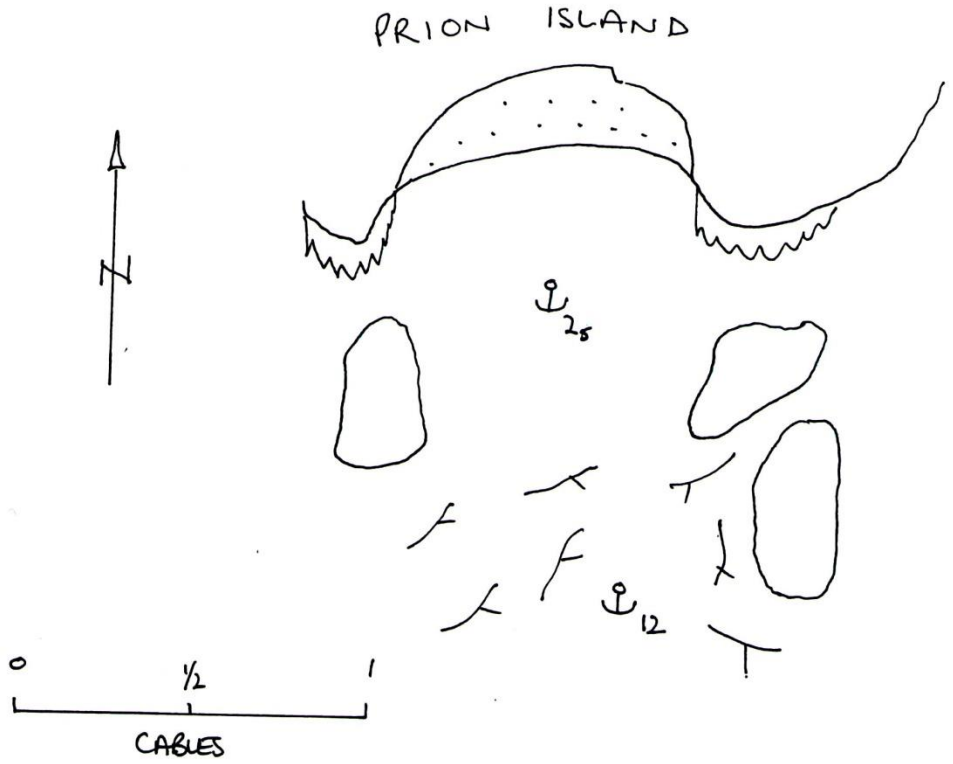
The first anchorage is found in the W corner of the SE part of the bay, behind the small headland mentioned above. There are quite a few rocks close to the headland. Anchor clear of the kelp, near the beach, in 12m. This gives shelter from NW through W to S.

Off the beach, at the E side of the SE corner of Beckmann Fjord, we found 10.5m, clear of kelp. This anchorage would give shelter from N through E to S.

When visited, there was little swell, but this was probably the exception. Beckmann Fjord may well give the best shelter from the E in the Bay of Islands.

PRION ISLAND

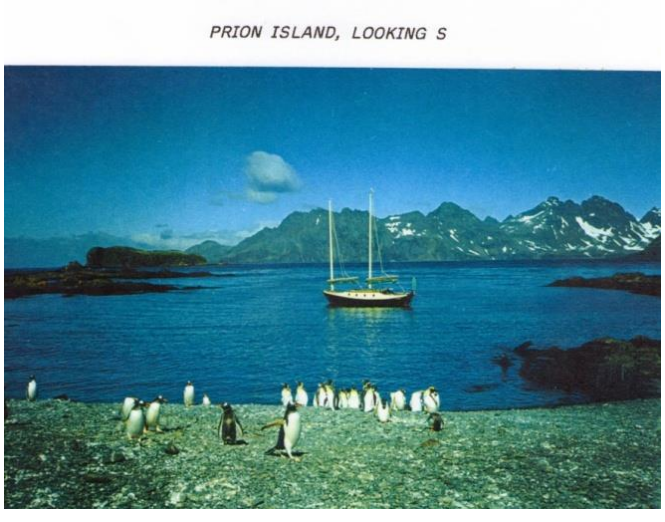
54°01'S 37°15'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance



A very small cove is situated at the SE corner of this island. Approach from the SE and work your way in through the kelp between the two rocks, as shown on the sketch chart. Once inside the kelp, there is a small basin, about 90m across, close to the beach.

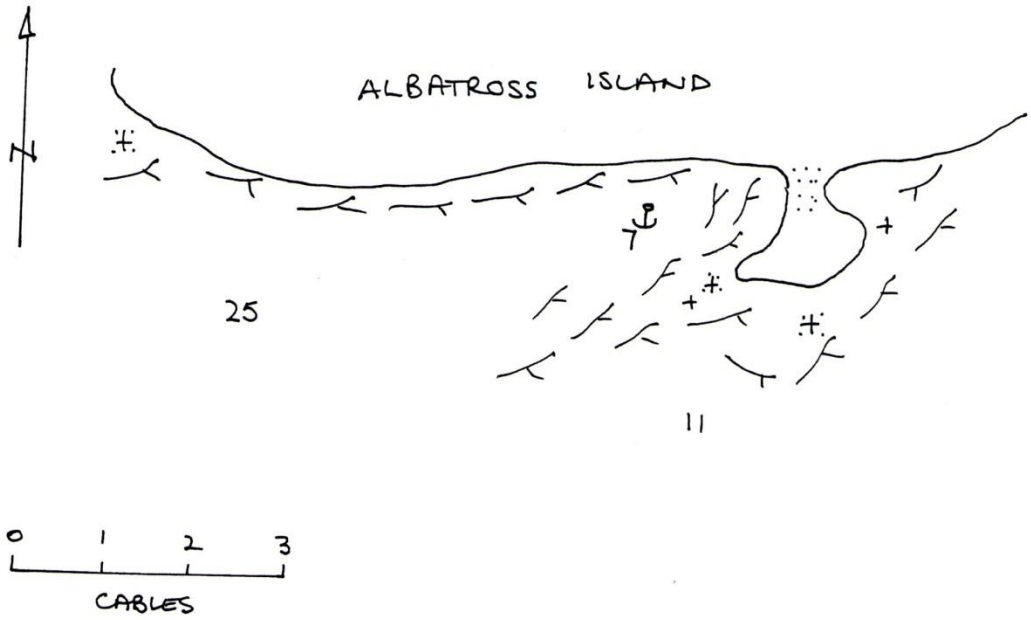
Anchor in the centre in 2.4m, sand and a little weed. There is shelter from the NW.
This tiny anchorage is fine for a short stay in fair weather. Several Wandering albatross nest on the island.

It is possible to anchor outside the cove in 12m in a clear patch in the kelp. This is also sheltered from the NW.



ALBATROSS ISLAND

54°01'S 37°20'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance



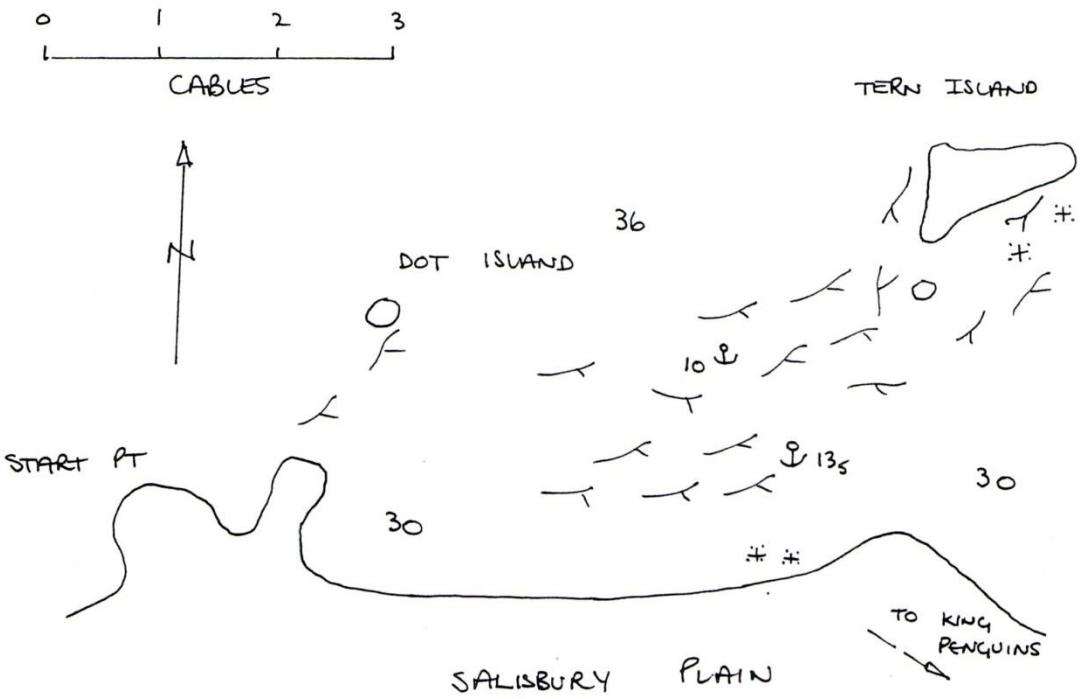
At the S end of this island, there is an anchorage off a shingle beach. This is the Miracle Cove mentioned in Gerry Clark's The TOTORORE Voyage. A reef extends SW from the S tip of the island, marked by thick kelp beds. Enter the cove from the SW, heading NE towards the beach, between the line of kelp and the kelp along the shoreline.

Anchor near the beach in 7m, clear of kelp. It is sheltered from the N through E to SE.
There are many Wandering albatross nesting on the higher ground and also some Giant petrels.

ALBATROSS ISLAND, LOOKING SW

SALISBURY PLAIN

54°03'S 37°20'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance



The most outstanding feature of this area is the enormous King penguin colony that lies a little W of the Lucas Glacier. The best place from which to visit this rookery seems to be off the long beach, SSE of Tern Island. There are a couple of drying rocks close to the beach here and large beds of kelp.

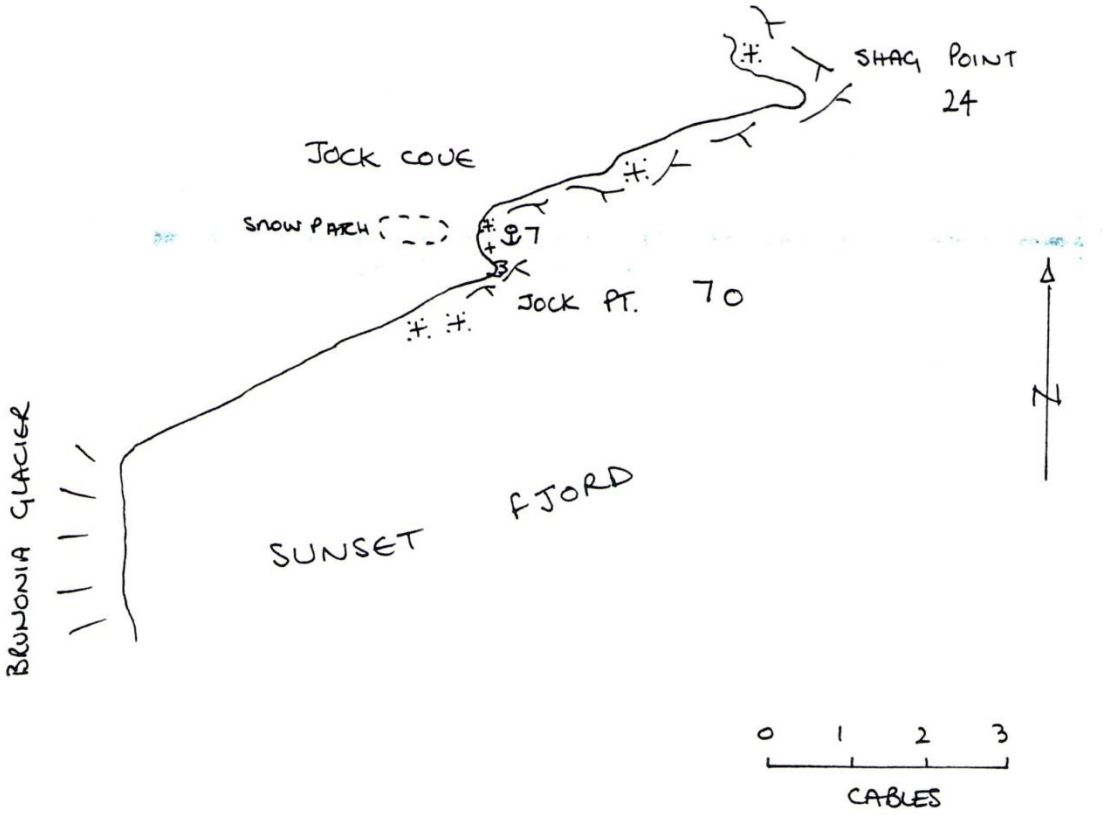
We found a small patch clear of kelp near the E end and anchored in 13.5m. It was found that there was shallower water further offshore in 10 to 11m, again in small areas, clear of kelp. There is shelter from the W and S.

The penguin colony can clearly be identified from the anchorage and it is an easy walk with relatively few Fur seals about. Landing on the shingle beach may well be difficult if there is any swell.

SALISBURY PLAIN, LOOKING NW, BADGER ANCHORED IN THE CENTRE

JOCK COVE

54°02'S 37°26'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance



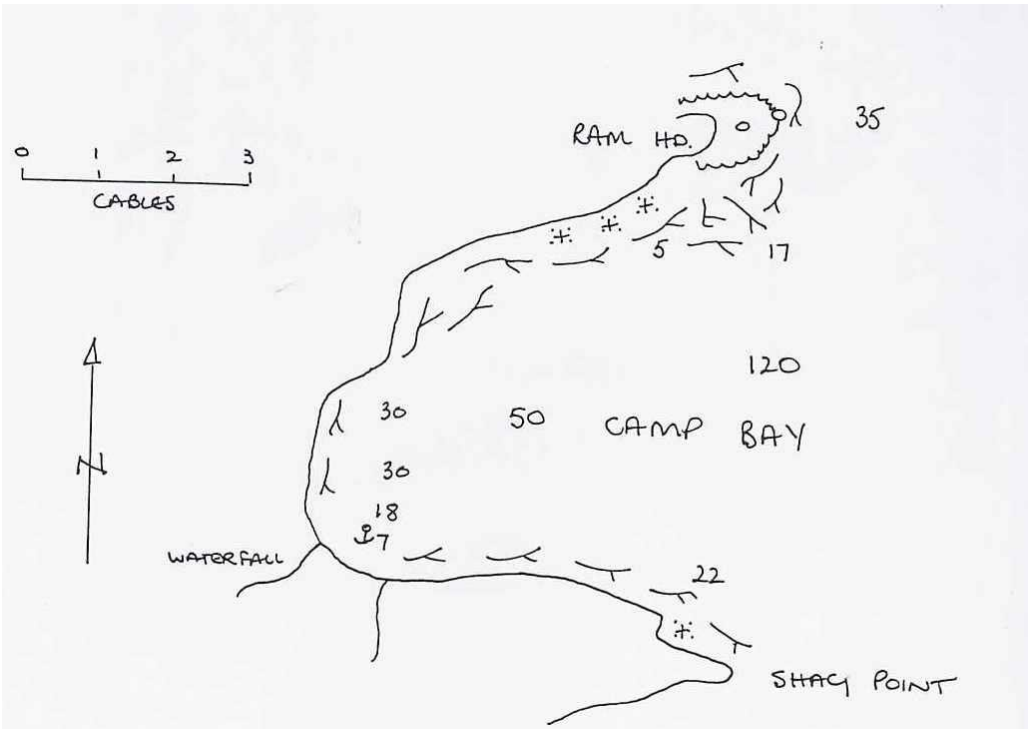
On the N shore of Sunset Fjord, the headland of Jock Point forms a small Cove.

Anchorage can be obtained in 7m off the shingle beach clear of kelp and sheltered from SW through N to NE. Small quantities of ice from the Brunonia Glacier were in the Fjord, but there was no ice in Jock Cove, when visited. The Glacier is receding and now has only a small calving front.

JOCK COVE, LOOKING E

CAMP BAY
54°02'S 37°27'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance

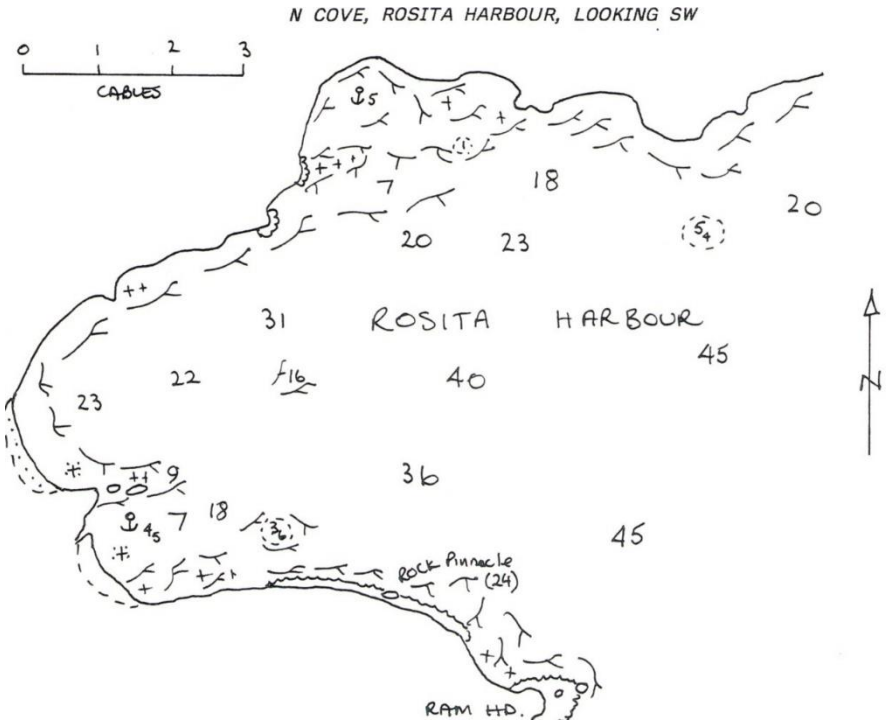
We anchored at the SW corner of this bay, in 7m, clear of kelp, off the small waterfall running down the moss-covered rock. We were sheltered from N through W to SE.
According to the Admiralty Pilot, the wind does not appear to blow very hard in the bay.



CAMP BAY, LOOKING W

ROSITA HARBOUR

54°00'S 37°26'W Chart 3585, Rosita Harbour



This is generally regarded as the best anchorage in the Bay of Islands. There are two possibilities:

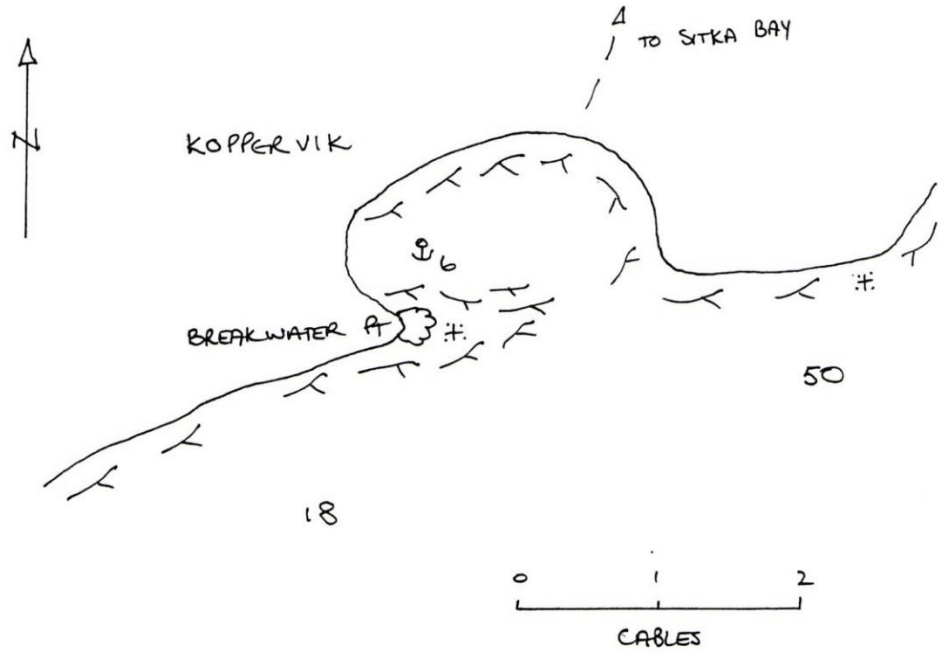
(i) The N cove is the preferred anchorage. The cove is guarded by a lot of kelp, but there are clear leads through which you can weave your way in.
Anchor in the large, clear patch, close to the shore in about 5m. Good shelter can be found from SW through W to NE. Although the cove is open to the S and E, with a 4 mile fetch, the extensive kelp beds may reduce the seas to make the anchorage tenable.

(ii) A kelp-marked reef divides the head of the bay in two. S of this reef and off the beach, is an anchorage in 4.5m, clear of kelp. Approximately one third of the way along this bay there is an underwater rock, near to the beach. When anchoring, ensure that you have sufficient swinging room to clear this. The S shore of the bay has extensive kelp beds off it. This anchorage is sheltered from the SE through W to N.

N COVE, ROSITA HARBOUR, LOOKING SW

KOPPERVIK

54°00'S 37°24'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance



Koppervik is a bay about 1 mile SW of Cape Buller. The W end is protected by Breakwater Point and forms a small cove. A kelp reef extends E from Breakwater Point.

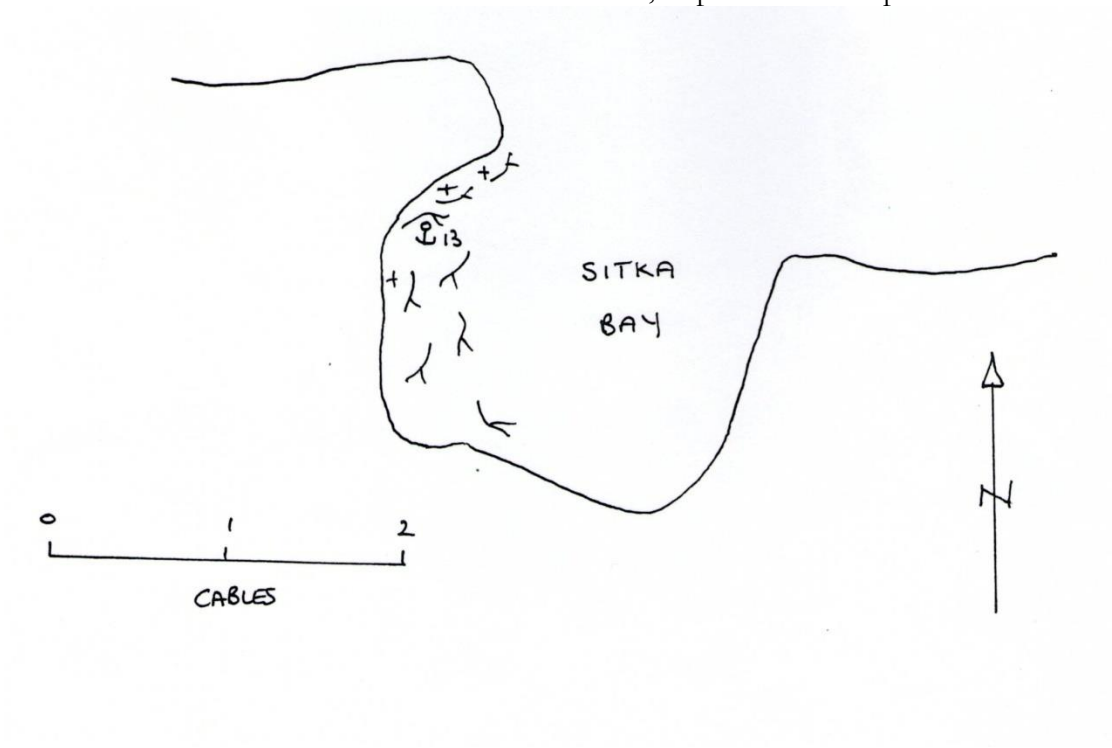
When entering, pass to the E of this reef and then follow the clear lead through the kelp to the head of the cove.

Anchor in 6m, clear of kelp. There is shelter from SW through NW to NE. On the N side of the bay, a low col leads over to Sitka Bay, but it is very steep on the Sitka Bay side.

KOPPERVIK, LOOKING SW

SITKA BAY

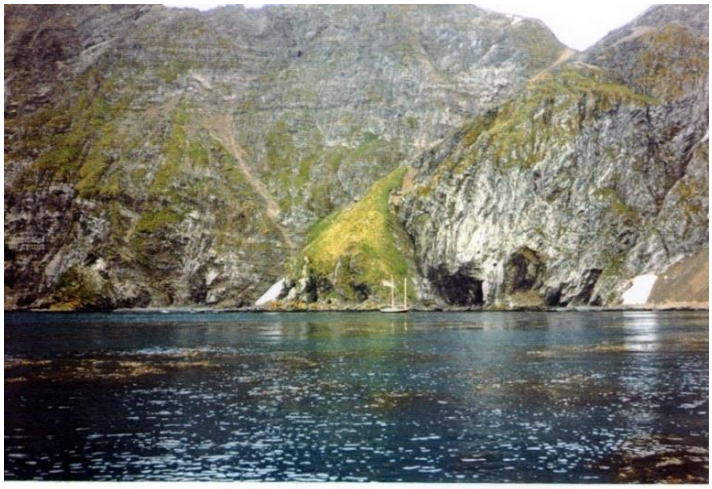
53°59'S 37°24'W Chart 3585, Cape Buller to Cape Constance



This bay is 1 mile W of Cape Buller. Along this stretch of coastline there are many Black-browed mollyhawks nesting in the high tussac cliffs.

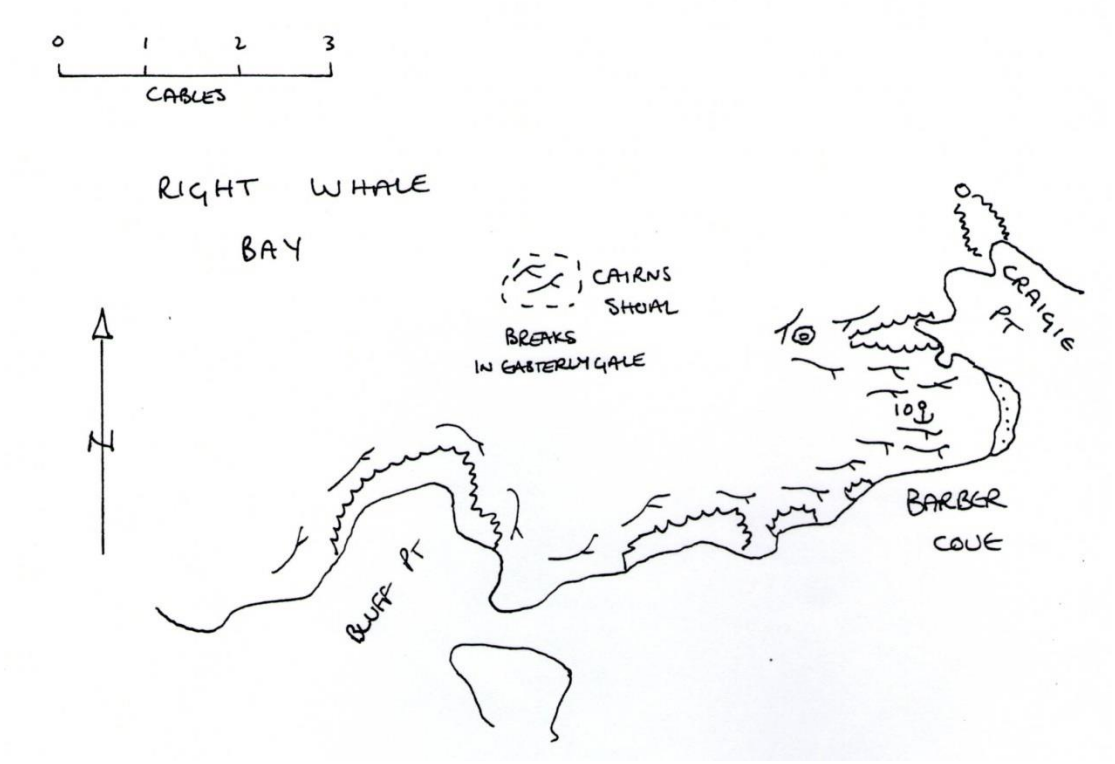
We anchored in the NW part of the bay, to get out of the worst of the swell, in 13m, in a small patch clear of the extensive kelp. There was shelter from the N through W to S.

When we visited, there was too much swell to land, but there are several beaches where landing should be possible. We found this to be rather a gloomy anchorage.



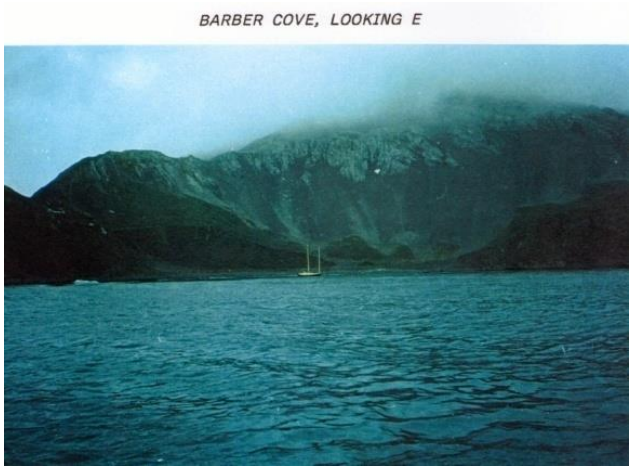
SITKA BAY, LOOKING SW

RIGHT WHALE BAY



At the head of Right Whale Bay is Binder Beach, a moraine beach with a very large King penguin colony situated at the S end.

There are two good anchorages, between them giving shelter from nearly all directions, although protection from the N to NE is a bit marginal.



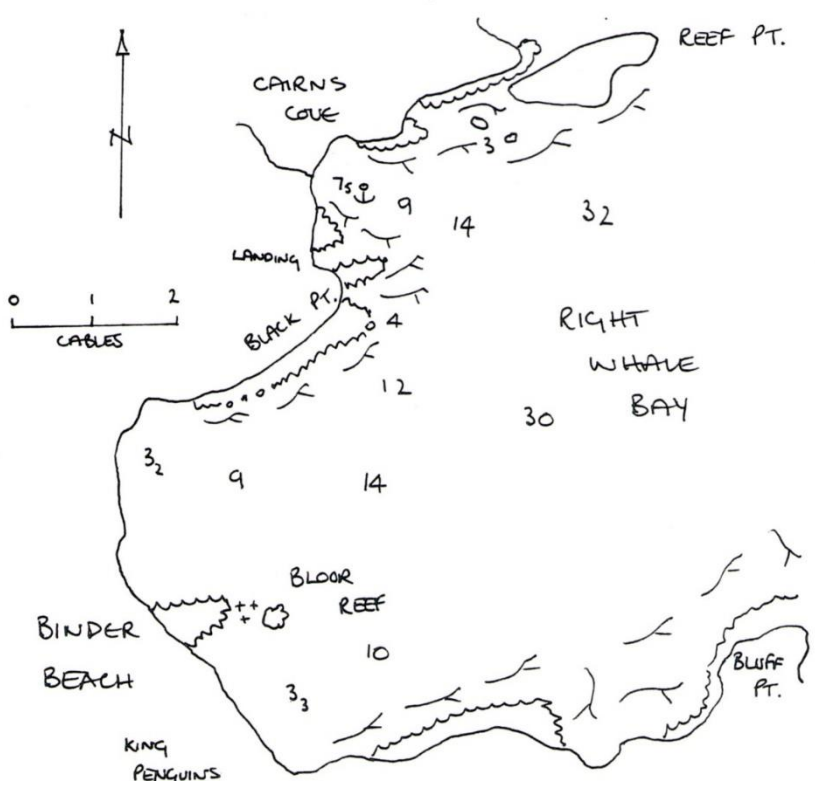
BARBER COVE

54°00'S 37°40'W Chart 3585, Right Whale Bay

A reef of above- and below-water rocks extends SW from the N end of the cove. The outer end is marked by kelp. Pass W of this kelp and enter the bay between the kelp on either shore.
Anchor near the head of the cove, off the black, sand beach in about 10m. Good shelter can be obtained from NE through E to S.

CAIRNS COVE

54°00'S 37°41'W Chart 3585, Right Whale Bay



This is regarded as the best shelter in the bay in the prevailing W'ly winds. We did not anchor here as the wind was E'ly at the time, but we sailed in to have a look.

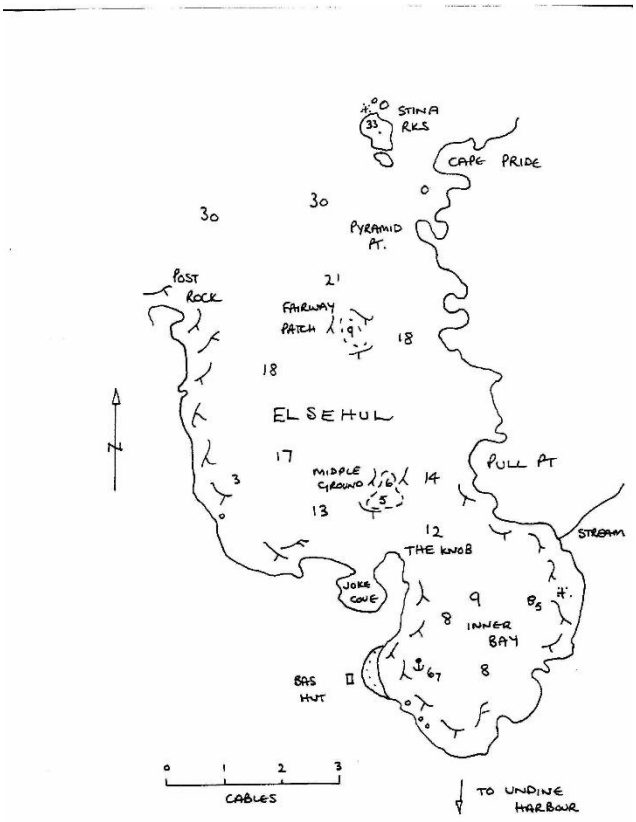
Depths of 7.5m were found in the cove, clear of kelp, with good shelter from the S through W to NNE.

It should be possible to walk from here to Binder Beach to see the King penguins, but there are large numbers of Fur seals ashore. If the swell allows, it would probably be easier to land at Binder Beach from the dinghy.

CAIRNS COVE, LOOKING W

ELSEHUL

54°01'S 37°58'W Chart 3585, Elsehul



This bay is at the W end of South Georgia and provides good protection from the sea in the inner part. Although it appears to be open to the NW, by tucking into the W side of the inner bay, shelter from the NW can be found.

Anchor in about 6.5m, outside the kelp, off the beach. The bottom is fine sand and provides exceptionally good holding.

When we visited, we anchored in the E side of the inner bay, outside the kelp in 8.5m, thinking to shelter from a NE gale. The whole bay was subject to hurricane force gusts from the N, with a big swell setting in. The anchor to which we were lying did not budge an inch. In retrospect, we would have been better off anchored on the W side: the gusts were as violent, but there was much less swell.

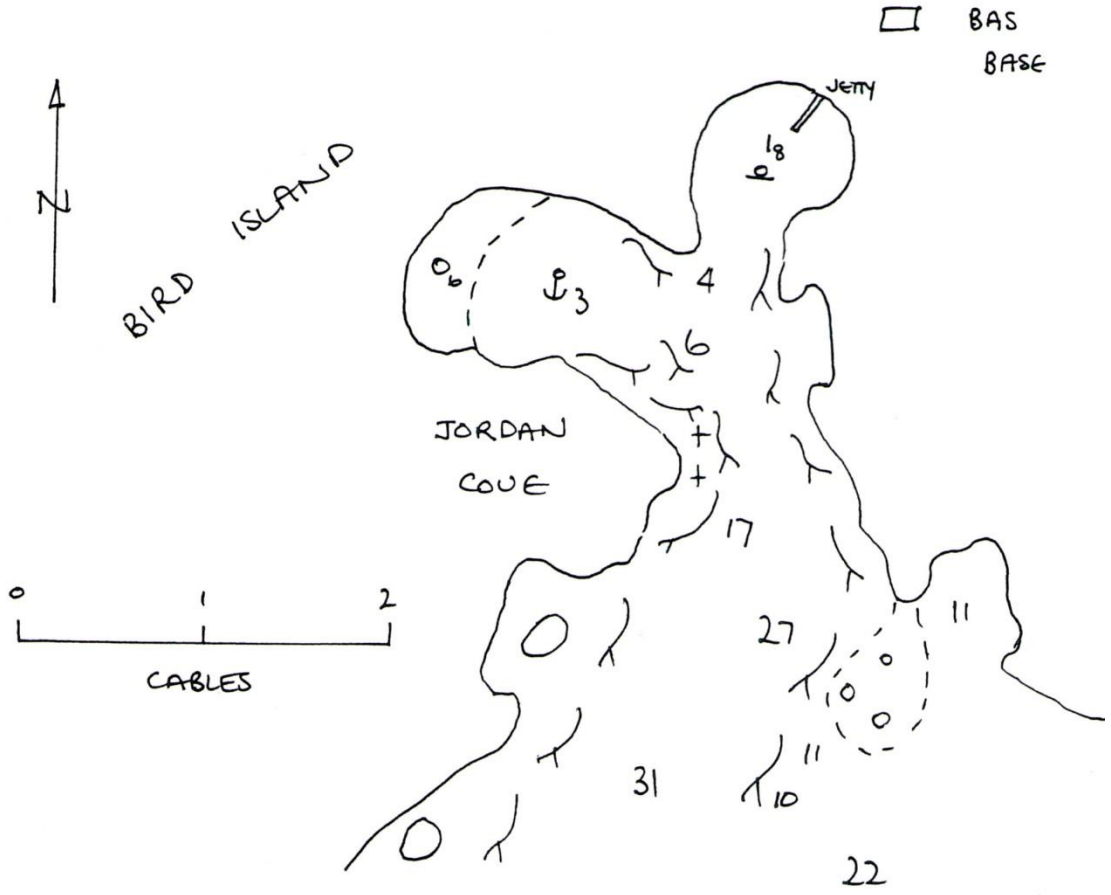
ELSEHUL, LOOKING SE

An old BAS hut, used for seal studies in the past, stands on the beach on the W side of the harbour. It is in a rather poor state, but still habitable. Next to it are three old trypots. A short walk over the low ground at the head of the bay, takes you to Undine Harbour on the S coast.

Water can be obtained from a stream at the NE corner of the inner bay.

BIRD ISLAND

Bird Island is a SSSI, hence visits to the island are not allowed unless special permission is obtained through the Assistant Commissioner to South Georgia. BAS have a base on the island at Jordan Cove, where birds and mammals are studied. Three people winter over and up to eight people spend the summer there.



BIRD SOUND

54°00'S 38°01'W Chart 3592, Bird Sound

The Sound has shoals and the Hornaday Rock in the middle of the passage. There are two passages through the Sound, to the N or to the S of the shoals. The N passage is narrower, but by keeping close to the shore of Bird Island, it is straightforward.

On the day that we passed through the Sound, the shoals were breaking heavily and creating a very confused sea. I suspect that the wind normally blows either up or down the Sound. Sailing through, except with a following wind, would usually be extremely difficult.

Treat Bird Sound with respect.

JORDAN COVE

54°00'S 38°03'W Chart 3592, Stewart Strait

At the W end of Bird Sound is a well-protected cove, with two arms. The approach is through a fairly narrow lead between kelp banks and rocks on either side, leading in a NE direction. The entrance itself is very constricted, with rocks on the W side and strands of kelp right the way across.

The north arm of the cove is the most protected, with swell rarely reaching in. The depth is apparently only 1.5m in the middle (less than is shown on the chart). Jerome Poncet laid a mooring for his 50ft Damien II in 1992. It consists of 250kg of anchor and chain. The orange mooring buoy gets lost from time to time, so if you are planning to use the mooring, you may have to drag for it. It is not known how often the mooring is inspected. If you are not planning to use the mooring, it may be worth having a trip line on your anchor. There is not sufficient swinging room to lie to a single anchor and Damien II always has a line ashore to the jetty.

The W arm is bigger and deeper. Anchor in the middle in 2.75m, where there is sufficient room to lie to a single anchor. This arm is apparently subject to some swell in gale force winds.

JORDAN COVE, LOOKING SW, DAMIEN II ON HER MOORING

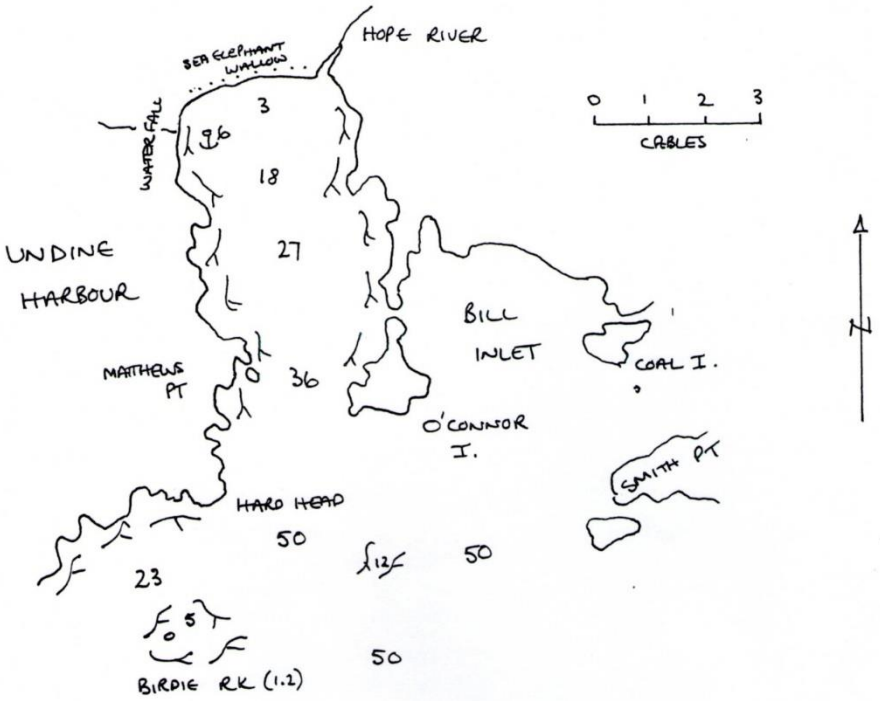
SOUTH-WEST COAST OF SOUTH GEORGIA

This coast is described in the Admiralty Pilot as being 'little visited', which is not surprising because it is much wilder than are the N and E coasts. From Cape Nunez SE, there are few harbours and it is a lee shore to a SW gale. Added to this is the fact that the surveys of the area are not complete and rocks and reefs exist that are not marked on the chart. There is usually a big SW swell along the shore.

Treat this coast with respect.

UNDINE HARBOUR

54°02'S 37°58'W Chart 3585, Undine Harbour



The approach to Undine Harbour is not straightforward, with shoals, kelp banks and the odd rock extending eastward from the Birdie Rocks to Grassholm. Passing to the NW of Birdie Rocks or N of Grassholm will give the clearest approach, but care should be taken, as there are several uncharted rocks.

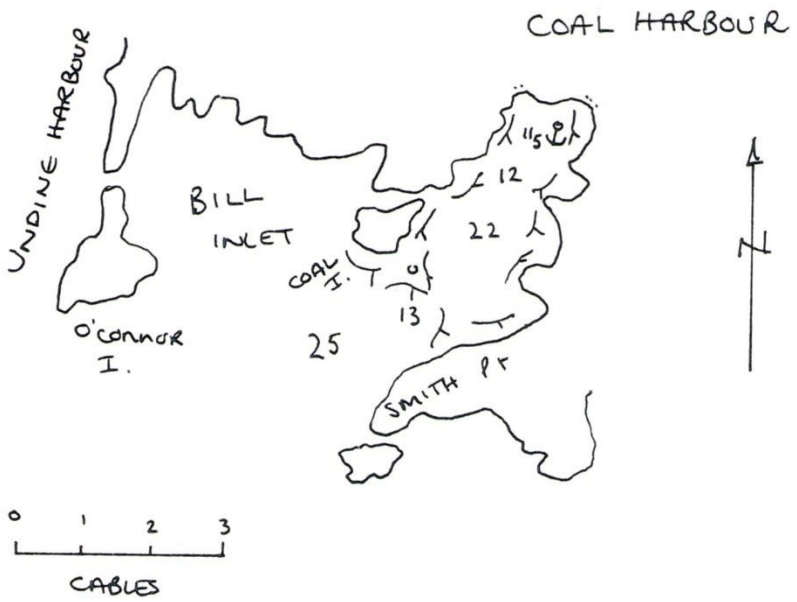
The entrance to Undine Harbour is easily identified with the conspicuous, flat-topped O'Connor Island (49m) marking the E side of the entrance.

We anchored in the NW corner in 6m, mud, off the conspicuous stream and outside the extensive kelp. The harbour gives good protection from all but the S. When visited, the shoals in Discovery Bay seemed to dampen down most of the swell in the anchorage.

A short walk over the low land at the head of the bay takes you to Elsehul.

COAL HARBOUR

54°02'S 37°57'W Chart 3585, Undine Harbour



This is an attractive bay, 12 mile E of Undine Harbour. The entrance has kelp extending all the way across, but this is thinner towards the SE side of the entrance. The kelp makes it very difficult to tack through.

The NE corner of the harbour seemed to offer the best anchorage, with a depth of 11.5m outside the kelp, off the small beach. There is good protection from all directions except from the SW.

The low, tussac-covered hills, make this harbour a very pleasant spot.
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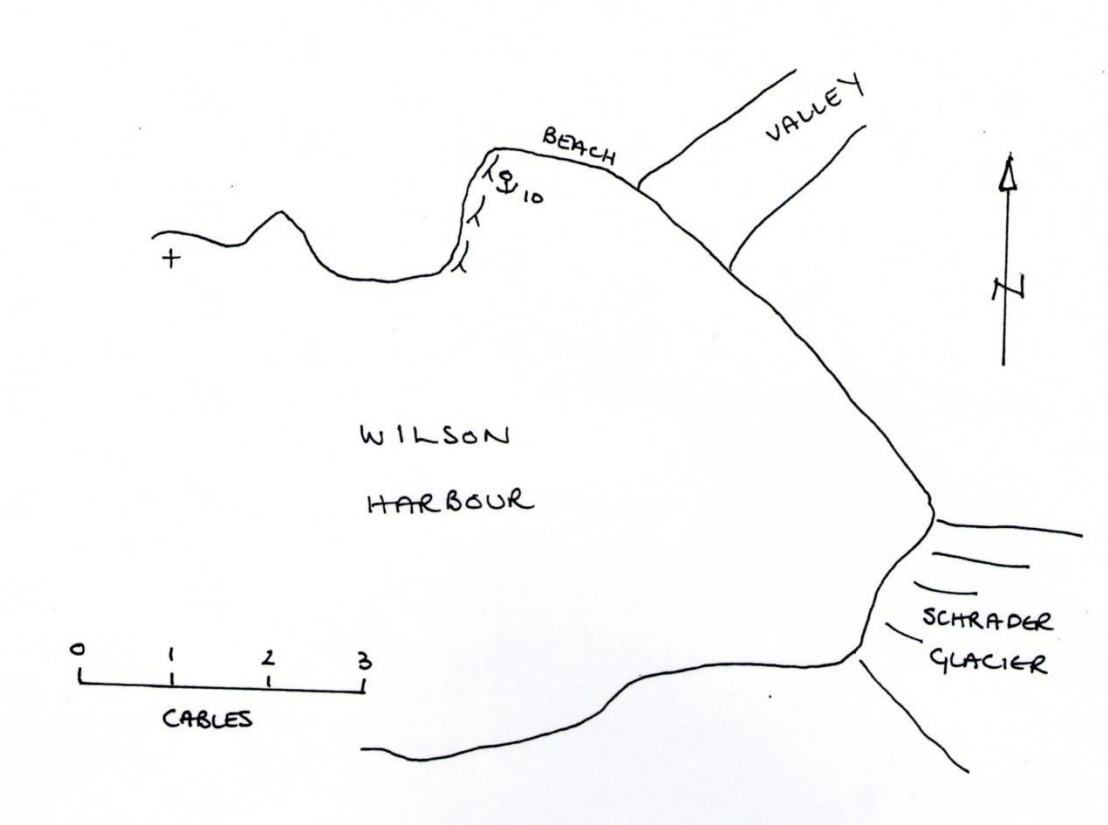
COAL HARBOUR, LOOKING NE ACROSS THE KELP-COVERED ENTRANCE

WILSON HARBOUR

54°06'S 37°40'W Chart 3597, South Georgia



This appears to be one of the best harbours on the SW coast and provides much better shelter from the sea than is apparent from the chart.

Sail in to the bay on the N shore, near the head of the inlet. Tuck well in to the NW end of the beach and anchor in a clear patch between the kelp in about 10.5m.

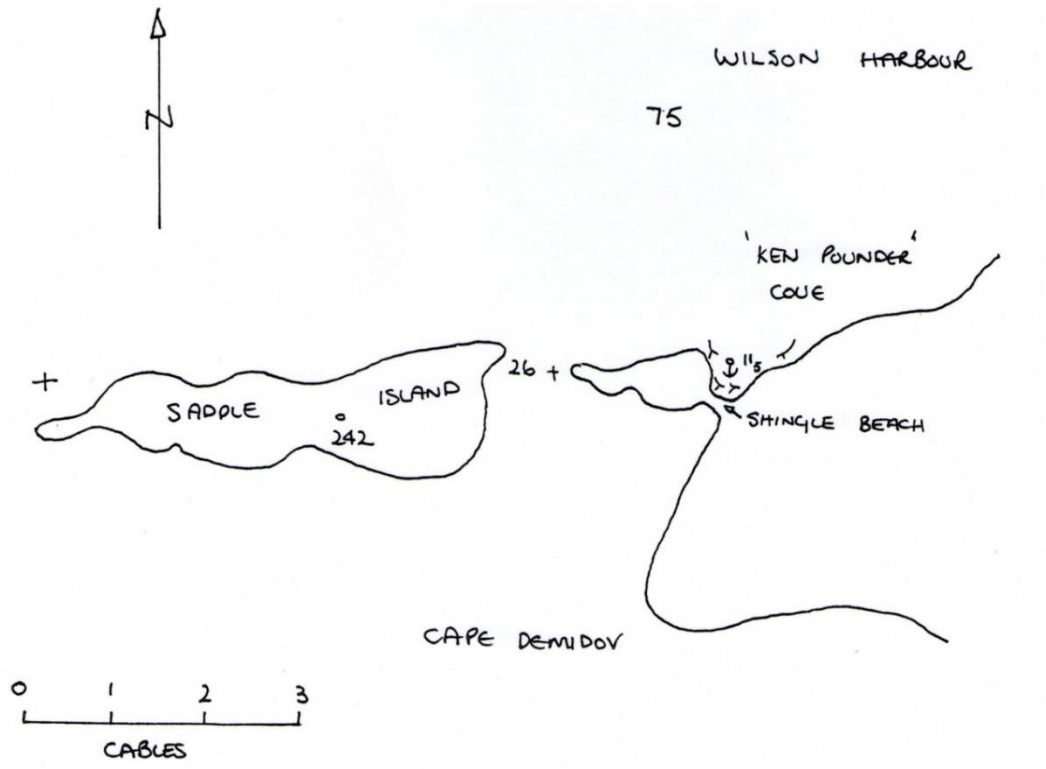
COAL HARBOUR, LOOKING NE ACROSS THE KELP-COVERED ENTRANCE

Good shelter from the sea is provided from W x S through N to E. The fetch from S winds is less than 2 miles.

The Schrader Glacier to the SE of the anchorage only has a fairly small calving front and when visited by Badger, there was very little ice in the bay.

The Pilot warns of occasional very strong winds blowing from the SE off the glacier.

SADDLE ISLAND PASSAGE



A clear passage exists between Saddle Island and the mainland, although it is somewhat restricted due to the kelp on either side. A minimum depth of 24m was found. When traversed, the wind was very variable in the passage and there was quite a jobble, which made sailing through very difficult.

KEN POUNDER BAY

54°08'S 37°43'W Chart 3597

This small cove was named by Gerry Clark, who anchored here. On the general chart of South Georgia, an island is marked between Saddle Island and the mainland. This island is actually joined to South Georgia by a narrow, shingle isthmus, which forms the SW end of the cove.

KEN POUNDER BAY, LOOKING S TOWARDS THE SHINGLE SPIT

Approach from the NE and enter the cove between the kelp on either shore.

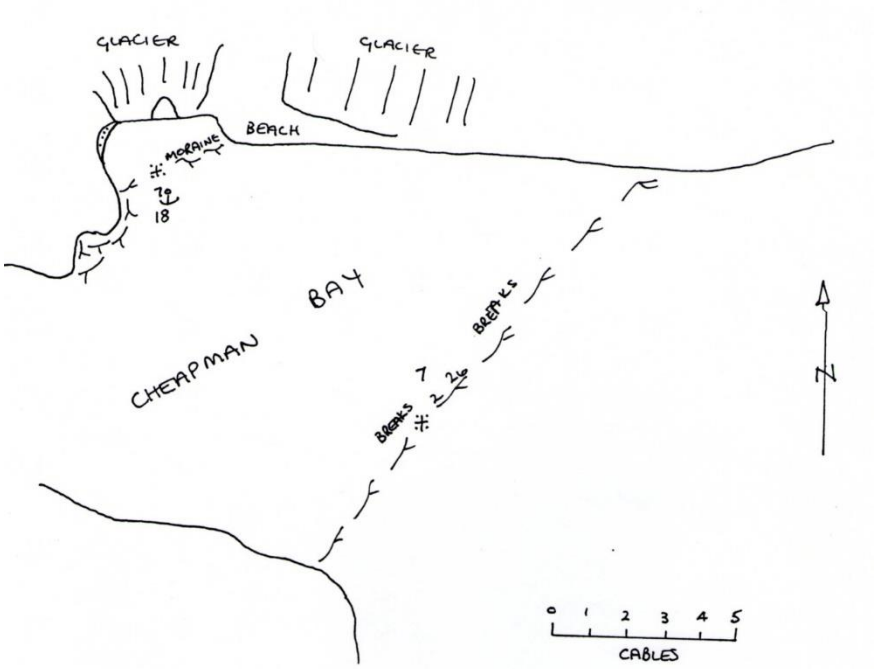
On the occasion of Badger's visit, we did not actually anchor, but it appeared to be possible.

Anchor near the head of the cove, just outside the line of kelp off the shingle beach, in about 11.5m.

Shelter from the sea from the SE through W to NW. There was some swell in the cove.

CHEAPMAN BAY

54°09'S 37°33'W Chart 3597



A band of thick kelp running SW-NE across the bay marks the terminal moraine. Towards the SW end of the kelp line is a conspicuous rock. Close NE of this rock, the kelp is much less dense. When entering the inner bay, we crossed this band of kelp about 100m NE of the rock. The minimum depth in the kelp was 3m, but just inshore of the kelp, the bottom shoaled to an estimated 1.5m at low water. Close N of the rock was a breaking wave, which suggested even shallower water.

On leaving the bay the following morning, we crossed the moraine approximately 200m NE of the rock. There was more swell and at times a breaking wave extended almost the whole length of the moraine, inshore of the kelp. When passing through this breaker, we were in 5.5m and found a minimum of an estimated 2.1m at low water just inshore of the kelp. Depths in the weed were about 3m. The kelp was fairly thick, but we motored through with no problems. A heavy swell from the S could possibly cause a yacht to be trapped behind the moraine until such time as it subsided.

Anchorage was found off the middle of the 3 glaciers at the W end of the bay. A kelp-marked, terminal moraine enclosed an inner pool off the glacier, with a drying rock in the middle of the kelp. We anchored outside the moraine in 15m with the depth rapidly increasing to 21m off the moraine.

CHEAPMAN BAY, LOOKING N

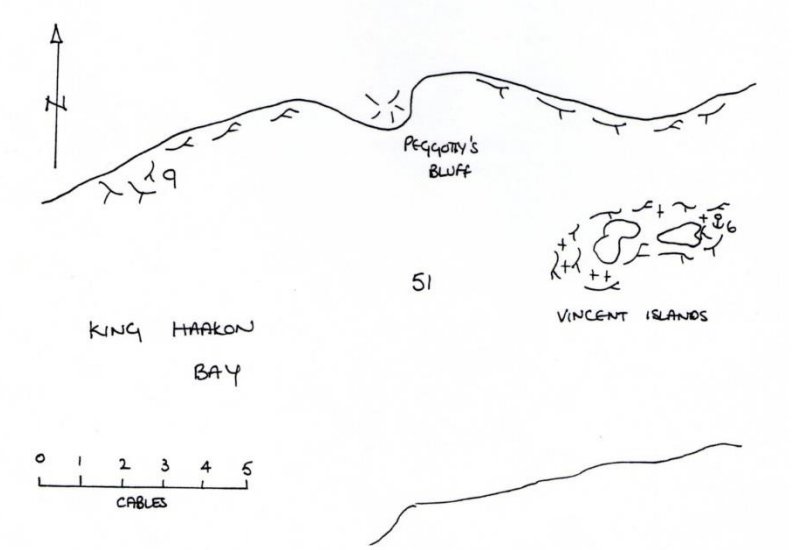
Close SW of this anchorage is a small cove, with a shingle beach, but it was completely choked with kelp.

At the time of our visit, the glacier calved quite a number of small pieces of ice, which filled the inner basin and slowly streamed past us, creating much noise, if little danger.

This anchorage is in a most spectacular setting, with the glacier descending the mountain almost vertically. There is good shelter from the N and W and little swell.

KING HAAKON BAY

54°09'S 37°16'W Chart 3597



This bay is famous because it is here that Sir Ernest Shackleton and his party landed after their epic voyage in the 22ft James Caird, to rescue the other men trapped on Elephant Island. In clear weather, it is a magnificent sight to sail up the bay, which has many glaciers descending to the sea.

Much of the entrance to the bay is blocked by McNeish Island, the McCarthy Islands and the shoals and rocks around them. When entering, either pass into Cheapman Bay and then N of McNeish Island, or keep fairly close N of Cape Rosa, at the southern entrance to the bay. If passing by Cape Rosa, look out for the tiny cove E of the Cape, where Shackleton made his first landing at 'Cave Camp'.

Half way along the bay, is a kelp-marked terminal moraine. Passing through the kelp N of the middle of the bay, we found a minimum of 8m. Towards the S shore is a clear channel through the kelp with a minimum of 24m; it is sufficiently wide to beat through easily.

Near the head of the bay, on the N shore, is Peggotty Bluff, a conspicuous, tussac-covered headland that appears to be an island, from some way off. This is where Shackleton made his second landing and from where he left to cross South Georgia to Stromness.

Shelter from the sea can be found from the NW through N to NE in the small bight to the W of Peggotty Bluff. It appeared possible to anchor in 10m, close E of a conspicuous kelp patch off the beach at the western end of the bight, but we did not do so.

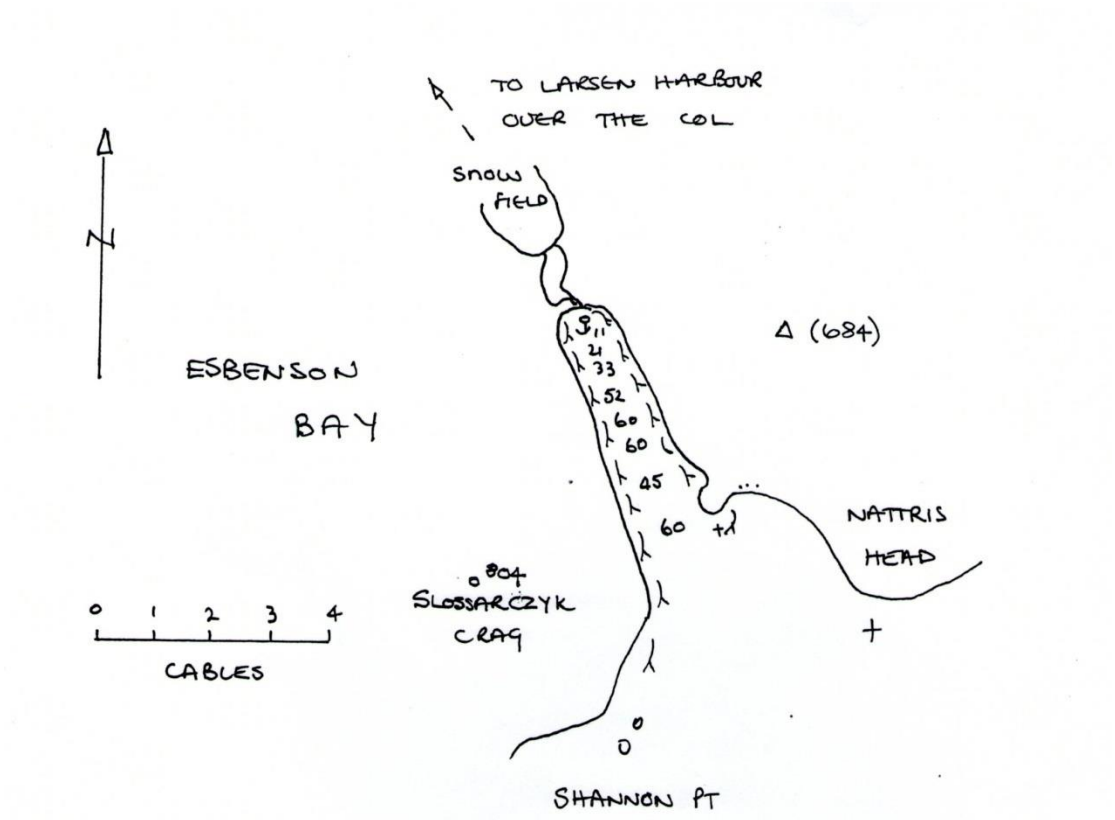
EAST VINCENT ISLAND, LOOKING E TOWARDS SHACKLETON GAP

About I mile SE of Peggotty Bluff are the Vincent Islands. There is an anchorage at the E end of the E island in about 6m. Anchor in a clear patch in the kelp. The island gives shelter from the W. A shingle beach provides a landing close to the anchorage. Note the broken trypot, largely covered by tussac at the top of the beach.

McNeish, McCarthy and Vincent are the names of the crew of the James Caird who stayed behind while Shackleton, Worsley and Crean crossed the island.

EBENSEN BAY

54°51'S 35°58'W Chart 3597



The entrance to this bay is close SW of Nattris Head (the S entrance to Drygalski Fjord) with a large snowfield at its head. On a fine day, this makes

- most spectacular anchorage, but passing by the bay in a NW gale, there was
- constant stream of fierce williwaws blowing out of the mouth. This was also the case with both Smaaland Cove and Doubtful Bay.

The southern tip of South Georgia has a reputation for very turbulent conditions.

The entrance to the bay is straightforward, with bands of kelp lining each shore.

EBENSEN BAY, LOOKING SE

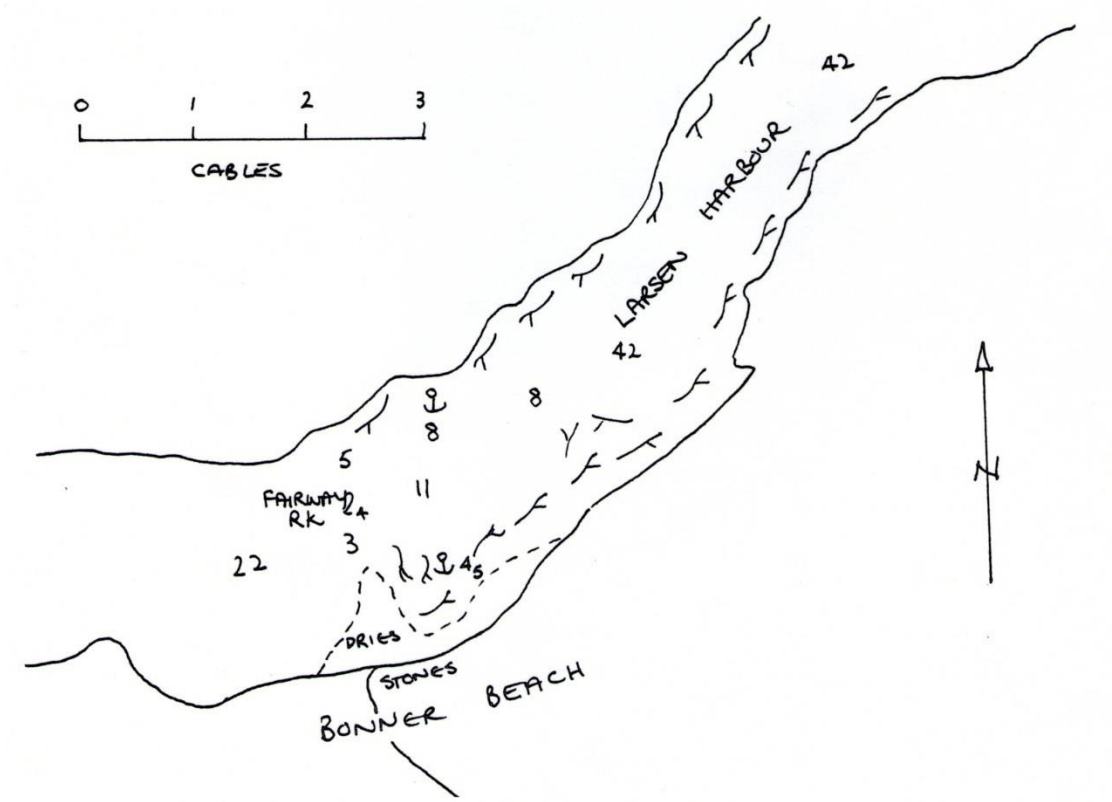
Anchor at the head of the bay in a clear patch in the thick kelp, in about 11m.

The Pilot suggests that there is a pass over the col to Larsen Harbour, but the snow bank leading up to it is very steep.

On Shannon Point, there is a Macaroni penguin colony.

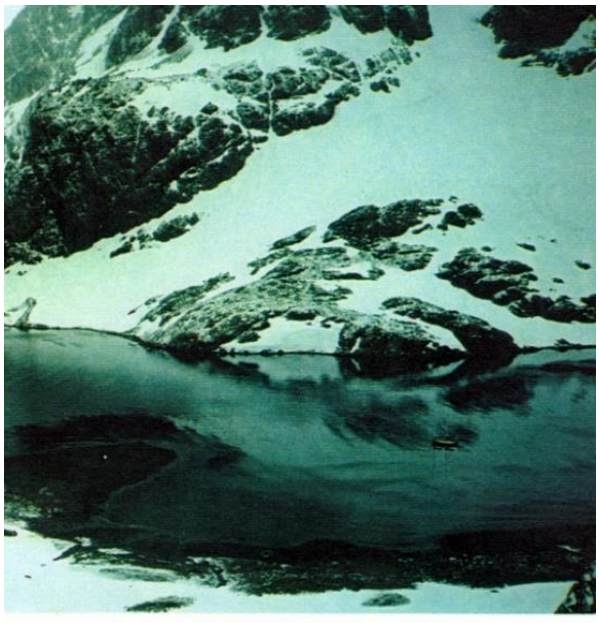
LARSEN HARBOUR

54°50'S 36°01'W Chart 3585, Larsen Harbour



This is a spectacular, high-sided fjord, with a glacier at its very head. There is good protection from the sea from all quarters, but apparently it is subject to fierce squalls in heavy weather. When visited by Badger, there was a S to SE gale blowing outside, but only the occasional gust was experienced in the harbour.

Anchor to the E of the Fairway Rock off Bonner Beach in 4.5m, mud, in a patch clear of kelp or off the opposite shore if it promises more shelter from the wind or squalls.



LARSEN HARBOUR. LOOKING N

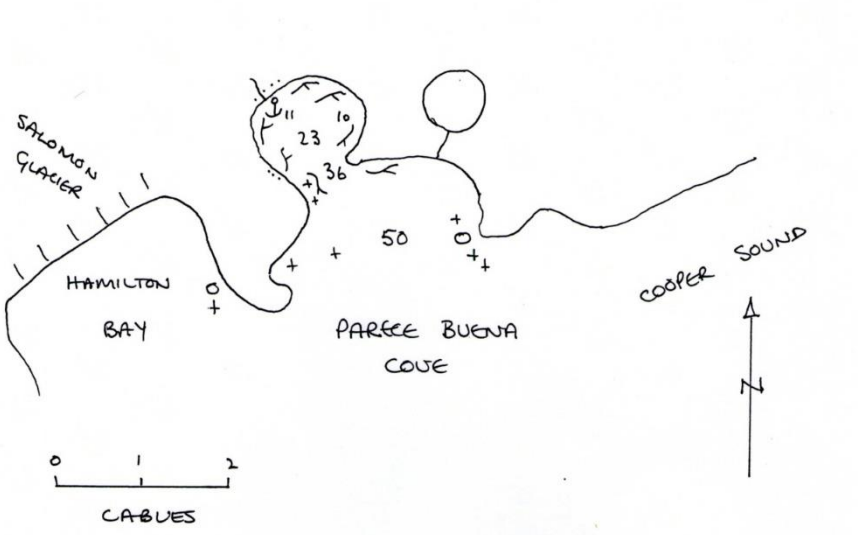
Bonner Beach is reported to have Weddell seals on it from time to time, but there was none seen when visited in early January.

The low col, S of Bonners Beach, leads over to Ebensen Bay, but it is very steep and the snow slope on the other side is even steeper. There is a good stream near to the beach.

Whalers used to moor their catch in this harbour and the remains of an old barrel buoy are on Bonner Beach, near to the stream.

PARECE BUENA COVE

54°47'S 35°53'W Chart 3597, South Georgia




PARECE BUENA COVE, LOOKING SE


THE LAGOON, LOOKING SW TOWARDS COOPER SOUND

Gerry Clark visited this cove and named it 'Parece Buena' (it appears good). It seems well named, as it offers shelter from the sea from all but the S and SE.

The cove has much kelp; we anchored off the beach at the N end in 11m, in a relatively clear patch.

On the beach here, are several large, old timbers from a ship. Although this appears to be a non-breeding beach, there were a lot of fur seals ashore.

COOPER SOUND

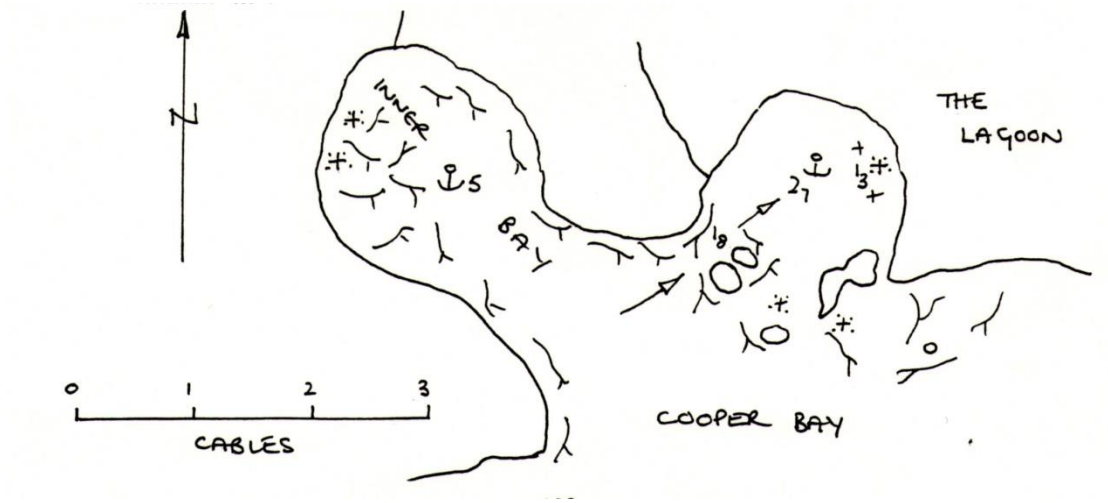
A passage leads between Cooper Island and the mainland. It is straightforward if the Cooper Bay shore is favoured. There are rocks off either shore and beds of kelp, but there is plenty of room to tack through.

On the several occasions that we passed through the Sound, the current usually ran eastwards.

To the W of Cooper Bay there is a colony of Chinstrap penguins on the beach, the only one in South Georgia. Further W on the hillside, is a very large colony of Macaroni penguins.

COOPER BAY

54°46'S 35°49'W Chart 3597



Two good anchorages are available within the bay.

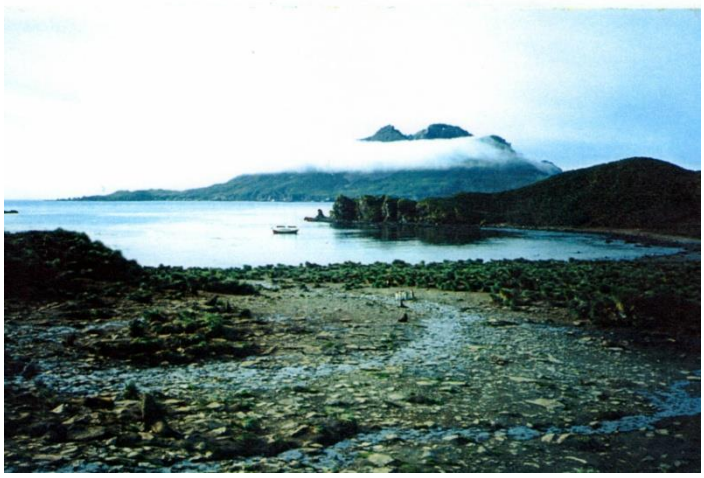
THE LAGOON

To the E of the entrance to the inner bay, is a small lagoon formed by the shore and a ring of rocks. The entrance is between the most W rock and the shoreline. There is kelp in this narrow channel, but it is at its thinnest near to the rock. We found a minimum of an estimated 1.8m at low water.

The lagoon itself offers complete protection from the sea, but it is very small and a yacht must be moored if it is to stay in the centre of the lagoon, where the depth is 2.7m. At the E side, there is a drying rock, off which are several underwater rocks with less than 1.3m over them.

There is a Macaroni penguin colony around the headland to the E of the lagoon. Ashore are a lot of Fur seals, but it appears to be a non-breeding beach.

INNER BAY, LOOKING SE TOWARDS COOPER ISLAND



INNER BAY

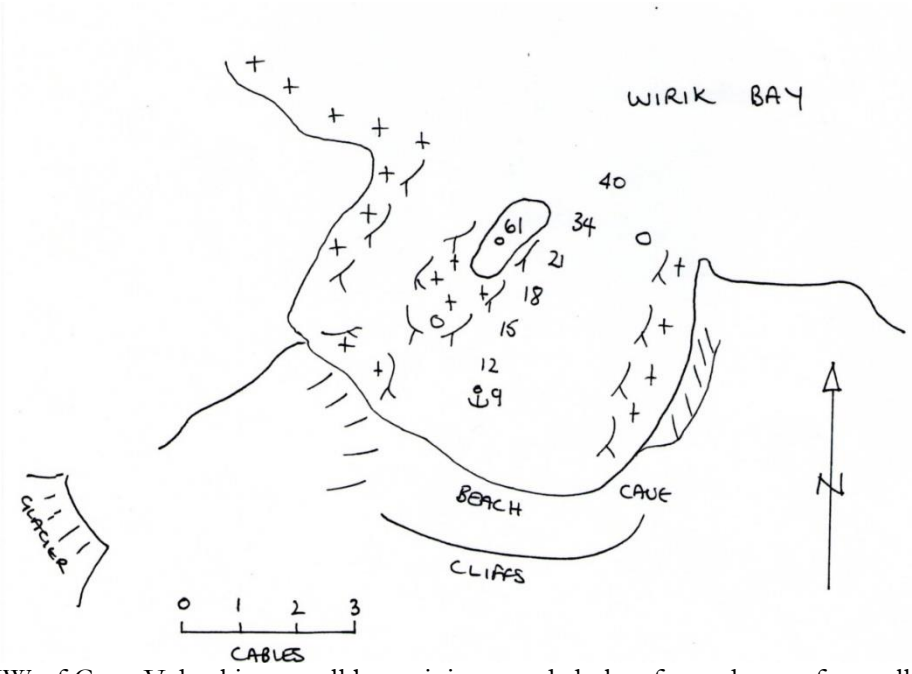
At the NW head of the Bay is an inner bay, offering good protection from the sea from all directions, with the exception of SE.

Although large amounts of kelp grow along the edges of the bay, there is a relatively clear patch in the middle.

Anchor in about 5m.

WIRIK BAY

54°45'S 35°51'W Chart 3597



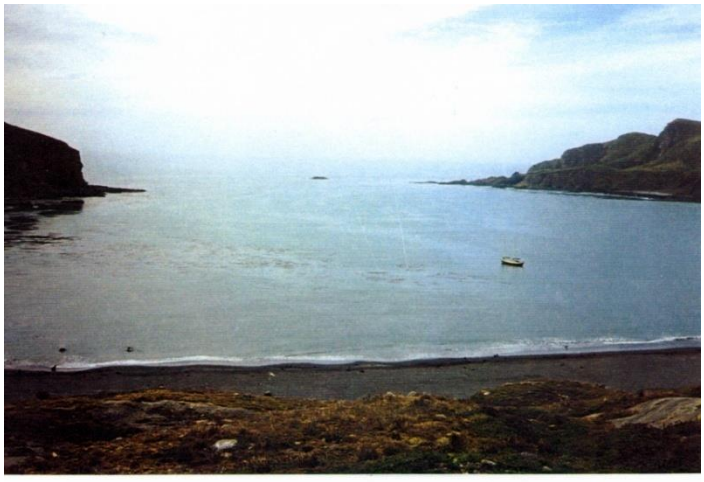
Two miles NW of Cape Vahsel is a small bay, giving good shelter from the sea from all directions but the NE.

The bay is identified from the tussac-covered island in the middle and is about 1 mile SE of a conspicuous tussac-topped island, standing a short way off the coast.

There is an above-water rock N of the SE entrance to the bay. Pass between this rock and the E side of the island in the bay.

Anchor at the head of the bay, S of the kelp that extends from the island to the shore in about 9m, good holding.

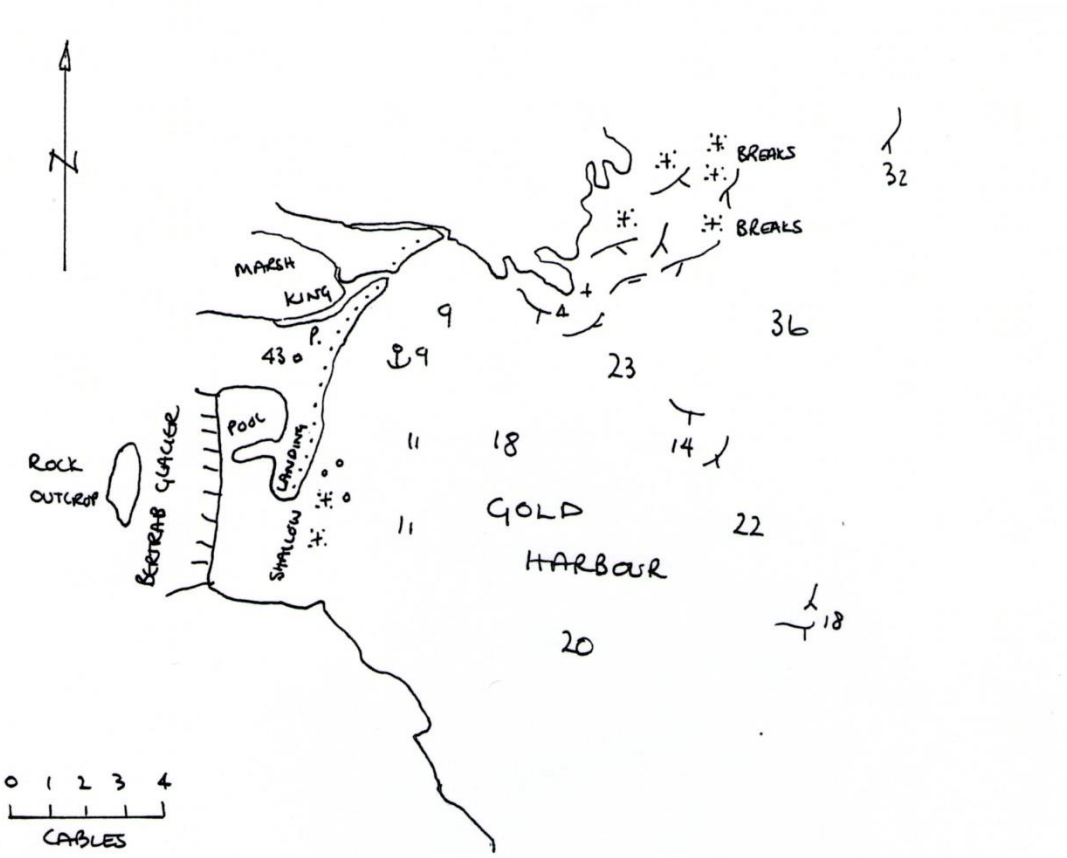
Spread along the beach at the head of the bay are the bones of a large whale, possibly a Blue or Fin and next to one piece of backbone is a rusty harpoon head.



WIRIK BAY, LOOKING NE

GOLD HARBOUR

54°37'S 35°56'W Chart 3585, Gold Harbour



This harbour gives much better shelter than first appears on looking at the chart, with protection from the sea from SW through W and N to NE.

Anchor off the beach to the N of the Bertrab Glacier between the rocks off the beach and the first stream, in about 9m. There was no kelp here and very good holding. On Badger's visit, we sheltered from a NW gale in relative comfort and experienced no violent gusts.

The glacier is divided in two by a sheer rock face. The northern part calves into a lagoon behind a very shallow moraine spit, which seems to contain all the ice. The southern part calves into the sea, but it is some way S of the anchorage and in the conditions we experienced, there was no sign of ice in the harbour.

GOLD HARBOUR, LOOKING E

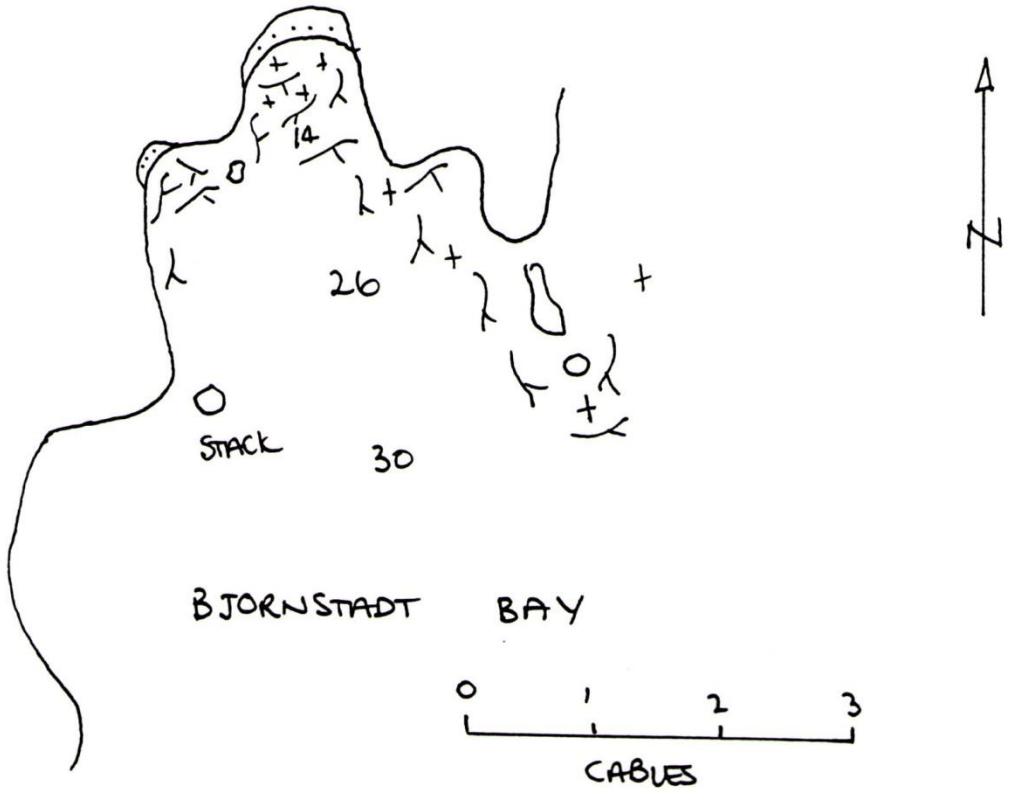
Alongside the banks of the stream, behind the beach, is a reasonable-sized King penguin colony.

If the surf makes landing difficult on the beach, it may be easier to row over or around the moraine spit and land in the lagoon.

Care should be taken to avoid several below-water rocks.

BJORNSTADT BAY

54°35'S 35°55'W Chart 3597



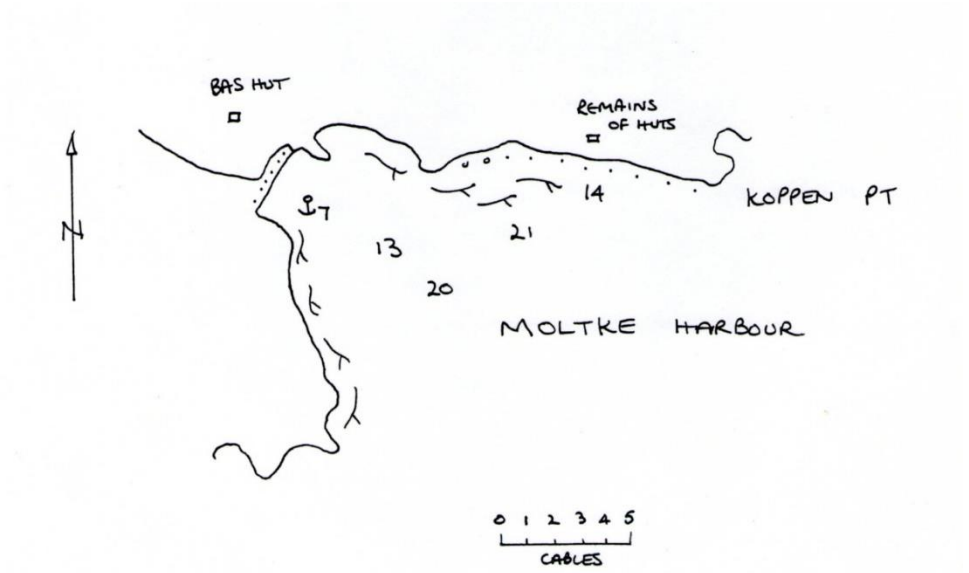
We sailed in to look at this bay, N of Gold Harbour. The head of the bay has a beach, but off it the kelp was very thick, with only some small holes in it.

It would be possible to anchor in these holes in a depth of 12m. Close inshore, several drying rocks were observed.

There is another cove to the W, but this also had large quantities of kelp.

MOLTKE HARBOUR

54°31'S 36°04'W Chart 3585, Moltke Harbour



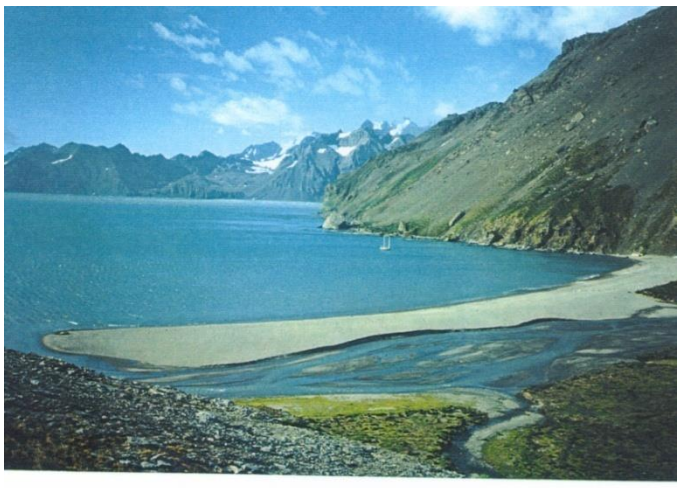
Royal Bay appears to be another windy place in South Georgia. There is a low pass at the head of the Ross Glacier that leads to the SW coast and this may well account for the strong winds blowing from the glacier on our visit. On entering and leaving the Bay, a fresh to strong W wind was blowing off the glacier, but offshore and N and S of the Bay there was a light NE wind. There was a belt of confusing winds and a nasty short sea between the two.

The W corner of Moltke Harbour near the SW end of the beach seemed to give reasonable shelter from the W wind with only a few squalls. From the sea, it is sheltered from S through W to NE.

Anchor in 7.5m, no kelp. There was only one small piece of ice in the harbour when visited, but S or E winds could well send in a large quantity.

The Pilot warns of extremely strong gusts in this harbour, no doubt associated with gales.

This is the furthest south that the southern reindeer herd ranges, as the Ross glacier forms an impassable barrier. An old BAS hut, which is used as a refuge, is sited on the NE side of the valley. The roof of the hut was rotten, when visited.



MOLTKE HARBOUR, LOOKING SE.

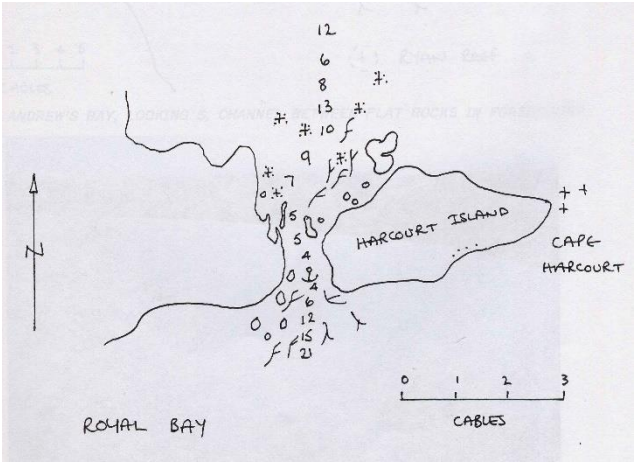
On entering the Harbour, the remains of the German South Georgia expedition of 1882-83 can just be made out, situated on the N shore.

A landing can be made on the beach by the site, but it is a long row from the anchorage, especially if a fresh breeze is blowing.

It should also be possible to walk round from the head of the harbour, but this would mean traversing a couple of scree slopes.

HARCOURT ISLAND

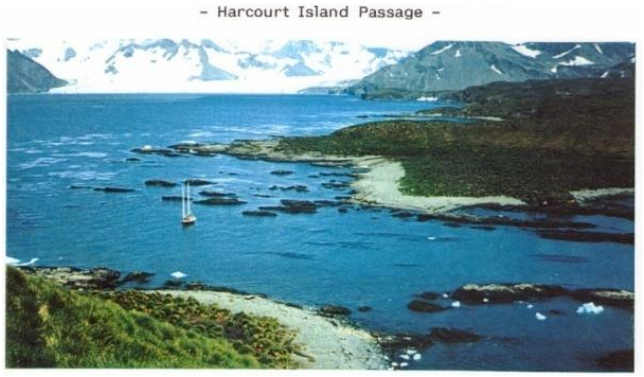
54°30'S 36°00'W 597, South Georgia

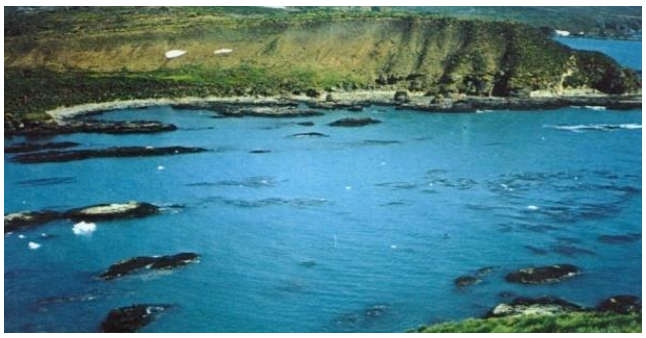


A narrow strait separates Harcourt Island from the coast and in reasonable weather forms a shortcut inside Harcourt Island to and from Royal Bay. It is possible to anchor in this, off the island in a small pool.

The pool is approximately 50m across and a vessel will need to moor or to take lines ashore to keep near its centre. The depth is 4m and it is clear of kelp. The channel runs N-S and the anchorage is open to the sea from these directions, but is otherwise sheltered. When visited, there were a few pieces of ice on the beach on Harcourt Island.

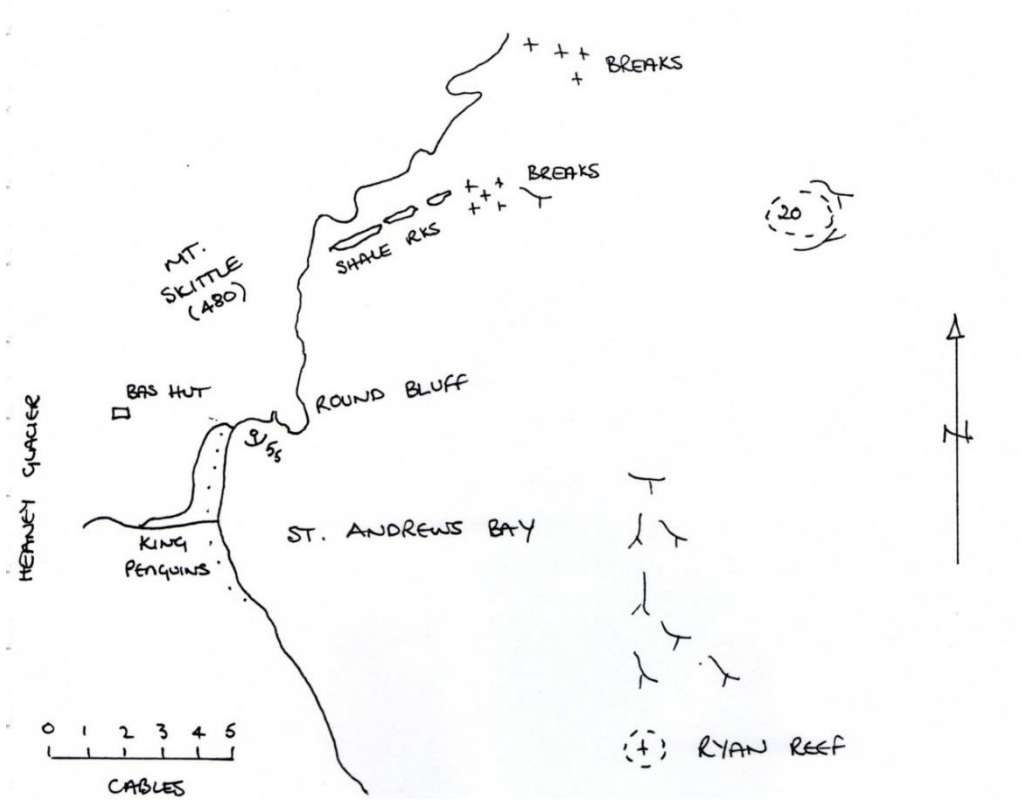
The accompanying sketch chart and photographs show the channel and anchorage. This passage is probably best avoided in strong winds and/or a large swell. Harcourt Island seemed to be out of the line of the W wind blowing in Royal Bay.





ST ANDREW'S BAY

54°25'S 36°10'W 597, South Georgia



The shelter offered by the headland at the N end of the beach is better than it appears on the chart and provides protection from the sea from S through W and N to NE. Tuck well into the northern corner and anchor in about 5.5m. No kelp.

A very large King Penguin colony is situated at the moraine close behind the beach. In clear weather, with Mount Paget and the other peaks for a backdrop, it is a spectacular sight and a popular place for visiting wildlife camera crews.

To visit the penguin colony it is easiest to land S of the glacier stream, if the swell permits. The stream runs very strongly and is usually at least 60cm deep. Several people have been knocked over by the force of the current. The landing at the N end of the beach is less subject to swell.

ST ANDREW'S BAY, LOOKING S, CHANNEL BETWEEN FLAT ROCKS IN FOREGROUND

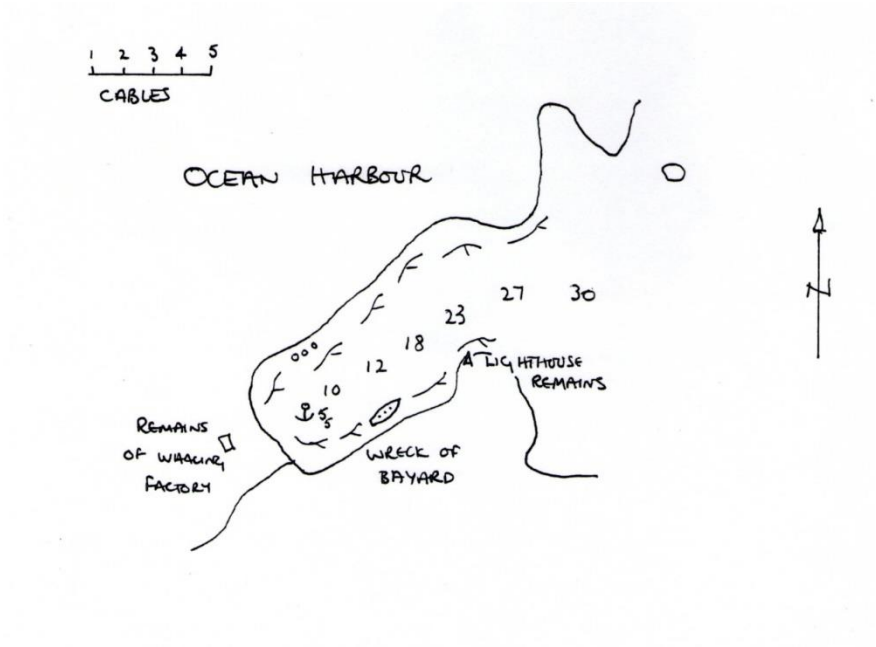
Near the round bluff that projects from the headland, there is a narrow channel in the flat rocks where landing may be possible, even with a large surf on the beach.

On the N side of the moraine, several hundred metres from the beach is a BAS hut, now used as a refuge.

Even if there is too much swell to land so that one can visit the penguin colony, it is well worth a sail along the beach (6m depth quite close in) to view this spectacle.

OCEAN HARBOUR

54°20'S 36°16'W Chart 3597



This well-protected harbour is the site of an old whaling station, that was closed down in 1920, when it was amalgamated with Stromness. Not much of the buildings remain, but there is a narrow gauge steam locomotive lying on its side to the N of the site and the wreck of the Bayard can be seen on the S shore. This iron-hulled vessel was built in Liverpool in 1864 and was wrecked in 1911, when she broke adrift from the coaling jetty (the remains of which can be seen on the N shore) in a severe gale, was driven ashore and holed.

The bay is open to the E, but apart from this, there is complete protection from the sea. The chart shows a rock, but we saw no sign of it and the scale is too small to identify its position accurately. Once past the bluff, at the S entrance to the harbour keep to the middle of the bay where there is less kelp.

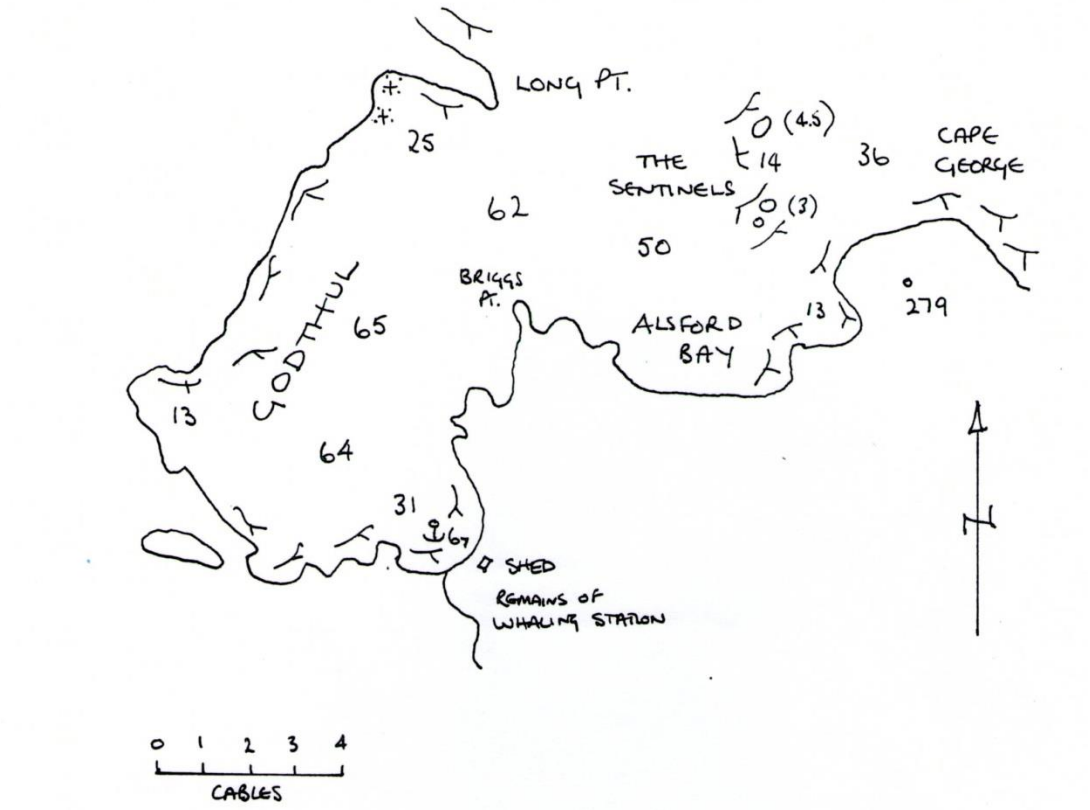
The remains of a light structure can be seen on the bluff.

Anchor near the head of the bay in 5.5m. There is kelp about, but it is not very thick.

OCEAN HARBOUR, LOOKING NE.

GODTHUL

54°17'S 36°17'W Chart 3589, Godthul



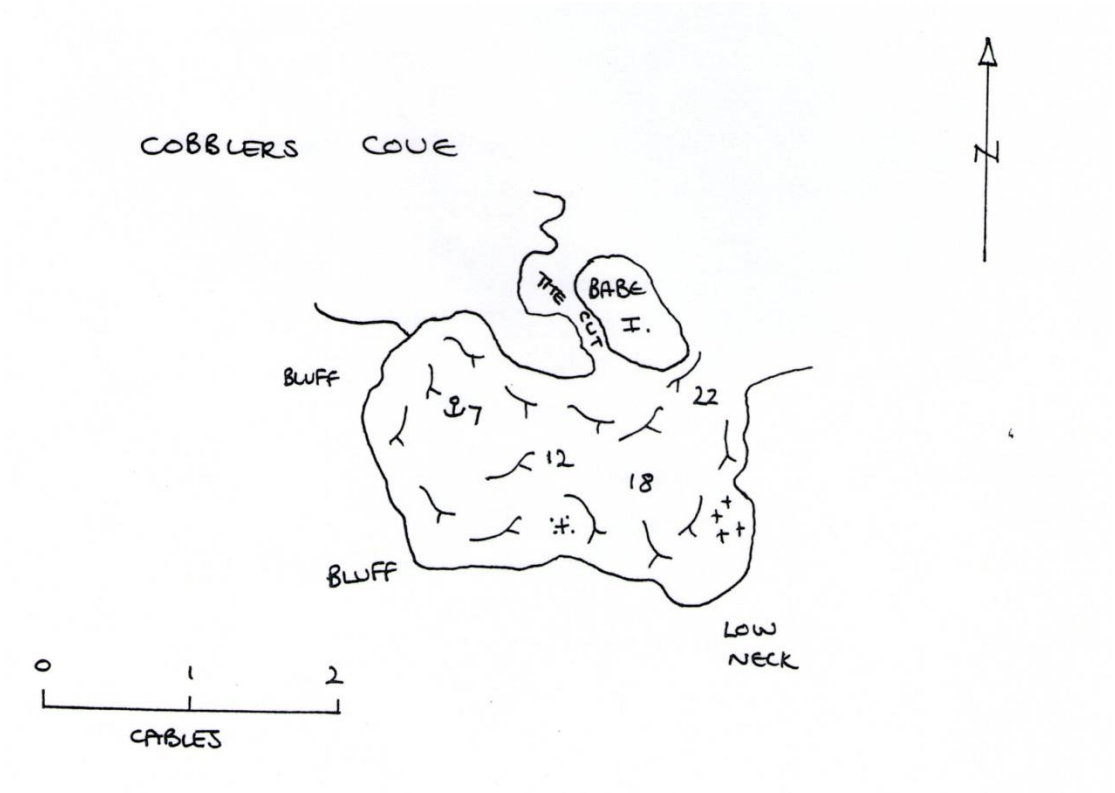
Godthul was another harbour used by the whalers, but here there was a factory ship and the whales were flensed, while they were still floating, from Jolle boats. Artifacts from these days can still be seen ashore; there are, for example, a couple of tanks, the remains of a shed, a heap of oak and steel barrels, three Jolle boats and several dinghies. The beach is strewn with whale bones.

GODTHUL, LOOKING NW

The ruins are in the SE corner of the bay and, tucked in here, there is complete protection from the sea. However, there is a 1 mile fetch with winds from the N or NW. Anchor in a patch clear of kelp, off the shed, in about 6.5m.

COBBLER'S COVE

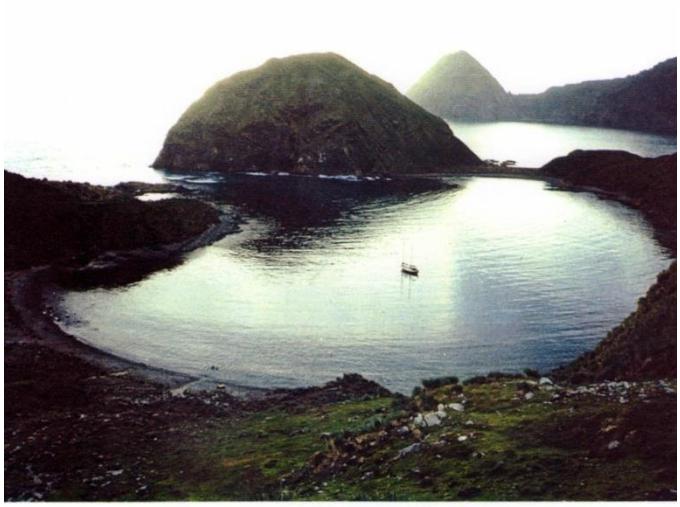
54916-S 36°18'W Chart 3589, Cobbler's Cove



A narrow entrance leads into this small cove, which offers complete shelter from the sea. The land to the NW rises very steeply, which suggests that this may well be a bad place for katabatic winds in a NW gale.

The entrance is straightforward and by taking a sweep to the S, once past the narrows, most of the kelp is avoided.

Anchor off the beach at the W end, in 6.5m, in a patch clear of kelp. Cobbler's Cove is shown as Pleasant Harbour on old charts.



COBBLER'S COVE, LOOKING NE

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The object of the Foundation shall be to collect and research information relating to small boat pilotage (including information relating to remoter areas where other sources of information are scarce or non-existent) and to disseminate this information through the production of books, charts, lectures, meetings, internet or such other media or means as may be appropriate" information is part of a series made available to yachtsmen on

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17/12/2008