

**DANIEL H. DeVANE**



**N.C. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Pg. Political Ad

## Falklands A Cozy British Spot Despite Long Argentine Claim

By Boris Weintraub  
National Geographic News Service

WASHINGTON -- The last time anyone fought seriously over the Falkland Islands, the United States was there--helping to evict an Argentine settlement and pave the way for British rule.

But that was nearly 150 years ago. Since then the tiny islands, with a total land area less than the state of Connecticut, have become very British. Until the recent Argentine invasion, the residents drank English lager in their four pubs, fondly remembered Prince Philip's 1957 visit, and avidly looked forward to the annual "Falkland Islands Olympics," pitting East and West Falkland Islanders in such sports as sheep-shearing races.

### God Save the Queen

"They're British, 'God Save the Queen' all the way," says Martin Rogers, a photographer who was in the Falklands on assignment for National Geographic in 1979. "They have tea every afternoon, and you have no sense while you're there that South America is only a couple of hundred miles away."

The invasion that broke the tranquility brought the islands out of their recent obscurity into a place in the sun--if the sun shone more frequently than it does there.

The bleakness of the Falklands--or the Islas Malvinas, as the Argentines call them--is a central face of their life and history. The average mean wind speed on the islands is 16 1/2 knots, there are hardly any trees, and on only about 18 days a year is the sky more than half free of clouds.

So bleak and so far off the world's beaten track are the Falklands that nearly 175 years went by from the time they were discovered by English navigator John Davis until settlers arrived. And those settlers found no indigenous human residents, only geese, penguins, albatrosses, and other birds.

Davis sailed by in 1592, and it wasn't until 1690 that the sound between the two largest of the 200 islands was named after Lucius Carey, Viscount Falkland, the First Lord of the Admiralty. The islands themselves were named after Falkland some years later.

The first settlers were Frenchmen who arrived in 1764 to avenge the French honor after being ousted from Canada the previous year. They set up a colony called Port St. Louis only to find themselves confronted a year later by a British colony.

### Spanish There Too

Meanwhile, the Spanish, who had established themselves throughout South America, expressed unhappiness at this turn of events. Within a few years they purchased title to the islands from the French for the equivalent of 25,000 British pounds.

In 1770 the Spanish and the British almost went to war over their rival claims. Negotiations gave Britain the right to found a settlement, but it was abandoned in 1774, and the Spanish moved back in, ruling the islands for 40 years.

When Argentina won independence from Spain in 1816, it claimed inherited sovereignty over the islands. Louis Vernet, a French-born merchant from Hamburg who had settled in Argentina, established a settlement in the mid-1820s.

But whaling and sealing vessels plying their trade in Falkland waters irked Vernet, with disastrous consequences.

In 1831 he seized three U.S. whaling ships, and the United

States retaliated by sending a warship which sacked the Argentine settlement and left it virtually deserted. The British returned in 1833 and retained control, despite Argentine objections, until this month's invasion.

The strategic position of the Falklands, not far from Cape Horn, led to a brief period of prosperity in the mid-19th century, after the discovery of gold in California and Australia and the growth of the Peruvian guano trade. Many ships traveling between European Atlantic ports and the Pacific put in for repairs in the Falkland's capital of Stanley.

The advent of the steamer, the growth of a mainland port in Chile, and the greed of the Falkland Islands' craftsmen led to a decline, however. The islands settled into life as a British colony whose peak population, reached in 1931, was 2,391. That has dwindled to about 1,800, who are vastly outnumbered by half a million sheep and several million penguins.

## Shootings

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prosecute, the sheriff said. The shooting of Carter was described as an accident. The gun fire took place at the Hideaway Club in the Five Points community about 1 a.m. Friday.

The report filed by Deputy Sheriff Craig Hart says the investigation shows Carter was standing by a pool table when a scuffle broke out between two customers and two bouncers after the bouncers had asked the two to leave. A .22 pistol of one of the bouncers discharged, and the bullet struck Carter in the right side of the neck.

Then Ransom, a friend of Carter, left the club, went to the car in which he had been riding, got a .22 pistol from it, and started firing toward the club. A bouncer started shooting back. Ransom ran into nearby woods and was struck in the buttocks by a bullet. Deputy Sheriff Ronnie Odom investigated the shootings with Hart.

In the shotgun shootings, the victims and Oxendine were at a cookout Saturday night at McGirt's trailer, near Lowery's Grocery on N.C. 20, the report, filed by Hart, who investigated with Odom, says.

Oxendine had been having a "problem" with his girl friend and went home, then returned to McGirt's with a 16 gauge shotgun shortly after midnight. He asked whether his girl friend was there, and he was told she wasn't. Then he fired twice into the crowd.

Oxendine came to the Sheriff's Department later Sunday and turned himself in. He was released after posting \$1,500 bond for appearance at a preliminary hearing of the charges.

McGirt was struck by pellets in the left side of the body and in the face. Locklear suffered five pellet wounds, in an arm, the chest, and the clavicle. Locklear was wounded by four pellets.



**GIANT FROM GARDEN** -- Jimmy Jacobs grew this cabbage and also two giant cucumbers in his garden. The cabbage weighs nine pounds, each cucumber was 16 inches long. This photo was taken June 15. [Staff photo by Pam Frederick.]



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