

*Journal
of a
voyage from Glasgow
to
Dunedin, New Zealand
in the
ship Benlomon,
commander
John Smart,*

sailed 10th October 1862, Arrived 18th January 1863

by

William Laurence Simpson

10th Oct. 1862
The Benlomond ship
built by MacMillan of
Dunbarton, all
appearance a fine ship
for passenger traffic.
Owned by Messrs D
Rose & Co, Aberdeen
& by Captn. John
Smart also of
Aberdeen.

Having procured all the requisites I thought necessary for a three months voyage, at 12 noon I went on board. The confusion on board was considerable, but how could it have been otherwise, it was impossible to expect the luggage of some 350 passengers to jump into its place on being put on board. On going into the cabin I found my friend Mr Rose (the owner) who received me with his usual kindness, and had my traps stowed away in my cabin, which was a two berth one on the port side of the vessel.

1 o'clock

The luggage and greater number of the passengers being now on board, the ship was slipped from her moorings and towed down the river. The crowd of friends, with tears in their eyes who stood on the shore anxiously watching the movements of the vessel amounted to about 400 I should say. On moving off a very considerable amount of cheering was attempted but one could see from the rapidity with which it died away that it was somewhat forced, and that every one felt a pang of sorry [*sic*] at parting from their native country, Scotland, that most blessed of all countries, in everything but climate.

We proceeded down the river at the rate of about 5 miles an hour. The sail down the Clyde I need not describe as its beauties are well known to everyone. Suffice it to say that I think the strength of the country & the industry of Glasgow is to be seen on the banks of the Clyde for a mile or so down, in those extensive iron works of the Messrs Napier and others. I observed one enormous looking vessel plated with iron, not beauteous to look upon but glorying in its strength. I called the attention of the river pilot to it, and he informed me it was a Ram for the British government. What naval architecture is to come to it is difficult to say, certainly its beauty does not strike the observer. About 5 in the afternoon we reached our anchorage in Gourock Bay a short distance below Greenock. On the Bay is situated the village rather a pretty one. Not intending to sleep on board, I went on board the tug along with my Brother Bob, who had accompanied me thus far down, & proceeded to Greenock where we got very comfortable quarters in the "Fortune Hotel", the principal one in the place. Before finishing the account of this day's proceedings I must take note of the absurd scenes that were occasioned by that expansive circular apparatus the females of the present day hide their otherwise beauteous figures under. Until this day I have never had an opportunity of judging of their extreme absurdity. But before on hour had gone "Jack's" sarcasm was too much for even female boldness. A remark or so like the following "now then young Leggy you don't wish to go into the rigging like a balloon, well take off them hoops", from Jack caused several of the more sensible to appear in a collapsed state and, example being always better than precept, soon all hoops disappeared, and great was the relief Jack felt at their disappearance.

11th October 1862

Having had a very comfortable night's rest in the "Fortune", a good breakfast and

that best of all digesters, a smoke, we strolled out thro' the town & made some purchases, and so spent the time til two P.M. the hour at which the omnibus leaves for Gourrock. The train having arrived from Glasgow, Mr J. Rose, the Captn. & I got into the omnibus. We left for Greenock after I had taken leave of dear B. who was to leave for Glasgow by the next train on his way to London for extensions of leave being at home on sick leave from India. God grant we may both meet again on this side of the grave. The omnibus landed us at the Gourrock Pier from whence we took boat and went on board the ship. As we approached the vessel I couldn't help admiring her, but I am no great judge of naval architecture. On getting aboard we found everything in very good order considering the disorder of the previous day, thanks to the activity of the crew, but of them afterwards. Soon after we were on board dinner bell was rung for the Captn.s mess, but of the viands afterwards. Immediately after dinner Mr Rose left the ship. In the course of the afternoon music of different sorts began to be very prevalent over the ship and in the course of evening I heard the welcome sounds of the bagpipes. Dancing singing were kept up until dark & sometime after. About 9 o'clock when all were quiet the Captn. & I went on the poop and had a very pleasant smoke and chat the night being fine and starlight. This was my first quiet conversation with the Captn. and from what I can see he seems a shrewd sensible quiet man, a regular Aberdonian, that may be a reason for my favourable opinion, but apart from all bias I think he is an able seaman. Indeed altho' I am an Aberdonian I can't help taking notice of what has been remarked by men well able to judge, that the Aberdonians are well known as first class seamen.

12th October 1962
Sunday

My first night on board ship. My sleep was not so sound as usual but the change quite accounts for that. I was very warm and comfortable in my berth. Got up and had breakfast, consisting of tea, without milk, chops, stew, bread & butter, a very good breakfast indeed, and don't you have an appetite on board ship! In the course of the forenoon the Captn. came to me to ask if I thought he should have service altho' the chaplin was not on board. I said I thought he should especially as I understood someone had volunteered to conduct it. So service we had between decks, as it rained heavily and very solemnly and properly conducted throughout. The journeyman who conducted the service read one of Dr Hanna's sermons on the dying thief on the cross. After service we had dinner, which was equally as good as the breakfast. Soon thereafter a boat came along side and up the gangway came Captn. Brotchie, an old sea Captn. who resides in Greenock and being of a philanthropic turn of mind takes a great interest in emigrant ships, and ships & seamen in general. Along with him came the ship's chaplin or catechist, and one or two other gentlemen. In short time Captn. Brotchie mounted on one of the hatches, the day having broken up, and gave a very good discourse indeed. After which I went ashore and went up to Greenock to get my letters but I hadn't got half way when it came on to rain heavily and several flashes of lightning with thunder accompanied it. A ducking certainly I got but however I persevered & reached the Fontine, where I found letters etc. awaiting. After getting something to warm me &

seeing no symptom of it clearing I ordered a cab & drove down to Gourrock & took boat & came off to the shop in rather a heavy sea. I arrived in time for tea and the rest of the evening was spent in reading etc. and from between decks the sound of psalm singing was heard in the course of the evening, all apparently conducting themselves in a becoming manner for the day.

13th October
Monday

Great day on board, the government inspection & clearance of the vessel. Captn. Stuart RN and Messrs Auld & Crawford, the Otago government commissioners, are expected on board at 12 o'clock, and preparations are being made for their reception.. The crew are being put thro their different duties, and certainly more smartly they could not be done thro'.

19th October 1862
Sunday

Prayers as usual at ½ p 7 a.m. at which I was present, but must say I had a push to be so, McInroy as usual, knowing the Captn. wouldn't be there, thought it better fun to lie in bed. Almost all the cabin passengers present. While at breakfast the steward informed us that the steamer the Captn. had taken up to Greenock was in sight and in a short time we saw him (the Captn.) signal for a boat. Immediately one was dispatched and with some difficulty got along side the steamer, the wind being very high at the time. Not long after the Captn. came aboard, having procured another "catch" for the windlass. While conversing with the Captn. he informed me that he had only taken 2 ½ hours to go up to Greenock a distance of about 50 miles, & by 10 o'clock p.m. he had his catch on board and might have returned the same night. In the course of ¼ of an hour after the Captn.'s arrival the wind lass was all to-rights again, and we were al ready had the wind been favorable to go out. It was arranged that public service should be conducted between decks at 11 a.m. and in the cabin in the afternoon. So at 11 the bell was rung and all the steorage passengers assembled in the afterparts of the vessel. In the course of the afternoon service was conducted in the cabin, and certainly Mr Torrence's discourse was very good. The rest of the day was spent in reading with an occasional interlude for a smoke & chat, and about ½ p 8 p.m. the usual family worship was held in the cabin. The day was very boisterous, wind west with heavy rain & snow.

This arrangement was necessitated by the state of the weather.

20th October 1862,
Monday

Rain and snow alternately and wind west by north, and in gusts this morning. Still impossible to get out to sea, glass down below 29, according to the Capt. a very bad sign indeed, and sure indeed before noon the gale and rain increased. Nothing of consequence to note. Everyone keeping as much as possible below. Dr. reports his patients affected by cold as all doing well, with the exception of one man ill from an ulcerated throat. Began my studies in English law today, but find it will be a difficult thing to study much on board ship. Rain continued to fall until I went to bed at 11pm, but the rain has moderated.

21st October, 1862

Bright sunshine at 7am when I got up and wind moderate, blowing more from the

Tuesday NW, glass up several degrees. After breakfast, orders were given to raise the starboard anchor, or rather to take in chain. Several fathoms having been taken in, the windlass gave way for the third time. How vexatious for the Captn. as the wind was coming so well round to the north and moderating down. Strange were the swamises [*sic*] as to the cause of the breakage for the third time. Some of the sailors declaring that it was because we had a priest or a person of that description on board. The Captn. soon after the breakage went off to Lamlash to see what assistance the village blacksmith could render. Since two o'clock pm the crew and such of the passengers as wd. volunteer, have been engaged in raising the port anchor with the capstan & tackling, a very slow process indeed compared with the windlass, but success crowned their efforts about 6pm, almost 4 hrs. About 3p.m. the wind died away almost completely and a finer afternoon could not have been. It gave one an idea of Arran's beauty during summer. The passengers were all on deck during the afternoon and music and dancing were the order of the day among the steerage passengers. About 7pm rain began to fall and the wind blew from the west again. In the course of the evening the Captn. returned on board, having succeeded in getting the blacksmith to mend as well as circumstances would permit, the catch of the windlass. Did a little of my studies today. Had good fun today at McInroy's expense, whom the Dr. had by way of married to one of the young ladies on the cabin.

22nd Oct, 1862
Wednesday Weather still unsteady, wind variable from W by N to NW, and very squally. We observed several small craft, who has been tempted outside last night beating a retreat, and in endeavouring to make for Lamlash Bay again. Among other vessels we observed a barque making up the Forth minus the bowsprit and fore-mast, very much crippled indeed. Glass down below what it was on Monday, towards evening it moderated down, and allowed several small vessels to come into the bay to spend the night. In the course of the day the gale was so strong that it carried the lifeboat, which the Captn. had dispatched with letters for the steamer lying at the pier (not a half mile distant), about two miles out before it could make the shore.

23th Oct, 1862
Thursday A very heavy gale blew last night and rendered it necessary to let go the starboard anchor which cost so much to raise. Several of the ships in the bay drifted, but no collisions. By the time I got on deck it had quite moderated down, and the sun was high, although the wind yet blew very cold. Several showers during the day, but none very heavy. Glass rising and wind going well round to the north. Tonight the sky is much more settled, and the pilot in great hopes of getting off tomorrow morning not deeming it safe to trust the fickle weather sooner. Did a good deal of reading and had a few games at chess & begammon with McInroy. Passengers in great good humor with high hopes of getting off tomorrow.

24th Oct, 1862
Friday Fine clear morning wind well round to the north and favorable for us to get out and everyone in good humor at the idea. Many of the ships in the Bay have got under weigh and gone, others are preparing. The Captn. has just ordered two boats to get

ready to go ashore for some water before leaving. A large ship supposed to be the City of Calcutta has just passed down in tow and the pilot expects the tugboat will come in and see if we are thinking of starting. A little before dinner the tug came alongside, having on board some spare gearing for our unfortunate windlass. The Captn. is coming off with his boats and water. After dinner we are to heave the anchors, now for the trial of Lamlash blacksmith's work. The starboard anchor has just been heaved, all safe, now comes the tug of war at the port. Some several fathoms have been put-up, but alas, snap goes the catch or box, how provoking! but more opportunely the spare gearing could not have come, 1/4 of an hour has gone and the windlass is at work, and the tug is forward ready to pull when the anchor is off the ground. Now it is surging and in a few minutes will be on the cat-head. How glad everyone seems to be, and the pilot not the least, as he thinks he has now been long enough with us, 10 days, he declares he was never so long in taking a vessel out. The sails are now being set and we are fairly under weigh and everyone is preparing for a toss on the cradle of the deep. We have reached Plassa, a lighthouse on a rock a little to the south of Arran. The tug is now come alongside to take the pilot whose leaving we all regret very much. Everybody is getting ready letters to send back with him. The P. is now on board the tug and has got his farewell cheer, and we are off at the rate of some 8 or 9 knots an hour. About an hour after we sighted land a lighthouse off the Inoyle of county and about 8 pm we came in sight of the Maidens lighthouse on the Irish coast, the north point of the Belfast loch and about 10 pm the Couplands light, the south point of Belfast Loch, was seen, after which I turned in not having experienced any sickness.

25th October, 1862
Saturday

Hazy with slight rain and strong contrary winds. Sea very choppy. Felt rather sick on getting up, and went on deck where I got worse, and came below and lay down. Didn't feel inclined for any breakfast or dinner. Went on deck again in the course of the afternoon but felt no better, went below and had a cup of tea and turned in for the night. Everyone on board more or less sick.

26th October, 1862
Sunday

Rather better this morning and able to take a little breakfast. Went on deck. Day bright but very cold, rather heavy gale blew during the night and the ship has gone back until Ails Craig was sighted, how annoying! Almost all the ground gained on Fri. and Sat. lost. Was on deck thru most of the day, everyone looking more seedy than their neighbour. No service parson and people both sick. Awful scene of sickness between decks, Dr. informs me, and I can hear the sounds of vomiting; enough to turn one's stomach. Ship has made a good deal of progress today by tacking. Sighted the Calf of the Isle of Mann on the English side, sea still rough.

27th October, 1862
Monday

Feel much better today. Sea still rough, & strong contrary winds blowing, very little progress made. Officers all quite worn out with watching, none of them having had off their clothes since we left Lamlash. Going under close reef almost. Gale increased towards evening and became serious. Not a ship but ours in the

channel. Passengers in a state of great fright. Some of the Irish imploring to be put ashore. "O Lord are we passed Cork, put us ashore." Gale continued to increase till ten pm when rain fell heavily for a short time and broke the gale.

28th October, 1862
Tuesday

Day five, but wind still contrary but moderate. A good many blanched countenances appearing on deck today. By tacking, have made up what we lost yesterday. Still very cold. Captn. informed me that we were rather far on the English side yesterday for safety. One or two sail seen today. Felt inclined to read a little on deck today. Towards evening we had made good progress on our right course, and wind going more round to the north, so I hope before morning we shall be down as far as Inscat having already sighted Wicklow Head. The night is one of the finest I was ever out in, indeed it is the first time I have been at sea with moonlight.

29th October 1862
Wednesday

Morning very fine, everyone on deck. Gentle wind blowing, enabling us to tack and make a good deal of way. About dinner time we were almost close at the foot of the Newing mountains, a very fine range. Wind falling very fast and a calm looked for. When the moon rose the sea was like glass and our sails were hanging loose; not a breath of wind almost. It was most enjoyable to pace the deck about 9. Such a dead calm prevailed, disturbed now and again by the Captn. or mate's shrill whistle.

30th October 1862
Thursday

Wind has freshened very much during the night and we were now going about 8 or 9 knots. About dinner-time we sighted the prominent headland of Kinsdale. A more bold and striking landmark couldn't be, it marks the one side of the Bay of Cork – the safest and finest bay on the Irish coast. As we powered west the coast got more bold still. In the course of the afternoon we sighted Cape Clear, and in the distance saw the Irish coast stretching to the northwest. I remained on deck till dark, unwilling to lose sight of the emerald Isle that had been our companion and guide for some days. And alas! Feeling that we were only now leaving our native country, it made me quite sad. Almost when darkness came down & hid all trace of land save the bright revolving light on Cape Clear, which remained in sight for some time.

31st October 1862
Friday

Felt rather seedy this morning, to be attributed to the change of motion in the ship, produced by the long steady swelling waves of the Western Ocean. Day fine, but cold. Ship going at the rate of 10-11 knots an hour, which put the Captn. in great spirits. Sickness again very prevalent and great demand by the Irish for brandy. And many are the plans resorted to to get the Dr. to give it. Some of them feigning serious illness with that object. But a knowing fellow is the Dr., sometimes treating them to a good splash of water on the face to make them show their colour. When the sun's altitude was taken we found that we were in 50 degree north latitude, which was not surprising as our course yesterday was almost due west. This being Halloween, the second cabin passengers are celebrating it, but preferring my hearth,

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- I didn't join them.
- 1st November 1862
Saturday
- Weather fine and milder than yesterday. Arising from our being about 2 degrees further south, 48° 10' N. Lat. Every one seems to have gotten over the sickness. The Dr. mentioned a rather good thing today, when going his rounds this morning, he said to one of the Irish girls, who had been complaining a good deal, "you're better: you should get up." To which she replied, "well I suppose I may, I have lain long enough here for all I have got," showing that she had been feigning with the view of getting some of the medical comforts. Very little wind today, so that our greatest speed has not averaged more than 6 knots. It blew from the SW and caused us to take a SE course, much out of our proper one.
- 2nd November 1862
Sunday
- Very fine morning indeed, wind still SW and slight. Two or three sail on the horizon. Signaled one small brig, British, but he could not carry on a conversation with us, a common thing with small ships, not always having the signals necessary to do so. About 12 noon after taking the sun's altitude we put about to go on the port tack, with the view of making westing, and thereby getting more on our proper course, SW. Sun's altitude 28° 30' and our position 46° 32' N lat. Had we continued in our course yesterday we would have landed on the north coast of Spain. A shark was observed over the stern this forenoon, and my attentions being called to it by some of the sailors, I certainly saw a large fin appearing above the water, but could not see the pilot-fish, the shark's usual companion, anyway. The porpoises are sporting about in great shoals today. After dinner it was arranged that service be conducted on deck at 2 p.m. at which time the bell rang, and on going on deck I found all the between deck passengers arrayed in their best apparel, and seated in front of the poop—and a gay sight it was, some of the females having on quite as grand bonnets as might be seen on any of the best streets of our large towns. Jack was not behind hand, for he was well washed and rigged in white trousers and clean flannel shirt. Mr. Torrence addressed us from the 10th chapter of Mark. It was not a regular discourse as the poor fellow had been sick almost all the week. But he made some very useful remarks. The 100th psalm was sung and with good effort. The quietness that existed throughout the rest of the day showed that respect was had to the day.
- 3rd November 1862
Monday
- This morning rain fell, which we hoped would have the effect of changing the wind to the proper direction. When the altitude was taken at noon we found we were in 47° 10' N L and 12° 30' N long, so that should the wind continue unfavourable, we are in a position to make a tack southwards. In the course of the afternoon it became almost a dead calm and rainfall which had the effect of sending the wind round to the wished for direction, NW and before evening we were bowling along in our proper course, SW, at the rate of 8 or 9 knots an hour. O what a noise these female passengers do make at the cabin door of an evening singing and talking. Of course the Irish are at the top of the talking. Certainly there are some fine voices among them, and sometimes it is pleasant to hear them sing when it isn't a case of

who will sing down their neighbours.

4th November 1862
Tuesday

Fine day and wind still favorable, may it continue so. Today the Royal yards were put up and sails set so that we are sailing under more sail today than we have yet done, a fine effect. The ship, when seen at a distance, must have under full canvass [*sic*]. There are still some of the female passengers and one or two of the males labouring under seasickness, especially one young man in the cabin who is very much reduced indeed. Several sails seen on the horizon today, one large ship which may have been the City of Calcutta. None of them so near as to allow communication. We are in 45°18' NL and 12' WL. Our pigs we bought at Lamlash thrive astonishingly, but as much can't be said for our hens, a number of them have died. I am now getting in to the way of reading law very regularly now, I only hope I may continue.

5th November 1862
Wednesday

The Capt. thought it grand fun, as he had been warning us to keep our windows shut about an hour before

Heavy rain this morning, & gale increasing. Wind blowing from the north and sending our gallant ship along at the rate of 11 and 12 knots an hour, not so bad. As the day advanced the wind moderated, and the sea began to rise until about dinner time, when it assumed the appearance of hills of foam. Just as the table cloth was being removed, we were surprised by a sea breaking over the poop, bursting open such of the state room windows as had the bad luck not to be fastened, and flooding the berths etc. and even coming in thru the skylight of the saloon. As good luck would have it, our rooms escaped, or almost so, the carpet only being wet by the water getting thru below the door. One may imagine the outcry among the fair sex, when the water came bursting into the cabin, but to their credit be it said, that when assumed there was no damage they were soon on their knees helping to get rid of the water in the different cabins. The poor chaplain sustained the worst soaking, and was obliged to take up his quarters for the night in the saloon. The sky was so clouded today at noon, that no observation could be taken, but by what is called dead reckoning we found ourselves in 41° NL and about 15' WL having come about 218 miles within the last 24 hours. Thru the day we continued to average 10-11 knots & in the course of the evening the sea having gone down, or rather having got thru the disturbed part we were going at the rate of 12 knots. Should we continue at this rate we will be alongside Madeira in the course of Friday evening. The evening is very fine, the moon is up, and a gentle wind is blowing to waft us along. The breeze begins to have the soft balmy feeling of a southern latitude, and each day now adds to its heat, although it is far from oppressive. The between deck passengers have got up a concert this evening. Some of the females sing well. One fellow, who appeared in character and sung two Irish comic songs, excited great laughs. Yesterday there were two patients put in the hospital, for the first time. Nothing very serious the matter, according to the Dr.

Day fine and very mild indicating that we must have made considerable progress

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- 6th November 1862
Thursday
- since yesterday at noon, and sure enough when the observations were taken we found we had gone about 261 miles within the 24 hours, and were now at 39° NL; the best run we have had. Today the first male patient was taken to the hospital; a young man apparently in the last stage of consumption, a between deck passenger. It is the wonder of all how his friends, who are understood to be in good circumstances, should have allowed him to come on board at all, much less to go between decks. The Dr. informs me that a step-mother is the cause of the young man leaving home, and that he has not even been provided with ordinary comforts. One more proof that a man should, if he will have a wife, be content with one during his life. The evening has been one of the finest we have yet had. Mild with bright moonlight so fine that I don't feel inclined to turn in. We begin to lose some of the stars of the northern hemisphere, and those of the southern come into view.
- [!!]
- 7th November 1862
Friday
- Since last night a good deal of rain has fallen and the wind is now blowing a gale, so we may look out for a heavy sea. We were not to be disappointed in this, for towards afternoon the vessel began to pitch heavily and many who had taken a good breakfast looked with disgust on dinner. We have been driven a good deal out of our course by this gale, for we are now steering S by W instead of almost direct south. When the observations were taken we found ourselves in 35.42 NL and considering that we have been sailing close reef we have done pretty well. The patients in the hospital continue to improve, even the consumption man seems to have benefited from the change to the hospital. I have been little on deck today as it is rather disagreeable, ever and again to be covered with spray and having had the misfortune of having my hat blown overboard in addition, I prefer to keep below.
- 8th November 1862
Saturday
- Still a heavy sea and squally the latter indicating our proximity to Madeira, and some of us wish the ship was obliged to put in there to give an opportunity of getting some fruit, which is very much desired, now that the heat is beginning to be felt. We begin now to need all the air our small cabin contains and having the misfortune to be on the weather side of the vessel in the gale the window can't be opened without a repetition of Wednesday's flooding. Today we are in 33.40 NL just opposite Madeira, but a long way to the west of it. The sea has fallen considerably but still, for some, is uncomfortably rough, and the sky is more settled, although showers still fly about, not showers I may say but water spouts or what would be considered so in Scotland. But we never grudge a shower, as we are then enabled to increase our otherwise moderate supply of freshwater for our morning ablutions. Tonight it is again very fine, just such a night as you have in Scotland in the month of September with the heat of that as of one in June. Often while pacing the deck in the bright moonlight, do I think of dear Scotland and all dear friends there, and strange to say on those occasions the earliest recollections of my boyhood passes thru my mind.

Bright sunshine and almost now hot (8 am), with a dead calm and everyone has

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9th November 1862
Sunday

turned out in summer clothing. How quiet a Sunday morning at sea in such weather when there is no noise but the occasional screech of the tiller. Our Captn. never, unless in case of necessity, sends a man to do any work aloft on this day. The heat is certainly considerable; the glass is at 80 in the shade, not very high certainly but still warm enough for the winter season in these parts. At 2 pm all were assembled on deck for service, when Mr. Torrance read a sermon by Dr. Guthrie, on the man saved at the 11th hour. How pleasant it was to hear the psalms singing on the calm waters that prevailed for the time. In the course of the evening there was rather a sensation on board. A vessel which we had observed on our lee bow in the course of the afternoon, suddenly appeared alongside, and many were the surmises as to who she was and what she wanted. Some were in great fear, that we were about to be boarded by a privateer, but soon were their fears dispersed, for the vessel turned out to be a small French brig that had lost her way and wished to know our position. Luckily we had a Frenchman on board who could understand what was wanted and thru him was carried on the conversation. The brig was bound for Cadiz and we requested to be reported. Our position today is 32° 50' NL and 24.20 N. long.

10th November 1862
Monday

Got up today at ½ 6am and having rigged myself in bathing costume went on deck and got one of the sailors to duck me well with some bucketful of salt water, which afforded great amusement to Jack. It was one of the most pleasant baths I ever experienced and throughout the day I felt greatly benefited thereby. The Captn. informs me that he thinks we have caught a corner of NE trade winds today; welcome news. They are very light as yet, but are gradually increasing and before tomorrow I hope we will be again be going along at the rate of 10 or 11 knots an hour. We will have the pleasure of the trades until we cross the line, which we hope to do in the course of a week. We have been lucky in catching them up so soon, for it is seldom at this season that they come so far north as 32° NL. This evening there was a sort of ball among the between deck passengers, the dancing seemed to be carried on with great vigor. About 10 pm when we were at prayers in the cabin, we were disturbed by loud cries from the female department of between decks. On investigation, it turned out to be a war that raged between the Irish and Scotch, or rather between Irish tongues and Scotch; in a female a far more deadly weapon than an Armstrong gun. The Irish seemed to come off the victorious, but I understand that the Scotch retreated in good order. The cause was surmised to be the ball, at which the Irish thought they had not received due attention. When I went below at 11pm all was quieter. Our position today was 31° NL and about 24° WL. For the last three nights we have been able to have our windows open.

11th November 1862
Tuesday

On deck again this morning by 6 a.m. and had a repetition of my yesterdays bath, which I mean to indulge in every morning. At breakfast I was surprised to hear from the Dr. that the war between the Irish and Scotch had been resumed and waged far more hotly at 2 a.m., so much so that the mate and he had to fetch down the irons and threaten to put them on before quietness was restored. It was

astonishing how soon the sight of the irons brought them to their senses. We are fairly in the trades and are bowing along at 10-11 knots. When our position was taken we found we were in 29° NL and 24.40 W Lat, about opposite the Canaries. It is not quite so hot today, or rather we don't feel it so much, by reasons of the strong wind. I understand the young men in the between decks have set up a debating club and Mr. Torrance is forward tonight giving them an opening address.

12th November 1862
Wednesday

Day fine, but as a good breeze of wind blows, we don't feel the heat oppressive. So strong is the breeze that we were going along at from 10-11 knots. At 12 noon we found ourselves in 25.52 NL and 25.6 NL at 4 pm so that we are now to the south of the Canaries, and our direction will now be almost directly south as far as Cape Verde Islands, which we hope to reach by Saturday morning, and most likely we will sight it. Had this evening a concert at which the great attraction was Ned Moses, one of the sailors, who sang some comic songs in character. Indeed I never listened to better singing of the kind than Ned's, who is a general favorite on board. We have had a larger number of sails set today, than we have had since we left.

13th November 1862
Thursday

Again a fine breeze blows and keeps off the heat with assistance of an occasional shower. We have been going today sometimes at 12 knots and we find we are now in 22.28 NL. The Capt has been engaged all day in planning a shower bath for the females between decks and he has succeeded very well. Tomorrow morning it will be put on trial and we may look forward to a scene, as I daresay some of them will object to go into it, preferring dirt to a good wash, but the Captn. is determined that they shall all go through it and quite right: as it is one of the best preventatives of disease. We have seen no ships for the last 4 days as we are now out of the homeward bound route. But in the course of a week we may have the opportunity of sending letters to Scotland.

14th November 1862
Friday

The warmest day we have yet experienced, so I intend to jump into my hot weather clothes. This was the first morning of the shower baths between decks. About 5 am I was awakened by the screams and noise of the females, who were undergoing the bath. Some of them for the first time in their life, and the Captn. told me that some of them thought they were to be drowned, others were so alarmed with it that they could with difficulty be got out. Some half dozen of the cabin passengers feeling it was too hot in bed, came on deck to try my bath, and all agreed in pronouncing it the best they had ever experienced. We are in 18.28 NL today and about midnight we expect to be off St. Antonis, one of the most westerly of the Cape Verde Islands, and the largest. There was a great debate, I believe, today on the tobacco question at which the anti-tobacconists came off victorious and in the course of the evening there was a concert. The weather is becoming almost too hot to read with comfort in one's cabin, any heavy subject such as law. I sometimes retire to the captain's room to which I am free, but even there it is too much. I continue to receive great kindness from the Captn. and we have long chats together

in the afternoon and evening in his room and sometimes we are joined by the Dr. who also enjoys a cigar now and again.

15th November 1862
Saturday

As it was dark, land was not seen last night. But today we are in 15° NL so we must have got to the south of St. Antonis. The heat is very much felt as it is sultry. But we will soon feel it much more, as our good ship is averaging 215 knots a day. I saw some flocks of flying fish today for the first time, they are much smaller than I thought they were, the largest not being equal to a loch line herring. Today the passengers are being admitted to their luggage in the hold to get out what they require. As an instance of the absurdity of some, one young woman wishes particularly to get at her chest and all she was observed to take out was a crinoline. Too bad after putting the sailors to much trouble. This evening I was persuaded by McInroy to join in dance but Oh! It is hot work. The only reward was that I had the pleasure of dancing with a very pretty girl.

16th November 1862
Sunday

This morning while bathing the mate, Mr. Strachan came and showed me a flying fish he had found at the back of one of the water barrels. It was of a blue color and about the size of a very small herring but not as sharp in the snout. The heat is very great today, although we are only in 11.20 N.L. As usual there was service on deck at 2 o'clock pm and the proceedings of the day conducted with their usual order. I am afraid we have seen the last of the trade winds, so we may prepare for some days calm & to be grilled.

17th November 1862
Monday

Today the heat is very great, the mercury is standing at about 81 degrees as we have not much of a breeze we of course feel it the more. When observations were taken today we were in 10°30' NL going almost due south, but we have not made much progress certainly since yesterday. Great excitement on board this afternoon. A shark having been observed in our wake, from the topmast; and now the Captn. has thrown his line from the stern, with a large piece of pork for a bait, and every one is on their tip-toe of expectation as the shark is steadily making his way to the bait. Once twice master shark has run off with the bait, returning with greater vigor to the charge when a new one is put on, but he is not to get off always for now the hook has stuck fast and the line is being run along the deck to pull him aboard. There he comes and the females of course are screaming with terror. In the course of ten minutes Jack had the shark cut up and the back bone taken out. So mighty sharp was Jack in cutting him up, that the Captn. was too late to secure steaks for breakfast, at which I was not disappointed as I don't think I would have relished them. One of the sailors is to present me with back bone, when it is dry and prepared. It makes a very good walking stick. The length of the shark was from 8 to 9 feet and said to be about 2 years old, from his teeth, of which there were only two rows. In the course of the afternoon a flock were observed astern, but none of them came close.

William Laurence Simpson, Journal of a voyage from Glasgow to Dunedin, New Zealand, 1862-63

18th November 1862
Tuesday

Of course the heat is increasing as we approach the line, but I am thankful today a breeze blows and lessens it. I can't say I have felt the heat at all disagreeable as yet; and we are now in 8° 9' NL as I don't expect to be at all troubled with it. There are three large ships outward bound very close behind us, and we expect to speak to them in the course of the day. A number of sail have been observed on the horizon today. We are now in the great high road for ships from all quarters of the globe both outward and homeward bound. So the Captn. has warned all to have their letters ready, as we may soon meet a homeward bound vessel. About 1 o'clock we signaled the largest of the three vessels that were behind us yesterday, she turned out to be the Chariot of Fame, from London bound for New Zealand. This is the ship I once intended to sail in. She has been out 28 days, three longer than us, so I think there is no fear but we will be in port before her. One of the others turned out to be the City of Calcutta that left the west on the same day with us, a fast ship but even she has not been able to beat us. I was rather surprised this afternoon when the Captn. came and asked me to give him my professional assistance in conducting a case, which he proposed today by jury. A girl had made a complaint against one of the male passengers who had been attempting to defame her character among the fellow passengers. The accused on being summoned by the court, at which I acted as a sort of prosecutor, admitted the charge with a qualification. And the jury having considered the case resolved to inflict a fine and cause him to apologize. The accused on being informed of this in an insolent and defiant manner refused to comply, whereupon the jury considering this a contempt of court and a setting of defiance all authority, resolved to imprison him for one week, his food to be bread and water. The sentence was immediately carried into effect and it was a study to see the effect it produced on the other passengers, but I have no doubt it will be a very salutary lesson to all. Well I didn't think when I embarked that I would have been asked for professional assistance on board ship, but never mind it may be of some use to me.

19th November 1862
Wednesday

I was rather suddenly awoken this morning by hearing a great noise, and finding myself with very little ceremony being tossed to the roof of my berth. I managed to scramble out of bed and on entering the cabin I found a number of the passengers there. The females crying and the men looking as if they could not help it. I enquired what was up most and was informed that a squall had come down like a clap of thunder and sent the ship almost on her beam and had carried off some of the life sails that were out at the time, and split one or two of the others. The danger only lasted for a few moments, and thanks be to our good crew, who in an astonishingly short time took in much of the sails as the Captn. Thought necessary to right the ship. I am sorry for the second officer, who was on watch at the time, as the Captn. thinks he should have seen the squall coming on, and taken in the necessary sails in time. We have all reason to be thankful that we escaped a rather sudden summons to the next world. These squalls are very common in the neighborhood of the tropics, and we are now only some 200 miles from the line,

being in 5° 28' NL so we are in the heart of them, and often do we see them playing round so. I rather laughed when I saw McInroy coming rushing down the companion with his bed on his shoulders, and looking like a drowned cat. He had been sleeping on deck all night and had not awakened before his bed was wet through and through, it will require to be opened up before it can be dried but McInroy is one of those fellows, who takes such accidents as a good joke. It is very enjoyable just now, to stand on deck of an evening, when the lightning is flying through the air, the stars shining with all their brightness, and the water studded with beautiful phosphoric lights. At that time the air is also in its most pleasant state. This evening there was a petition sent to the Captn., praying for the release of Buchanan the prisoner, and he has asked the jurymen to meet tomorrow morning to consider it.

20th November 1862
Thursday

As arranged, the Jurymen on Buchanan's case met about half past nine a.m. to consider the petition, and as the Captn. was called on deck, a squall having come on, I presided. After some trouble I got Buchanan to agree to make a public apology, the conditions on which the jurymen were willing to grant the prayer of the petition. I wrote the apology out and in the course of the afternoon he read it on the main deck. The squall turned out to contain rain only, but certainly enough of it, for it came down in buckets and what a scramble to catch as much of it as possible for washing purposes. A considerable quantity was put into tanks in case we may have the misfortune to consume our supply, which god forbid, but it is better to be on the safe side. The Captn. is under the impression we have caught the south east trades, too good news to be true, I am afraid we are now in 4° NL so that it is possible, although it is not common at this season that they blow so far north. Some of the passengers are so foolish as to indulge in a dance, certainly in this weather more of a pain than pleasure; ten to one some of them are not laid up tomorrow. Thanks to an over-ruling providence, we have had no serious case of illness; of course the consumption patient can't be considered, as he was ill before coming on board. Poor fellow, I am afraid his dissolution is not far off. The Dr. is very particular in insisting on cleanliness being preserved, a great preventative of disease. It rained the greater part of the day but cleared up towards evening. No ships came today.

21st November 1862
Friday

It is cooler today than we have felt it since getting into the tropics. I suppose the rain yesterday has caused the change. We are making some progress today and it looks as if the Captn. was to turn out correct in saying we had got to the SE trades. We found ourselves when the observations were taken about 3° 14' NL and about 26 degrees WL. We are rather far west but I hope our good ship will come a little more up to her course, as it wouldn't be a good thing to go too near the Brazil coast at this season and run the risk of yellow Jack coming on board. If we don't come up more to our course I would be afraid that we would miss the chance of sending letters home as we will be several degrees to the west of the usual point for vessels

outward and homeward bound crossing the equator, which is usually between 21° and 24° W.L.

22nd November 1862
Saturday

Day very fine indeed. There will be no doubt now that it was the SE trades we caught up on Thursday. Today we begin to make some progress, but in rather too much of a westerly direction, at noon our observations made us out to be in 2° 18' NL and 27 W long and I should think we will cross the line in the course of the evening, where we will likely have the pleasure of a visit from Neptune, as I persuaded the Captn. to allow the visitors to go through the form (at any rate) if they promised not to deal too hardly with those they purposed shaving or making free to the line. We are not now making so much progress and I should fear Neptune's second visit will have to be put off til Monday as it isn't likely we will cross before Sunday afternoon. Oh but there goes Neptune hailing the ship in a cloud of fire, now he is on the bow rails and the passengers are running and coming in every direction and he has intimated his intention of returning on Monday afternoon to let the ship pass the line. It is rather amazing to hear the different ideas of what the line is, some asking how long we have to stop on it, others if the line is large enough to be seen without a glass. Such questions are often asked by parties who should know much better. Some of the wags have been putting hairs on the glass of telescopes to carry out the deception.

23rd November 1862
Sunday

No sign of vegetation
could be observed

At 7 am land was observed ahead, or on our lee bow rather, and about 8 am it was made out to be St Pedro or St Paul's Islets, a number of barren rocks grouped together & rising, the highest of them, between 80-100 ft above the sea. There are five principal peaks presenting a white appearance towards the top apparently from bird deposits and dark green at the base. It is the first time our Captn. has ever seen these Islets although he has been on the southern passage for upwards of 20 years. Their position is laid down as 0° 55.19 [*sic*] NL & 29° N. Long, so that judging from their position we will cross the equator in the course of today likely in the afternoon. At noon we were 35 miles off it & about 29° 20' W long our chances of speaking homeward vessels are therefore diminished. About noon a ship or barque was seen on our weather side bearing down on us and in a short time we were within signaling distance & our ensign was hoisted. The barque turned out to belong to Hamburg homeward bound & was requested to report us at Lloyds as is common with almost all these small foreign ships, there were no signal flags on board, so we could hold no conversation. We have averaged 9 knots/hour today and had that been due south, our proper course, we could have been across the equator long ere now. As we sail fast now we are making straight for the Brazil coast. 4 pm we have crossed the line now & are now in the southern Atlantic, and certainly our passage thus far has been remarkably good having crossed in 40 days from the time of clearing at Gournock, from which should be deducted the 10 days we were detained there and in Lamlach. But even without that deduction it is a

24 November 1862
Monday

good passage. Service on deck as usual today conducted by Mr Torrance.

Day remarkably fine, and a good breeze blowing. Today Neptune is to pay his promised visit and Nick is making preparations to receive him. One or two sail seem at considerable distance. By observation at 12 noon we were on 1°57' LS and 31°55' WL. I should fear we would have to tack before night as we are getting fast into the neighbourhood of islands and reefs which the Captn. wishes to pass to the East of if possible. There goes Neptune hailing the vessel; now he is on board and he & his lady are being wheeled along the deck on their chariot (our guncarriage) preceded by their bodyguard & band. Neptune's barber & other officials bringing up the rear dressed in the most mitre [?] fashion possible. Neptune & his lady ascended to the poop and introduced themselves to the Captn. and enquired if there were any of his children on board who had never crossed the line, being answered in the affirmative Neptune summoned them forth that he might shave & baptise them, the procession then moved forward to where the tubs & other apparatus were placed, the Dr. Barber etc taking up their position on either side the tubs, the policemen were then ordered by Neptune's clerk to bring forth the person first on the list; who being seated on the edge of one of the tubs & the Dr having pronounced him a fit person to be operated upon the Barber proceeded to besmear him with a mixture of grease oil blacking & then having by way of sharpening his razor which consisted of an old iron hoop all notched, proceeded to scratch the mixture off the victim's face in rather a rough stile not being at all particular when he entered the flesh the shaving being finished and a pill of a compound of all sorts of froth having been administered the seat was subsequently taken from beneath the victim & precipitously head over heels into the tub of water & then held down till almost drowned. Several parties, chiefly belonging to the crew having been thus operated on the grand performance of baptizing the ship and passengers commenced & in the course of an hour there was not a single person on board who had not been well drenched. I certainly never enjoyed any amusement so much, Jack finished up with a glass or two of grog.

25 November 1862
Tuesday

The ship not having come up to her course during the night was put about in a north east direction in the course of the morning to avoid the reefs called the Rockas, which lay about 60 or 70 miles off the Brazil coast and consist of low rocks and sand banks covered with slime, and pass between them and the Island called Fernando Norronha, an island used as a convict settlement by the Brazil

Government, this course is rather a difficult one to be avoided if possible there being only some 60 or 70 miles between Fernando Norronha and the Rockas, and also because of the difficulty afterward of being able to weather the point at Prenambraco without tacking, which I trust we may be forced to do. But I doubt it as we are still sailing in a S.W. course. The vessel that signaled us last night about midnight is still in view, and seems to be an emigrant ship, we have gained somewhat on her, but we will see what the next 24 hours will do; but there is

another vessel just come into view that will I think distance us both, as she appears fast to gain ground on us. We are now in 4 S.L and 3° W.L and are going an average of 10 knots an hour.

26th November 1862
Wednesday

The ship that gained on us last night is now a head some two or three miles, having passed us in the middle watch between 4 and 3 am. But we are still keeping ahead of the emigrant one and hope to do so, although she has a good deal more sail set than we have, and is trying hard to come on up. To see the three vessels just now, one would think it was a regular match, and certainly as long as we have been together it has been a close enough race. We are bearing right down on the Brazil coast and even now at 9 am land can be seen from the rigging, and everyone is straining their eyes to see it. About noon the coast could be seen quite distinctly and from the increasing heat we could tell that we were fast approaching it. With the glass the coast appeared to be rather bold with high hills in the distance covered with wood to the top, indeed as far as the eye could reach the country had the appearance of a dense forest without any signs of human habitation. The cliffs along the shore seemed to be of red sandstone having a considerable sand beach in front of them. I suppose when we put about, this nearest point of land wd. Be distant some 4 or 5 miles. By observation we were in 6.35 S.L and 33°16 WL. The land seen must therefore have been some 100 or 120 miles to the north of Permambuco, perhaps in the neighborhood of Parabhya, which lies about that distance along the coast from the province of Permambuco. The Captn. is somewhat disappointed at not being able to weather the Olinda light, the most easterly point of Permambuco without tacking, and now he fears that we will have to tack off and on the land for a day or so before we are able to double the point at Permambuco, after which the land recedes. The emigrant vessel that has been with us for their last two days turns out to be the Blue Jacket from Liverpool to Melbourne, one of the White Star Line. She says that she has been 30 days out, only two less than we have, but thus she may be counting from Cape Clear. This evening between 11 and 12 the doctor was called in great haste from the poop and in the course of half an hour he returned and informed us that he had just landed a young Benlmond and that mother and child were both doing well. This is the first addition to our number.

27th November 1862
Thursday

This morning we are again close in upon the land. It is much the same description as that seen yesterday only not quite as high. I can see that the cocoa trees abound, indeed the forests seem chiefly to be made up of it. I can see several breaks in the shore denoting apparently the flow of river, but we are some 15 miles off and it is therefore difficult to say whether they are so. Today there are a great number of sail in sight, like ourselves driven to the West by the favorable S.E. trade. We must be in the neighborhood of some town, for several of the native fishing boats have been seen. They are strange construction, these boats, consisting of one plank, quite flat, with the mast placed in the nose and bent back in the form of a fishing rod, and

attached to it is one pretty large white sail. All that can be seen above water is the box containing the water provisions and fish of the boatman. It is steered by a paddle or oar, which is held by the boatman from his small seat over the stern. It is astonishing the rapidity with which these small craft fly through the water, or rather under the water, for the waves are continually sweeping them from stem to stern and the wonder is how the fishermen keeps his seat. These fishermen are all slaves who purchased their freedom and are employed by the sugar planters along the coast to produce fish for their establishments. Sugar seems to be the principal product of the Brazil coast. Our position today is about 7° S.L and 33.44 W.L

28th Nov. 1862
Friday

This morning we are again coasting along the shore and with the glass I can see what has all the appearance of a large town on a point of land jutting out into the sea. From the description I gave the Captn. he says it must be Permambuco, the capital of the province of that name and that the hill close by is Olinda. Along the shore we can distinctly see the sugar plantations and homes of the planters which are generally situated on the high ground a little inland. The country all along has a fine appearance, but is much flatter than the part of the coast we sighted on Wednesday. Some of the sailors tell me that is very like the shore of the West Indian Islands. About noon we were abreast of Permambuco and had a very good view of it. It is a town of considerable size with some large and lofty buildings apparently all of a white appearance. The population is said to be about 90,000 or 100,000 and its principle exports are hides, sugar, and cocoa nuts. It is very flat and I should fear was very often ravaged by Yellow Jack. The shipping could be seen distinctly and seemed to be pretty extensive. The harbor is formed by a coral reef appearing above the water but admits only vessels of small draught of water entering: all large ones lie in the open roadstead. The coast to the south of Permambuco abound in coral reef and consequently is dangerous to approach. When about opposite this town the Southampton steamer passed us, but only within a signal distance and he was requested to report us. Fleets of this nation's fishing boats or Katamarans as the sailors call them, were around us on every side. But Sambo is such a stoical individual that he never once looked up from his line, notwithstanding all our salutations & beckoning. To round the point at Permambuco, we tacked away to the East and were soon out of sight of the town and as we thought, not to see it again, but as fate and the currents would have it, in the course of the afternoon we found ourselves in the exact same spot as we had been at noon, rather provoking. Permambuco is in 8.9 S.L and 34.50 W.L.

29th Nov. 1862
Saturday

Day very fine and a very fair breeze blowing. We have rounded the Point at Permambuco and all that can be seen of land are some of the highest peaks of the mountains that run along the coast as far as Rio Range. Our good ship is steering a better course today almost due south. At noon we were in 9.18 S.L and about 35° WL so that we have made only a few miles of Westing, which is satisfactory.

30th Nov. 1862
Sunday

One of the finest days we have had since we crossed the line, and we are able to get out our studding sails. It is strange that all the Sundays we have yet been out, have been I say our finest days, for which we ought to be thankful. It may now be said that we have got over the most dangerous part of our voyage as regards disease, and praise be to almighty God that no symptoms of any epidemic have appeared among us, indeed no illness of any consequence has as yet visited us. I think great credit is due to the Captn. and crew for the pains they have taken to prevent such, as far as lay in their power. Today we are in 12.14 SL and 34.34. WL having made a run of 182 miles the last 24 hours, and I hope we will begin again to average 220 a day to make up for the last weeks delays. Our course lies now south til we get below 30 SL when we will begin to make easting. Mr. Torrance gave a very practical discourse this afternoon against scandal, of which there has been a good deal on board. One sail seen on our weather quarter this morning.

1st Dec. 1862
Monday

The first day of a new month, how time does fly. It is hardly conceivable that it is now nearly 2 months since the vessel was cleared at Gourock. People at home I daresay are looking forward to Christmas and all its festivities, and are all suffering or enjoying, as the case may be, the frosts and cold of a northern thirties (?). The chief object of interest looked forward to in our little community is the time of landing, which will I daresay be in the course of 40 or 42 days. Although Christmas will not be allowed to go past unnoticed, many on board will, I daresay have difficulty in persuading themselves of the season of the year, unaccompanied, as it will be with its frosts and snows and long nights. We are at present in the enjoyment of most delightful weather, the heat of the sun which is now directly above our heads, or will be in the course of tomorrow, when we expect to be in 21° SL his [*sic*] meridian, is moderated by the cool strong breeze of the trades, which alas we lose about that degree, but it may be remarked that the rays of the sun, when he is directly over head, are not felt as much as when he is at an angle. It is just now very difficult to take his altitude he is travelling so quickly & setting is almost momentary. Our day which up to a week ago continued much of the same length as it was at the time we left Britain is now considerably lengthened and will continue to do so until we have light til about 9 or 10 pm. The evenings are gorgeous just now, the moonlight is so bright that one can see to read by it. The passengers still continue to amuse themselves with concerts. During the hot weather the Dr. has difficulty in getting the passengers to go below to bed, especially the females, sometimes requiring to administer a bucket of water. Today we are 15.30 SL and 33.37 WL.

2nd Dec. 1862
Tuesday

Today we are in the latitude of Trinidad Island but considerably to the West of it being in 18 SL and WL. Our consumptive patient is failing fast and I should fear will not survive the first few days of rough weather which we are quickly getting into now. By the end of the week cotton clothing will be cast off for woolen, the nights now begin to be much cooler and no one but McInroy who has complained

all along of the heat thinks of sleeping on deck. Indeed I have never done so for more than a few hours at a time.

3rd Dec. 1862
Wednesday

We found ourselves in 21.17 SL and 30.31 WL today having made a very fair run of about 190 miles. The Captn. has handed me a chart of the heavens, but I can't say that I can make much of it. I have never yet observed the Southern Cross, which should now be visible. A very large vessel was seen on our lee bow in the morning, outward bound apparently, and by noon she was several miles astern. It is much cooler today although still somewhat close below, and requiring all windows open. The Captn. fears that we have seen the last of the South East Trades and are now at the mercy of variables to take us down south to 45 or so when we will get the benefit of the strong winds from the south pole to blow us East. We may now also look for rough seas and rainy weather. Many I fear will feel the change from the smooth sea; gentle breezes and fine weather we have enjoyed for the last 3 or 4 weeks.

4th Dec. 1862
Thursday

Day very cloudy and the sun has not made his appearance, but by dead reckoning we are in 23.59 SL and 29.34 WL. The wind which has for sometimes been East or almost so, is now north east so that we are running right before it. When the wind is right aft the most disagreeable motion of the vessel is caused and the least sail available.

5th Dec. 1862
Friday

Very cloudy and thick all round and looks very like a day of rain. In these latitudes cloudy and rainy weather prevails almost throughout the year caused, I believe, by the heated air and winds of the tropics meeting those from the south and condensing them. Towards 12 o'clock it came on to rain and continued so till midnight. We are now in 27.2 SL and 27.7 WL and our course is still SE. I am sorry for the female passengers, who to avoid a ducking have been sent down below where the heat and close air must be very uncomfortable. I am afraid our consumption patient Cranston is near his end, for it is now with great difficulty he can cough up the expectorations from his lungs and the Dr. informs me that the left lung, which was not affected so much at first, is now very much ulcerated. Certainly there are very grave reflections on his friends for sending him away especially in the unprovided way he is, and I have advised the Captn. who is strongly inclined to expose the case to do so. The poor fellow is aware of his dying state now and seems resigned. Today he has been making some gifts to those who have been attentive to him, particularly to one girl who has nursed him like a sister.

6th Dec. 1862
Saturday

Rain still continues to fall heavily and a strong wind blows. We begin to now feel the strong southerly swells of the sea, which we may expect to increase daily and will, I have no doubt, renew to some their sea sickness and put an end to all dancing and such amusements. The further we go south the wind and sea will increase. Today we are in 29.27 SL and about 23 WL and sailing South East and will continue that course for some 12 or 14 degrees more, after which it will be entirely

easterly. The object, as I think I have already mentioned, in going so far south at this stage of the voyage is with the view of taking advantage of the short degrees of longitude, which of course get shorter the further south we get. This is called the great circle sailing. Some vessels go so far as 50 LS and often have their decks quite frozen over. It cleared up towards afternoon and allowed the caged birds to get on deck and breathe fresh air. The evening was one of the finest we have had, and about 10 pm it fell to an almost dead calm.

7th Dec. 1862
Sunday

Fair this morning but very cloudy and towards the afternoon rain began to fall and rendered it impossible to have service on deck. Arrangements were therefore made to hold it between decks, the first time that it has been necessary to do so since we left Lamlash Bay. We are in 30.49 SL by dead reckoning, it was too cloudy to get the sun. The wind is almost at north.

8th Dec. 1862
Monday

Again rainy and cloudy this morning with a considerable sea. Wind still northerly and blowing pretty strong. All the better for us, as it is driving our ship at the rate of 11 or 12 knots. This is the second day I have observed a number of black gulls commonly called Cape Hens flying astern, indicative of the latitude we are in of 34.19 SL which is a few miles below that of the Cape of Good Hope (34.8 SL 18 EL) our longitude is 18 West. In the course of the day an albatross was observed flying round the ship. It was a small one, not more than 7 feet from tip to tip of the wings. Some of them I believe measure about 14 feet and I daresay we will have an opportunity of verifying the statement, as we are now getting into the region of them. They are of a light grey color with black wings and a long black bill. Some of them are of a very dark grey, probably the older ones. The only other bird observed was one of what the sailors call Mother Carrey's Chickens, a dark coloured bird with a white stripe across the tail and about the size of a snipe. In the evening it cleared up and was very fine, although much colder than we have been accustomed to.

9th Dec. 1862
Tuesday

A fine clear day and a steady wind blowing. When our observations were taken today, we were surprised to find that we were only in 34.42 SL and 15.15 WL, as we were under the idea that we had been making a South Easterly course instead of one almost due East. This made us rather apprehensive of our compass, but on trying it, it was found to be all right, so that it must have been the currents that had carried us to the East so much. In addition to the birds seen yesterday, there was observed a very pretty bird of a black and white color, in stripes, about the size of a wood pigeon and not unlike one in shape. It is commonly known by the name of the Cape Pigeons. The wind has been right aft all day, causing that very unpleasant rocking motion from side to side.

10th Dec. 1862

Another beautifully clear day, but cold, as I felt when I took my morning bath, which I think everyone has given up on now but myself. It is surprising the rapidity

Wednesday

with which it gets so cold on steering south. In the same latitude north the heat is very considerable, even at sea in the summer, which season we now have. About 8 a.m. land was observed ahead and our weather bow, about some 10 miles distant. On getting closer, it turned out to be one of the Tristan da Cunha group of Isles, known as Inaccessible Island. It presents a high bluff and forbidding appearance, it is the most westerly of the group and may be seen some 10 leagues off. About 2 leagues in circuit, barren steep and inaccessible, some scattered shrubs is all the vegetation I understand to be seen on it. It was on this island that the Blundin Hall East Indiaman was wrecked on 23rd July 1821. The crew and passengers of which were there detained for about 6 months feeding upon fish and sea birds at the end of which time they were got off by the assistance of 2 boats from Tristan the principal island of the group. In the course of the morning we had the whole three islands composing the group in sight. Tristan is about 5 leagues circumference and so high that it may be seen 25 leagues off. The highest point is said to be between 8000 and 9000 feet above the level of the sea and is not unlike the peak of Teneriffe. The South East side of the island is cultivated and all sorts of British crops grow. Seals and numerous fish abound along the shores. The history of the inhabitants who are English is rather a strange one but too long to be here narrated. The Governor up to the year 1836 was an old corporal of artillery of the name Glass and the population which in 1824 consisted of 22 men and 3 women had increased to 41. The American whalers often touch here when fishing to get fresh provisions and which also now to be often done by the East Indiamen if ----? Indeed it is the captain of an East Indiaman who gives the bleak account of it. The island was taken possession of by Grt. Britain in 1817 by force from the Cape of Good Hope & while Napoleon was a prisoner in St. Helena, a small garrison was kept here of which I have no doubt Glass was a member. Highlingale the third & last of the group and also the smallest, it presents a rugged appearance & has two islets to the north of it having something of the appearance of an old fort, the position of these islands is as follows: Tristan S Lat 37.6 & 12.3 WL. Inaccessible 37.19 SL & 12.23 WL, Highlingale 37.26 SL & 12.12 WL. The group was discovered by the Portuguese in 1643 & by the French in 1767. In our course thru them Tristan lay on our East & the other two on the west.

11th Dec. 1862
Thursday

Another fine clear day but much colder than yesterday, although we are only about a degree further to the south being in 38.34 SL and 8.9 WL. We would appear to have gone almost due East contrary to our intuition, for the course is Southeast. But the currents are so very strong here that one is put a good deal out of his calculations. Nothing particular going on onboard, different from the ordinary amusements. The crew are still engaged putting on the storm gear for the rough weather of which it is a wonder we have not had a touch.

12th Dec. 1862
Friday

Equally fine with yesterday, but not such a good breeze. Indeed, it seems to be gradually dying away, but we have made a pretty good run since yesterday, notwithstanding being now in 39.39 SL and 3.5 WL. Another day should I think

bring us into the meridian of Greenwich. Towards afternoon it fell almost to a dead calm, but that is a thing that does not last long in these latitudes. For these last two days what wind we have had has been right aft causing the more unpleasant motion from side to side.

13th Dec. 1862
Saturday

Still almost a dead calm, but the clouds are gawking up all round as if to warn us of a storm. Notwithstanding the very slight breeze we have made some progress in the right direction and are now in 40.32 SL and 0.8 West long. In the afternoon it came to rain and shortly after the wind rose and steadily increased until midnight, when it blew almost a hurricane and caused us to take in sail. By this time or a little further on in the night the sea also had risen and then we began to feel what it was to be at sea in a storm. Not much sleep could be got for the rest of the night as you were pitched from side to side of your berth in a most unceremonious manner. And in these Southern low latitudes it is no ordinary pitch for every now and again the vessel is on her beam end.

14th Dec. 1862
Sunday

Still the storm rages, although the rain has ceased, and breakfast has been got over with some little difficulty, the cup being almost dashed from your hand when attempting to raise it to the mouth. It is a fine sight to stand on deck, or rather I should say to cling onto a rope and look at the sea lashed into a fury and threatening every time our gallant ship sinks into the cavity of the waves to engulf her, but boldly she rides over every wave. Let it be ever so high, although almost close reefed still we are being driven along at the rate of 12 knots an hour and in the right direction fortunately. The between deck passengers, especially the females, have been in a great state of fright, for in addition to the rolling of the ship, they have had the misfortune of having their trunks and dishes knocked about in every direction spilling their water and endangering their legs. But it is all their own fault that such is the case, for no sooner are they secured by the carpenter than they move them to suit their purpose for the time, forgetting that in a few hours a storm may come again. The waves are certainly the highest I have ever seen, but the Captn. seems to look on them as nothing and says he will show us larger. We may look now for very little settled weather until we get beyond the longitude of Madagascar. The Captn. says from experience he has always found very unsettled weather prevails from the Meridian of Greenwich to that of Madagascar. Still the winds and the sea rage and it has been with great difficulty that Mr. Torrance has been able to conduct service between decks. Indeed, the seas have increased but that is always the case as the wind moderates. By dead reckoning we find ourselves in 42.24 SL and 3.29 East long, steering almost East, with the wind on our starboard quarter, but it is veering round and will soon, the Captn. says, be in the Southwest, when he expects it to moderate a little, but at the same time he says he has no objection to it blowing so strong as this all the way.

Fine clear frosty day and the wind has gone round to the Southwest as the Captn.

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15th Dec. 1862
Monday

said and moderated but there is still a heavy sea on and will be for most of the day. The cold certainly surprises me—this is mid summer and we have the thermometer at 59 & 38 in 42.38 Southlat and 8.28 Eastlong. When the suns altitude is 70 ½ [sic] higher than ever it is any part of England, shewing how different the Southern hemisphere is from that of the North and how soon it becomes impossible to penetrate the South. Very few have ever been much below 60 S.L. I was mistaken when I thought we would not have cold weather about Xmas time, it will certainly be cold enough as about that time we will be about 45 or 46 degrees.

16th Dec. 1862
Tuesday

Fine clear morning, not cold with very little wind and the sea quite smooth, a change from Sunday. Every one is on deck again enjoying the fresh air. But I am sorry to say that weather that seems to bring health to all is hastening death to our poor consumptive patient Cranston, for he is I believe very much worse today. The number of birds flying astern today is immense and several lines are out trying to catch them, but none have succeeded. The Captn. seems to have some particular dread of fire around or we might have some good shooting. Our position today is 42.26 SL and 13.39 EL. Tomorrow I think we will be in the longitude of the Cape of Good Hope. Numerous amusements going on on main deck tonight.

17th Dec. 1862
Wednesday

This morning when sitting down to breakfast I was informed that poor Cranston had died at ¼ to 4 a.m., a merciful deliverance for him, he was now so wasted. The first death that has happened among us, and although it has been looked forward to, still there is a general quietness and apparent sorrowfulness prevails throughout the ship in consequence. That indicates the foot print of the angel of death, and earnestly do I hope that it is the first and only visit to our good ship. The funeral is to take place at 2 o'clock p.m. when all have been requested to be present. At my request Mr. Torrance has agreed to read the English church funeral service, as I think it will have a more solemn effect. The mate and sailmaker are busy preparing the body for service by stitching it up in canvas, which is the only coffin used at sea. It is rather remarkable that the Captn., who has seen some 20 or 30 years at sea has never yet witnessed a funeral there. It is now near two o'clock and all the crew, very much to their credit, have turned out in becoming dress for the occasion, and that without being asked, another proof of their decency and good behavior. A slip has been arranged at one of the two port holes and the body deposited there. And the funeral service is being read by Mr. T before all onboard. Men and women and very solemn is the effect, especially at the time the body is being committed to the deep. All is now over and the Captn. and Dr. and I have gone over and taken an inventory of the deceased's effects. And certainly a poorer outfit could not have been given to anyone. Two or three pounds would buy the whole. I have advised the Captn. to expose the case to the public, which he says he will do. This day has been one of the finest we have had for sometime, a gentle breeze with the air quite mild. Quite uncommon for these quarters. A number of whales were seen this evening but at considerable distance. When they blew up the water, it had all the appearance of a water spout. They were apparently all going South. We are almost

at a standstill tonight, it has fallen to a dead calm. Our position is 42.55 SL and 16.21 EL, the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope.

18th Dec. 1862
Thursday

The calm of yesterday evening has continued all night and is still, much to our disappointment as every one is beginning to be anxious to get to their destination, which there is a very fair probability if favored with strong winds, of arriving at about the 10th or 11th of January. As we have now the easiest part of our journey to get over. Tide, currents, and winds being all favorable to drive us East and we are now in 43.6 SL and 18.6 EL. The weather is such as to surprise the Captn., he never did yet go over this part of his Easting with such fine weather, so free from rain, indeed throughout the whole passage the weather has been as favorable as he ever experienced.

19th Dec. 1862
Friday

The wind got up last night from the SW about 10 p.m. and has blown strong since, driving the good ship at the rate of 11 or 12 knots and should it continue, we will make up for yesterdays delay. Indeed, to our surprise we find we are 43.17 SL and 22.10 EL. The sky is happy today and now and again we have a shower of sleet, which causes the air to feel very chilly indeed.

20th Dec. 1862
Saturday

Fine clear morning with strong frost and a good breeze blowing, which puts the Captn. in great glee, especially when it blows the ship at 10 and 11 knots in her proper course at S. East. Our run for the last 24 hours has been very good, about 240 miles and we are now in 43.53 SL and 27.38 EL.

21st Dec. 1862
Sunday

Another fine day although very cold and one can bear all the warm clothing he has. By reasoning of the cold the service will be below today. A heavy shower of snow has fallen, the first we have had, causing us to feel very much at home. Another good run of 213 miles, but this is far below what the Captn. expects with these strong winds. We are in 44.28 SL and 32.39 EL and tomorrow we expect to be in the longitude of Prince Edward Islands, which we will pass to the North of.

22nd Dec. 1862
Monday

Very cold indeed today, with very frequent showers of snow. The wind varying from N to SW and blowing pretty strong. The sea has been running rather high all night, causing the vessel to roll considerably and thereby disturbing our slumbers. Many now are the questions as to what is to be given on Xmas in addition to the ordinary allowance put by the steerage passengers. Our run today is the best we have had, 272 miles by the log which will be considerably under the distance by observations by some 20 miles. Our position now is 44.15 S.L. and 38.27 EL, and from the number of birds we must be in the longitude of Prince Edward Islands, although considerably to the north of them.

23 Dec. 1862

Fair breeze blowing on our southerly quarter. During the last 24 hours we have made a run of some 265 miles and are now in 44.27 S.L. & 43.52 EL. The Irish or

William Laurence Simpson, Journal of a voyage from Glasgow to Dunedin, New Zealand, 1862-63

- Tuesday Roman Catholic part of the community & a few episcopalians, being the only parties who are to celebrate Xmas day, are today engaged making their preparations. New years day is to be the great day on board the majority being Scotch. On that day the Captn. is to give the steerage passengers a dinner & will kill two of the pigs we took on board at Lamlash (no small task for they have thrived amazingly. In the evening there is to be a concert ball.
- 24 Dec. 1862
Wednesday The wind has gone round to the north east & the day is hazy with a drizzling rain. Another good run of some 210 miles which brings us to 44.35 SL & 48.3 EL the longitude of[sic] Islands. When the Dr went his rounds this evening he found a number of the catholics assembled together confessing the one to the other, this being Xmas eve the most sacred night in the year with them . While this was going on, at one part dancing & singing was being carried on by others at another part, rather a contrast.
- 25th Dec 1862
Thursday Xmas day, and certainly a most beautiful day. Very clear and frosty with a good breeze reminding one very much of home. All the Catholic & Episcopalians have turned out in their best attire in honour of the day and everyone seems in good humour from the Captn. downwards. At the Captn.'s table we had a sort of Christmas dinner and you have no idea how well we can get up things on board, our steward being a baker, an advantage we have felt as we have thus been able to have loaf bread throughout the voyage, a luxury at sea. Dancing is the great amusement of the day, it surprises one that they never get tired of it. In the afternoon Mr Torrance at the request of some of the Episcopalians held a prayer meeting. In the course of the evening a little after the usual hour of retiring the Captn., Dr, & I were having a tumbler of toddy together, we were surprised to hear a noise as of dancing going on below, in the female department, so I proposed we should go and see. And certainly a sight we did see, more than 100 females in their night costumes dancing & singing & creating a greater noise than I ever heard from any male audience. During the last 24 hours we have made some 233 miles & are now in 45.18 SL & 33.18 EL.
- This day I suppose will be celebrated as usual by the members of the family in ?? & my heart is with them although absent in person. God grant that we may meet again.
- Friday
26 Dec 1862 The wind is still in the north and it is quite thick & hazy with occasional rain, the great topic of conversation now is the programme of amusements for New Year Day. Our run today has been some 216 miles bringing us to 46.56 SL & 58.31 EL
- Saturday
27 Dec 1862 A similar day to yesterday but more sea on. We have made a better run although having by the log done 233 miles and find ourselves in 46.19 SL & 63.57 EL and tomorrow we hope to be abreast of Kerguelus Land or Desolation Island passing it on the north. This is a large island about 47 SL & 70 EL inhabited & I believe the picture of desolation. The South Sea whalers very often put in at it & make it a sort of depot for fishing from. It is the last of any known land to the south of our latitude & last of our longitude, & on passing this island voyagers consider themselves pretty safe from coming across icebergs.

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- Sunday
28 Dec 1862
- A fine clear frosty day, and a good breeze blowing, & has been all night for we have gone over a greater space these last 24 hours than ever we have done yet, 274 miles, bringing us to 46.40 SL & 70.5 EL and as we thought are abreast also of Kerguelus Land, confirmed by the seaweed floating about & the number of birds flying astern.
- Monday
29 Dec 1862
- A dull misty sort of day but a good breeze blowing. Great preparations being made for Thursday & everyone is busy, a great many of the females are engaged rigging out dresses etc. for the occasion, silly creatures. We have made a first run these last 24 hours, having gone more than 6 degrees longitude which are reckoned in the lat to be about 40 miles each. Our position therefore is 46.34 SL & 76.20 EL.
- Tuesday
30 Dec 1862.
- As strong breeze is blowing and we are going along at 10 & 11 knots. We have occasional squalls when hail of a very large size falls. About ½ p 10 a.m. a most heart rendering accident occurred & caused a damper throughout the whole ship. One of the apprentice boys who had been sent aloft to unreef the main royal which he had almost done but one of the gaskets or ropes that fasten the sail up when lowered got entangles in the yard arm, went out to set it right, a thing he had no right to do & missing his hold & came right down falling as it would appear on his head on the rail of the shop, & going over board. Life seemed to be quite extinguished by the fall which was upwards of 100 feet, for the body was seen floating quite motionless on water & several spots of blood were observed on the rails. The Captn. who was below at the time came rushing on deck & was told that a man was overboard on which he ordered the life boat to be cleared, a buoy to be thrown and all the light sail to be taken in & prepare to lay the ship to, but on learning the particulars of where the boy fell from & it being almost conclusive that life had been extinguished by the fall he countermanded his orders, as he did not consider it right to risk the ship for the mere recovery of the body, and certainly considerable risk there would have been as the ship was running between 11 & 12 knots at the time and would have been at least 4 miles distant from the body before she could have been brought to, supposing that cd. have been done without any accident such as a mast giving way, a very likely occurrence with the wind that was blowing & the quantity of sail spread at the time. Poor boy, he was the most active of all the apprentices and a very great favourite with all the passengers and crew and with me in particular. He came from Aberdeen and was named George Grant of 15 years of age. His father is I understand a rigger in Halls yard there. This was his first voyage to sea, although he had been employed among the riggers & was accustomed to climbing ropes, & of all the apprentices was the most likely to escape such accidents. It will be a great blow to his parents. I never saw anyone more affected than the Captn. was, indeed he would not have been more so had the boy been his own child, everyone on board was more or less so. Another good run for we are in 46.21 LS & 82.18 EL today if go on in this way we will be at our port

in the course of a fortnight.

31 Dec 1862
Wednesday

A cold disagreeable day with frequent showers of hail & squalls with the wind in the northwest. There is a sail in view, most likely a ship bound for Melbourne and I am glad to say our good ship has gained a point or so on her since she came in sight. The Captn. is to allow new years day to be celebrated best in a different style from what was intended by reason of the accident. There is to be no dancing or theatricals, which I think is quite right. We have made a good many miles of northing today for we find we are in 45.56 SL & 88.27 EL. There was rather good fun when 12 p.m. struck or 8 bells as we call it. With the Captn.'s permission a good many of the male passengers, MacInroy & I among them, rushed down to the female compartment & you may imagine the row that followed at first footing as it is called.

1 January 1863
Thursday

New Year's Day. Bright and clear although cold & occasional squalls of hail come down. Every one is wishing his neighbours a happy new year, some appear to be pretty jolly. Or rather I am afraid have been so since last night. One of the cabin passengers who got rather obstreperous in his cups last night had to be put in irons. All have turned out in their holiday dress, Jack included, and each male who has the good or bad luck to have a lady love is pacing the main deck with her, others are busy between decks arranging for the dinner.

½ p 1 p.m. & all have disappeared between decks with the exception of those who are appointed to carry down the viands. The Dr is to be in the choir & the Captn. & I & others are to go down when the toasts commence but in the meantime we have to discuss the Captn.'s dinner in the saloon, to which he has invited all the married & 2nd class passengers, and a good dinner it was. But it is time for us to adjourn below as the toasts are about to commence. A strong smell of the rum punch the Captn. so kindly gave is even reaching the cabin & no little gift a glass of rum punch to about 350 people. The Dr. is on his legs proposing the first toast & making a long speech of it but I am sorry to say he is breaking down & will have to cut it short, poor fellow. I am sorry for him as he seems annoyed. The Captn.'s health has just been proposed in a long speech & he is in the act of replying & much to my surprise is making a very good speech. The next toast was the officers & crew of the ship, which I was called upon to propose & to the best of my ability did so. The evening was spent in singing & the day's proceedings finished off on the whole in a very orderly manner. Within the last 24 hours we have made a good many miles of southing and are now in 45.27 SL & 94.14 EL. Today my thoughts very often reverted to home to those dear ones I left behind & the year 1862 will ever be remembered by me as that one in which I left my native land & all dear friends there.

Friday
2 January 1863

Today it is cold & disagreeable & everyone looks as if he felt the effects of yesterday's festivities. I for one didn't get up until dinner time. We find ourselves

by dead reckoning in 46.47 SL & 99.44 EL.

3rd to 8th January 1863 For these last few days I have been too lazy to write but nothing very particular has occurred. We have been making daily runs from 250 to 260 which brings us to about 134 EL & we are in about 49 SL a little further south than we intended going and we are now therefore shaping our course in a northerly direction. Since we came within the longitude of the coast of Australia it has been much milder. Today I had handed to me by the Dr a few verses composed by one of the passengers in the young mens department on the loss of our little sailor boy, they are rather good and I will enclose a copy. Was a great hubub caused amongst the females today. The Captn. having instituted a search for a silk dress that one of them said she has had taken from her, while she was in the hospital. The search was made but no dress was found & the others immediately came to the conclusion she never had one & wd have given the girl rather rough handling had such been allowed.

Friday
9th January 1863 Today it is almost a dead calm but beautifully clear and as you may believe everyone is annoyed at this so near port, but it can't last long here so that I yet hope we will be in by the middle of next week as we are now in about 139 or 140 EL.

Saturday
10 January 1863 This is the day, when we were about the meridian of Greenwich that I had said we wd. be in port by, & certainly if we had kept up our speed we might have. It is a beautiful day with a strong wind blowing and all hands are engaged painting the poop & giving the ship a red up for harbour. Our longitude is about 145 East today & we have also made a few miles of northing, and I only hope the breeze will increase & let us make up for yesterday.

Sunday
11 January 1863 This I hope will be our last Sunday on board, and with that prospect Mr Torrance has given a sermon suitable to the occasion. I must say he has improved very much since we left England. The day is dull with occasional showers and a strong breeze is blowing off the land (Tasmania) driving us at the rate of 12 knots an hour.

Monday & Tuesday
12 & 13 January 1863 We have made good progress during these last two days and are now almost in the longitude or our destination. Every one is beginning to pack up, so there is great confusion among the passengers. Tonight is a great sight on board, the theatricals that were to have come off on New Years Day are being gone through and great is the amusement caused thereby.

Wednesday
14 January 1863 This morning we sighted the Snares, a dangerous reef of rocks immediately to the south of Stuarts Island the most southerly of the group forming New Zealand. We shaped our course the day being clear to run between the Snares & Stuarts Island and in the course of the forenoon we were in sight of that Island. And it may easily be imagined the satisfaction with which the passengers welcomed sight of the land gazing with outspread eyes & open mouth. It is only now that the Captn.'s greatest

anxiety commences, the making the land, especially if it is the first time, is a far more dangerous undertaking than encountering a storm in the open sea.

Thursday to Saturday
15 to 17th January
1863

For the last three days we have been lying almost motionless on the coast of New Zealand, which is a very fine looking bold coast, trees growing close to the ocean's edge and to the top of the highest mountains in sight. Everyone is annoyed at this being made to wait while in sight of their future home.

Sunday 18 January
1863

A fine breeze sprang up this morning and by noon we were anchored at the entrance to the inlet to Port Chalmers harbour, which lies between two very high headlands & goes by the name of the Heads. Great excitement was displayed when the pilot came on board. His boats crew were natives fine looking fellows and he himself was one of the largest men I ever saw. A Scotsman of the name of Gunn. The passengers crowded round and stared at him as if he had been a chief. We are to lie here til tomorrow when a tug boat will come down and take us to the port. Thank God we have arrived here all well.

19th January Monday

The tug boat is alongside & the anchor is being weighed and all is expectation to get into port. From the papers that have come on board gold seems to be abundant on the Island, & everything at golden prices. The mail for Britain must have passed us on Saturday night which is rather provoking as our great point was to save it. However we have made the quickest passage to this place of the season having run from land to land in 75 days & from anchorage to anchorage in 86. The sail up to Port Chalmers is very fine indeed. Scenery very like that on the Caledonian Canal in Scotland. The Port is about 4 miles distant from the Heads with rather an intricate passage & to add to its difficulties there are two bars one outer & inner to cross which large ships must study the tide. However we have arrived at the Port and the anchor has been dropped. Port Chalmers is a small town of some two or three hundred inhabitants, altho at present I dare say there is triple that number. As a large ship is just discharging a cargo of some 500 diggers, which she has brought from Victoria, which along with ours if they get off today will make rather a crowd. Numerous are the boat loads coming off from the shore with friends of the passengers but no one will be allowed on board until the ship is cleared by the Customs House officer who is now on board. It is passengers not to get off till tomorrow but the Captn. & I have taken a boat on shore, to have a look about & to do some business. Such an ...[?]/race as the colonist are I never met talk to the sharpness of Londoners they are nothing to the Victorians with whom this place seems to be flooded. I think I will drop anchor now for I don't think you will have patience to read this scrawl through. In this journal there is a blank of about a week before leaving the coast of Scotland but that don't matter as you had letters from me after that.

Some notes from the transcribers (David Malcolm & Peter Malcolm), July 2003

This was a fascinating task, not just because we are both direct descendants of William Laurence Simpson, but because it made the lives of such emigrants very real. The journal was intended to be read by the author's family back in Scotland and they must have enjoyed reading it even more than we did; in the absence of today's emailed digital photographs, it was the most tangible evidence of where their son/brother had gone to.

We have tried to duplicate the author's words, phrases and abbreviations faithfully. In some places the hand written words proved indecipherable and we have resorted to an editorial blank or *sic*. In some other places we have doubts about the words, the grammar, or punctuation but have chosen not to change the original.

By today's standards of sexual equality and from our relatively classless society, William Laurence's journal may paint him somewhat as a snob and/or a misogynist. But he was no doubt merely a product of his times and his background. As his later career as a magistrate in Otago demonstrated, he was a very unbiased judge of people and events and was most respected by "working" people. Our only wish is that he had continued his journal and given us a glimpse of his subsequent life in New Zealand.



Photograph of Rev. Robert & Mrs. Simpson and some of their children at the Manse, Kintore,

William Laurence Simpson, Journal of a voyage from Glasgow to Dunedin, New Zealand, 1862-63

Scotland, 1860 (?)

Front row: Harriet, Mrs. Simpson, Jeannie, Rev. Simpson, David

Back row: Harry, William, Isabella, Archie, Anne