On the 26th of August 1833, the settlement at Port Louis, Berkley Sound, East Falkland Island, consisted of the following persons, (viz) Captain Matthew Brisbane (superintendent), Thomas Helsby (the writer of these pages), William Dickson, Don Ventura Pasos, Charles Russler, Antonio Vehingar (known in Buenos Ayres as Antony Wagner), Juan Simon (Capitaz), Faustin Martinez, Santiago Lopez, Pascual Diego, Manuel Coronel, Antonio Rivero, Jose Maria Lune, Juan Brasido, Manuel Gonzales, Luciano Plores, Manuel Godoy, Felipe Salagar, Lattorre, (the last five being Indians, having been sent to this Island by the Governor of Monte Video), three women (viz) Antonina Roxa, Gregoria Madrid, Carmelita and her two children, also Captain William Low and boats crew late of the schooner "Unicorn" were temporary residents, (Captain Low sold the "Unicorn" near six months since to Captain Fitz-Roy of HMS Beagle); (viz) Henry Channen, John Stokes, Daniel MacKay, Patrick Kermin, Samuel Pearce, George Hopkins, Joseph Douglas, Francis Marchedo, & Jose Manuel Prado, likewise two men of colour, one of them formerly of the Unicorn, known in the settlement by the name of "honest John", and the other, late of the U.S. Schooner "Transport" (Captain Bray) named Antonio Manuel.

On the morning of the 26th of August as above mentioned, Captain Low left the colony in a whale boat with four hands, (viz) Faustin Martinez, Francis Muchado, Jose Manuel Prado, and the man of colour Antonio Manuel, for the purpose of sealing the North & South rocks, at the mouth of the sound, calling at Johnsons Harbour. About 10 AM of the same date, I walked down from Captain Brisbane's house towards the store on the point, for the purpose of procuring some oil from William Dickson, whom I found with Henry Channen, Daniel McKay and Joseph Douglas, in the house of Antonio Wagner.

I returned immediately afterwards towards the flagstaff with Henry Channen, leaving the three aforementioned persons with Antonio Wagner, in his house. When I had passed the house of Antonio Santiago Lopez, I met Antonio Rivero, Jose Maria Luna, Juan Brasido, Manuel Gonzales, Luciano Flores, Manuel Godoy, Felipe Salagar and Lattorre, running towards the point armed with muskets, pistols, swords, dirks and knives. It was very evident they were going to kill someone, and I hastened towards the house of Captain Brisbane, for the purpose of informing him of what was going on. On my arrival I was alarmed at finding the doors locked and after knocking some time, was surprises at learning from two of the women that the aforesaid eight men had killed Captain Brisbane, Juan Capitaz Simon (the Capitaz) and had left Don Ventura for dead, he having been wounded by a musket ball in his throat, his head cut open, and his hand almost cut off by a sword, afterwards he escaped by a back window, and reached the house of Antonina Roxa, about 50 or 60 yards distant. On my way up from the point, I heard two musket shots fired at the house of Antonio Wagner, where they killed him, and William Dickson, to which two of the boats crew Joseph Douglas and Daniel McKay, were eye witness.

They then returned to the house of Captain Brisbane, and not finding the body of Don Ventura, searched for him and on finding him, he ran out, when I saw him killed by their firing 2 or 3 musket shots at him. On being informed what had taken place by the women on my arrival from the point, I was attempting my escape by running into the camp, but was soon overtaken by Felipe Salagar, who was on horse back, and seeing that it was impossible to get from him, I walked towards him, he had a drawn sword in his hand. Afterwards I got upon the South side of the garden wall to see where the remaining seven men were, when they passed along the outside of the South wall entered the garden gate and came across it to shoot me, and ordered me off the wall for that purpose. Some conversation took place among them and I was spared, but I was ignorant at that time by whose interposition; this occurred immediately on their return from killing Antonio Wagner and William Dickson, and before they missed the body of Ventura.

I was ordered by them into Captain Brisbane's house, and there first saw his body lying dead upon the floor, he appeared to have been making towards his pistols before he fell, and there was smile of contempt or disdain very strongly marked in his countenance. They dragged his body with a horse to a considerable distance, and plundered the house. Afterwards it was locked up and I was ordered to the house of Antonina Roxa, where I found her, one of the women and Pascual Diez. I pleaded hard to be allowed to go to the house of the boat crew, but it was not permitted. I considered myself still condemned to be shot, and they left one for the purpose of plundering William Dickson's the store at the point, after some conversation on their return, I was ordered to my room, and I took that opportunity of joining the boats crew (seven on them) at their own house. The assassins now became possessed of all the arms and ammunition in the place excepting what the boats crew had, two guns of which were only good for any thing, and which might be said to compose all the arms they had to defend themselves with. The house of Faustin Martinez (who was with Captain Low) was robbed of its contents.

At the time these murders took place, the remainder of the male inhabitants of the settlement were at the following places; I and Henry Channen were returning from the house of Antonio Wagner towards the flag staff, having left two of the boats crew there as before mentioned, with him and William Dickson, Santiago Lopez was in the house of the boats crew, four of
whom were within and variously employed, Pascual Diez was cooking in the house of Antonina Roxa, Manuel Coronel was sick in bed, and honest John was in his own house, whose fingers and toes had been frost bitten. Captain Brisbane was a native of Perth in Scotland, William Dickson of Dublin in Ireland, Antonio Vehingar alias Wagner, of Pratten on the Rhine in Germany, Juan Simon (Capitaz) of France, but further particulars unknown.

The eight murderers made the house of Santiago Lopez their head quarters, where they afterwards lived, and which commanded a view of the mouth of the Sound, the entrance into the basin and the house of the boats crew. About two hours after the murders were committed, we saw the green whale boat drifting across the basin and which had been launched by them, (from the place she was laying in, hauled up high and dry) to prevent our escape. We kept a good look out all day, and a regular watch was set at night, to guard against surprise. The wind blowing very fresh from the westward, and when we saw the boat on shore on the other side of the basin on the rocks, we expected she would be such a state as to be of no use to us in effecting our escape.

Tuesday 27th. Wind from the SW weather more moderate. Felipe Salagar called at the house at day break this morning on horse back, inviting us to walk about the settlement as usual, but observing that their object was to separate us, it was determined that only two should leave the house at one time on any account. We kept within doors altho' several requests were made that we should bury the dead, and at length Henry Channen and Samuel Pearce left the house to assist in burying Captain Brisbane, Juan Simon and Don Ventura: they had some difficulty in finding the body of the former, which had been dragged by a horse to a considerable distance from the house, and was interred on the spot, the two latter were buried in one grave, the bodies were stripped of a part of their clothes and their pockets searched by Juan Brasido; during the absence of Channen and Pearce, I was outside the house looking round, when I perceived Lattore coming full gallop towards me, with a sword in his hand, and I retreated within doors, when he was within about 100 yards of me, on which Felipe Salagar called to him, and he turned his horse in another direction, and I afterwards found that he was sent by Antonio Rivero for the purpose of killing me, and under the expectation that I should assist in burying the dead; a loaded musket was sent to one of the graves for the express purpose of dispatching me. On the return of Channen and Pearce, Stokes and Hopkins left the house to assist in burying William Dickson and Antonio Wagner, the body of the former was stripped of every thing except his shirt waistcoat and drawers. The jolly boat which had been fastened to a boat under the flag staff was this day turned adrift, no doubt to prevent our means of escaping, and appeared at high water about 2PM to be going out of the gut into the sound, but fortunately grounded on the East side of the basin near the entrance.

On this day they killed some of the tame cattle, saying, now they would have fat beef, and talked of going tomorrow into the camp to the southward, asked several questions respecting where Captain Low had gone, but we gave them very different answers to where we supposed he was. This evening Juan Brasido informed me, he had been the cause of saving my life, when they came armed to me across the garden, as it was their intention to shoot me, and related the conversation that had passed amongst them concerning me, that he had done all in his power to save me altogether, but that he was only one against seven, and that I was merely safe for the present and that he and Jose Maria Luna were at variance with the other six, who not only wanted to kill me, but the whole of the boats crew, women and children so that no one would be left to tell the story of what had actually occurred. All hope of escaping appeared now to be cut off by their turning the two boats adrift, and as the weather had been very boisterous, we had every reason to expect to find them both stove on the rocks, where they were lying on the other side of the basin. The boat with Captain Low and the four hands was seen this morning under sail off the mouth of the sound going towards the south rocks. A message was soon afterwards received by one of the indians from Antonio Rivero requesting to know which way she was going, when we replied she was going towards the North rocks, when we all felt convinced that she was going to the Southward. Preparation was made by them for leaving the settlement to go to the Southward, and all the horses (say fifty) were collected for that purpose from Long island. It was reported that their intention was to escape to Patagonia by falling in with some vessel in Grantham Sound, Choisseul Bay or Bull Point.

Thursday 29th. The eight murderers left the settlement this morning on horse back armed, for the north rocks with the avowed intention of killing Captain Low and his boats crew; after seeing them over the hill four hands were dispatched to examine into the condition of the two boats on the other side of the basin; they found the whale boat completely stove, but after some time returned with the jolly boat, and as she was small could merely carry our persons arms and ammunition which were necessary for our subsistence, we quickly determined first to land on Hog island and then that the boat should return with a few hands for the purpose of bringing off the seal skins belonging to the boat's crew which had been the whole of their earnings for the last sixteen months, and in procuring which they had suffered much privation and labour. All hands hastened towards the boat, learning the assassins had only pretended to go after Captain Low, for the purpose of seeing if we would make any attempt at escaping, and on approaching her to embark, two of the women made their appearance in male attire on horse back and were nearly fired on as we at first supposed they were the Indians returning, not knowing them in their disguise. In this dress they intended going to the southward with the eight murderers, who were not only going to
compel them, but the three men also who took no part in the murders. We then saw Pascual Diez coming towards us, crying
and begging to be taken into the boat, and we complied with his request. Charles Russler then made his appearance, and we
made signs for him to join us, and he lost no time in doing so. Santiago Lopez, Manuel Coronel and the three women
begged we would not leave them for if we did, the eight Indians were sure to kill them on their return. It was impossible for
the boat, small as she was, to carry all of them, and we directed the party to get round the basin to the point in front of Hog
island as quick as possible, & on our arrival at that island the boat returned with a few hands to embark them, and no time
was lost in doing so, as they were found ready there on arrival. Our party now consisted of twelve men three women and
two children, and the next consideration was how we were to subsist? When it was instantly agreed that the boat should
return to again to the colony for the purpose of bringing off whatever beef they could meet with, & we felt much anxiety for
her return which she effected in safety bringing beef, fat, molasses and a few clothes, principally blankets. In consequence
of saving the lives of these nine persons, the boats crew lost the only opportunity they had of saving their seal skins, which
they had procured after so much starvation hardship and labour, and most of them after their escape, had not a second
change of clothes to their backs. During the hurry of embarkation we saw nothing of black John, and not knowing the
instant the Indians might return we did not think of going to look for him, he was the only person left behind. After our
escape I was informed by the boats crew, that Juan Brasido, had also informed them on the same day I had the conversation
with him, it was the intention of the murderers to kill me, and he begged of them to use every means in their power to
prevent, and they explained they would not tell me before, as it would only have added to the anxiety of my situation.

Friday 30th Wind from the southward blowing fresh, at noon low water, saw the eight Indians galloping from the settlement
towards the beach opposite us, a distance at low water of about 250 or 300 yards. On their arrival they gave an Indian yell
and commenced taking the water with their horses, with an intention of crossing over to us, we fired upon them repeatedly,
and they as often returned it; on firing the last shots they retreated in a body & rushed as fast as they could gallop to the
back of a small hill, which at high water formed an island and I believe one of them was struck with a rifle ball, for he was
seen to dismount with all the appearance of being wounded. They then returned to the settlement and passed over the hill to
the westward, where we suppose they took up their quarters for the night in the open camp. Honest John was seen this
afternoon going from house to house, and with the help of a telescope could plainly perceive him busy carrying bundles of
things towards his own house.

Saturday 31st. Saw the Indians in the settlement, going from one house to another, and in the evening left it in a body and
crossed over the hill to the westward with their baggage on spare horses

September 1st Sunday. Early this morning several volleys were heard from the other side of the hill to the westward. Some
of the Indians to be seen about the settlement this day.

Monday 2nd. A regular watch kept day and night, looking out for the boat of Captain Low, and observing the settlement;
fearing the indians might have gone after Captain Low to the south rocks, & force the four hands to bring them in the boat,
or murder all hands and bring the boat up themselves; we thought it therefore prudent to move to a small island known by
the name of Turf island, which we could more easily defend in case of an attack, and from the top of which two hands could
keep a good lookout over the whole of the sound, which was an advantage over Hog island, and it would also take more
than double our number to guard against surprise or the approach of a boat. Moved from Hog island in four trips, found the
water small in quantity and brackish.