

Sources in Local History  
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NOTES ON A VOYAGE  
FROM  
GLASGOW TO PORT ADELAIDE  
MADE BY  
ALEXANDER KENNEDY, 1878

*Transcribed by*  
Audrey Christophory and  
Catherine Woolnough

*with an introduction by*  
Catherine Woolnough



THE EUROPEAN  
ETHNOLOGICAL  
RESEARCH CENTRE

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Sources in Local History  
General editor: Kenneth Veitch

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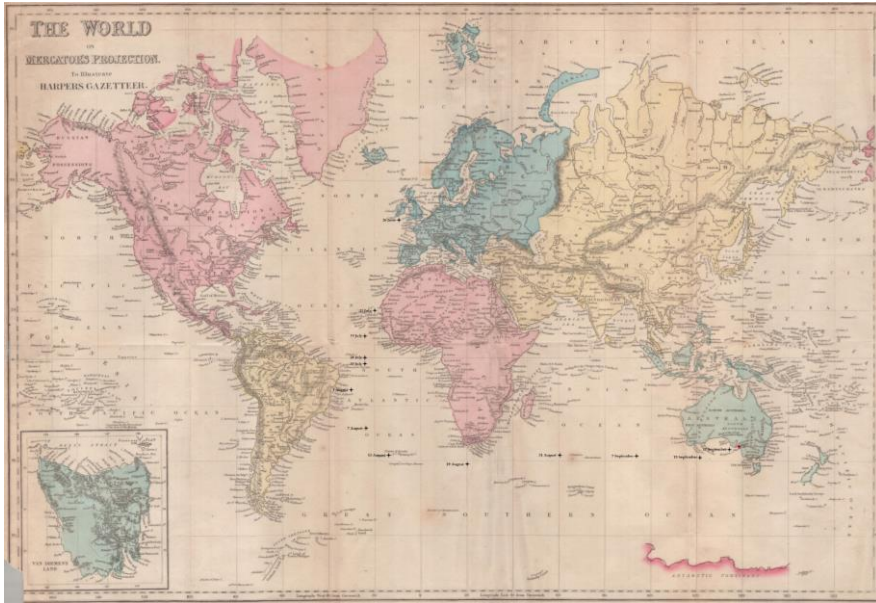
## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The EERC is grateful to the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland for permission to reproduce a copy of Alexander Kennedy's diary. Thanks are also due to Alison Metcalfe of the NLS for providing the transcribers with a digital copy.

## EDITING

In preparing Alexander Kennedy's notes for publication, the original spelling and punctuation have been retained. *Sic* has been used to indicate misspellings, omissions or idiosyncrasies in the text that might otherwise be mistaken for an error in the transcription. Words that are unclear in the original text and have been transcribed tentatively are given as [*?word*]. Abbreviated words (including ampersands) have been silently expanded, and superior numbers and letters lowered. The date headings have been standardised and given in a bold font for ease of reference. Other editorial comments have been inserted in [ ].

## MAP



Map 1. The co-ordinates recorded by Kennedy in his account of the voyage provide a rough idea of where the ship was on certain dates, as plotted on this 1885 map of the world. They show that the *Largo Bay* followed what was known as the 'Great Circle' route, which enabled captains to take advantage of the strong westerly winds of the Roaring Forties. This route took ships dangerously close to the ice zone, however, and to avoid encounters with bergs the captain of the *Largo Bay* was not allowed to go below 42 Latitude south.

## INTRODUCTION

‘The Scots have always been a restless people ... [but in] the nineteenth century their restlessness exploded into a sustained surge of emigration ...’.<sup>1</sup>

Scotland lost more of its population to emigration during the nineteenth century than any other country except Ireland and Norway.<sup>2</sup> Part of a longer-term trend that stretched back to at least the seventeenth century and continued to the 1930s and beyond, this surge was the result of several factors. Britain’s expansionist policy and the consequent growth of empire was crucial as it opened vast new areas for settlement; and it was to the colonies that many Scots emigrated. Unemployment, political oppression, urban overcrowding and rural clearance were among the reasons why many felt compelled to leave. Others saw the colonies as a place to start again, where the prospect of land, better employment, higher wages and freedom from old world social constraints promised a better life. Would-be emigrants, moreover, were increasingly encouraged by those in authority who, having opposed large-scale emigration for many years, now saw it as a cost-effective way of dealing with Scotland’s ‘redundant’ population.

The shift in attitude towards emigration in Scotland over the nineteenth century is most obviously seen in the Highlands. At first, emigration was driven by the tenants themselves, most notably the influential tacksmen class, who had seen their status decline with the erosion of the clanship system and their income depleted by rising rents. Attracted by the plentiful freehold land available in north America, they encouraged fellow clansmen to join them, and soon whole families and sometimes communities were making their way across the Atlantic. Landlords were strongly opposed to this migration, fearing that it would mean a loss of valuable manpower. They lobbied intensively for tighter regulations, which were duly delivered in the Passenger Vessels Act of 1803. The post-1815 economic depression ushered in a period of land clearance, when communities were moved from inland farms to peripheral townships in order to make way for more profitable sheep farms. The original plan was for the cleared population to combine small-scale farming with other activities, such as fishing and kelp processing. By the 1830s, however, many of these new ventures had failed or gone into decline, while a rapidly rising population was putting increasing pressure on already limited land resources. Landlords began to view emigration as the only solution to these

economic and demographic problems, and actively encouraged their surplus small tenantry to find new lives abroad. Many Highlanders were reluctant to leave, however, and continued to sustain themselves through greater reliance on the potato crop. When the crop failed in 1846, bringing suffering and destitution to communities across the western Highlands, calls for large-scale emigration grew even louder and more urgent. In response, the government passed the Emigration Advances Act (1851), which enabled landlords to borrow public money to assist tenants who wished to emigrate. Financial aid was also provided to emigrants by the Highland and Island Emigration Society.

The rural Lowlands also experienced significant levels of migration during the nineteenth century, initially for reasons similar to those that convinced many Highlanders to emigrate: a growing population and an agricultural reorganisation that resulted in dispossession for many and rising rents for the rest. Much of this migration was internal with individuals finding employment in the burgeoning urban and industrial centres of Scotland and England. The post-1815 recession, however, also took its toll on the urban workforce – most notably the weavers – and as the century progressed, an increasing number of both rural and urban Lowlanders sought new lives overseas. These Lowland emigrants differed from their Highland counterparts in several ways. They tended to emigrate either alone or with their immediate family; and wanted to carve out individual careers rather than replicate their native communities. Moreover, while many of them were former tenant farmers or agricultural workers, their number included a wide range of craftsmen, mechanics and tradesmen, most of whom were not fleeing poverty or the threat of starvation but looking to improve their economic and social situation.

North America continued to be the favoured destination for Scottish emigrants throughout the century, but from the 1820s onwards a growing number travelled to Australia. Among the earliest to arrive were settlers who had been given land grants in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. They were followed in the 1830s and 1840s by a much larger wave of migrants who had taken advantage of government and private bounty schemes that offered assisted passage to suitable candidates. Farm workers, labourers, maidservants, shepherds, masons, carpenters, bricklayers, wrights and dairymaids were among those eligible for assistance. By 1850, about 16,000 Scots had emigrated to Australia by such means; and to this number can be added the estimated 7,000 Scots who paid their own passage, mainly artisans, landowners, merchants and others with private means. Scottish emigration to Australia tailed off during the 1840s, only to revive again with the discovery of gold in 1851. Around 90,000 Scots entered Australia in the

1850s, most of them young Lowlanders either hoping to strike it rich or attracted by the wider employment opportunities the goldrush offered. These goldrush migrants were largely unassisted, unlike the *c.*5,000 Highlanders who arrived between 1852 and 1857 courtesy of the Highland and Island Emigration Society. From this period onwards, the newly self-governing Australian states also actively sought Scottish emigrants by employing agents to promote their territories and advertise colonisation schemes. Of the *c.*175,000 Scots who emigrated to Australia between 1861 and 1914, around 40 per cent took advantage of one of these schemes. Our diarist, Alexander Kennedy, was one of them.

Alexander Kennedy was twenty-five years old when he set out from Glasgow one June morning in 1878 to make a new life for himself halfway across the world. Born into a working-class family at Logierait, Perthshire on 8 April 1853, he was the fifth child of James and Catherine Kennedy.<sup>3</sup> A newspaper reported his father's death at the age of eighty-eight in January 1906, saying he was 'survived by 3 sons and a daughter'.<sup>4</sup> Whether or not these sons included Alexander we are not told. A building contractor with a good reputation, James Kennedy was a well-respected member of the local community and an 'ardent Freemason'.<sup>5</sup> The reason for Alexander's emigration is not stated but presumably like other young, single men, he wanted to make a better life for himself abroad and saw the assisted travel being offered by the government of South Australia as the ideal way of achieving it. It may be that like many would-be emigrants Kennedy was persuaded by the success stories published in newspapers or by encouraging letters from family and friends who had already settled abroad.

Today a trip across the world is taken for granted and we can board a plane and land on the other side of the globe in less than a day, travelling in comfort and arriving rested if a little jet lagged. In the nineteenth century things were very different. Travel by sailing ship to Australia took between three and four months, depending on the vessel and the weather. On-board conditions also left much to be desired, especially for steerage passengers, with a lack of sanitation, shortage of food and poor sleeping areas commonplace, especially during the earlier part of the century. The use of steam-power from the 1850s onwards gradually began to decrease the journey time (although sail continued to dominate until the 1880s) and on-board conditions also improved as the century progressed, often due to the work of emigration societies and government legislation. The journey, however, continued to be long and arduous.

Diary-writing was a popular occupation aboard emigrant ships. Indeed, it has been calculated that there are between 800 and 850 extant



Figure 1. *Largo Bay* at Port Augusta, c. 1888.  
(Courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, PRG 13731723)

examples kept in museums, private collections or libraries and that these represent only a small proportion of those which were written.<sup>6</sup> Of the surviving examples, only around 30 per cent were written by steerage-class passengers; and very few were written by women of any class.<sup>7</sup> The extant diaries nevertheless provide precious first-hand accounts of what life was like during the long and often tedious voyage. Steerage-class diaries in particular give a fascinating insight into life ‘below decks’. Most diarists, like Alexander Kennedy, were young, single men with time on their hands and without the responsibility of caring for a family.<sup>8</sup> Entries generally comment on the bearings of the ship, the stars and other astronomical observances, the speed and distance travelled and the sightings of any sea life and birds. The weather, naturally, is more often than not mentioned on a daily basis and Kennedy’s diary is no exception in this respect.

Kennedy started his adventure on Wednesday 19 June 1878. He boarded the steamer *Hero* at Kingston Dock, Glasgow, and with his fellow emigrants sailed down the Clyde to rendezvous with the *Largo Bay* off Greenock. She was towed out to sea on 21 June by the tugboat *Tay* and began her three-month voyage the following day. A three-masted iron barque built by John Key and Sons at the Abden shipyard in Kinghorn, Fife and owned by Hatfield, Cameron & Co of the Bay Line, Glasgow, the *Largo Bay* had been launched on 13 May 1878 and was making her maiden

voyage. She had been chartered by the South Australian government to carry 362 emigrants to their new lives,<sup>9</sup> under the command of Captain Cusin of Dysart. These numbered fifty-seven married couples, seventy-four single men, seventy single women, ninety children (aged from one to twelve years) and fourteen infants. There were only two fully paid passengers, the rest, like Kennedy, were travelling on assisted passages.

Assisted emigration was seen as a way not only of alleviating the growing problem of unemployment at home, but importantly of strengthening the colonies by providing them with a young and skilled or semi-skilled workforce. Its value in this respect is shown by the occupations of those on board the *Largo Bay*, which were listed in the *South Australian Advertiser* on their arrival: agricultural labourers (51); blacksmiths (5); bricklayers (3); carpenters and joiners (16); carter (1); farrier (1); butcher (1); labourers (13); limeburner (1); masons (24); masons' labourers (2); miller (1); plasterer (1); plumber (1); railway labourer (1); tailors (3); wheelwright (1); domestic servants (58); dairymaid (1); cook (1); and nurse (1). It is interesting to note that children as young as thirteen were classed as adults, no doubt because many of them would have had working skills by that age. While the Scottish school leaving age had been raised to thirteen in 1872, some pupils were allowed to leave earlier to pursue training in family trades if they had achieved a basic grounding. Kennedy's occupation is listed elsewhere as 'mason'<sup>10</sup> and he probably served his apprenticeship in the family business under the guidance of this father.



Figure 2. 'Emigrants embarking from Great Britain'.  
From the *Australasian Sketcher*, 1880.  
(Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, b51060)

The route taken by emigrant ships to Australia in the mid to late 1800s took between three and four months, during which time the ship crossed the equator and experienced weather ranging from the heat of the tropics to the bitter cold of the southern oceans. The Suez Canal was opened in 1869 and gave an alternative route to ships travelling from Europe. Initially only mail steamers used the new route and emigrant ships travelling to the Antipodes continued to sail around the Cape of Good Hope. Since the 1850s, emigrant ships sailing to the Antipodes had followed the 'Great Circle' route, which made use of the strong trade winds of the 'Roaring Forties', which blew west to east between 40- and 50-degrees latitude south. Although faster than earlier routes, it ran through some of the most treacherous waters in the world and thus, ironically, emigrants to Australia and New Zealand in the second half of the century were less likely to survive than those on the earlier convict ships.

Upon leaving British waters, ships continued south, crossing the equator about one month later if going well (see Map 1). 'We crossed the line at 12.30 and are now in S. Latitude' (28 July), notes Kennedy. He is intrigued by the way the sun now rises and sets in the northern sky, 'a strange difference from Scotland' (28 July), and begins to see different stars from those familiar to him at home: 'I saw the Southern Cross for the first time', which he believes to 'fulfil the same purpose as the north pole [*i.e.* star]' (27 July). The observation of the heavens is a regular feature of emigrants' diaries and must have provided wonders to many passengers. On Wednesday 4 September Kennedy writes how he was 'up on watch at 2 a.m. and saw two beautiful balls of fire'. This was possibly ball lightning, sightings of which have been recorded at sea particularly during or preceding thunderstorms, although Kennedy makes no mention of such. On the same night, he writes he has seen the 'Elfin' and Seven Sisters, which are familiar to him from home. The Elfin may be the 'Ellwand of Starrs' described in *The Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopaedia* as 'Those three bright stars of the first magnitude ... in the northern constellation Lyra, the harp',<sup>11</sup> *i.e.* Vega, Zeta and Delta, which are visible on the northern horizon in the southern hemisphere at the beginning of September. Kennedy writes of a belief that these stars are the centre of the universe 'round which the planets revolve' (4 September). Esoteric astrology states that the seven solar systems revolve around the Pleiades, and he is perhaps referring to this myth. If so, he might have heard it from his father or another freemason, whose traditions were influenced by esoteric thought.

Ships continued across the southern Atlantic, travelling in a westerly direction to be in position to pick up the trade winds. On 3 August Kennedy noted, 'We are getting on well being in Latitude 15 S. today but

we are very far west near the Brazilian Coast'. On 13 August the three islands of Tristan da Cunha are sighted. He is relieved to see land but seems disappointed as it 'passed like a shadow'. The weather then becomes noticeably colder as the ship travels south, with rough seas and 'swells as high as a house' (14 August). Fortunately, the wind carries them along at a great pace and by 15 August the vessel has travelled 300 miles in a day. Three days later they are at 42 degrees latitude south, 'which is as far as the Captain is allowed to go with passengers' (18 August), and the next day pass the longitude of the Cape of Good Hope. Kennedy relates how the Cape 'was once called the Cape of Storms which was perhaps a more appropriate title than the one used later' (19 August); and the prevalence of both storms and icebergs in these southern waters required an experienced captain to avoid disaster.

Like most diarists, Kennedy makes a record of the weather conditions almost every day. As a constant source of information for the reader the entries reveal how uncomfortable the voyage must have been at times. On 2 July the temperature is 'very hot and registers 80° [Fahrenheit] below deck'. This heat continues for most of July and Kennedy notices 'the pitch boiling up between the joints in the deck' (17 July). The same day he is tempted to bathe in the sea and again the following morning to freshen up. The luxury of a swim in the ocean was usually denied to the women on board due to the preservation of dignity. Personal hygiene was difficult to maintain even on land and people were limited to a daily 'lick and spit' of face, underarms and private parts. Most poor families would have no running water at home and relied on pumps or wells for their daily supply. On board things were even more difficult, especially in steerage with its mixture of hot, sweaty humans, children's dirty nappies and poor ventilation. Hatches battened down in bad weather must have quickly added to the foetid atmosphere.

On many ships, latrine facilities were often rudimentary. Men were required to perch over the side of the ship to relieve themselves, while women and children were provided with basic water closets that either emptied directly into the sea or were flushed out with sea water. Kennedy makes no mention of what the facilities were like aboard the *Largo Bay* but, as the ship was brand new, we can assume a fairly decent provision. Even so, we can only imagine the stench that was a constant companion to the travellers, with diarrhoea rampant (especially among the children) and contagious disease such as cholera an ever-present threat. A further complication for women was their monthly period and this must have been an added trial to cope with at the best of times. No reference can be found

as to how this was dealt with on board probably due to the decorum of the times when ‘women’s problems’ were hardly mentioned at all.

Government regulations for emigrant ships stipulated regular routines of washing and cleaning; and on most ships, rotas were implemented to allow for the cleaning of quarters, the flushing of latrines and the airing of bedding. At the beginning of the voyage, Kennedy writes, ‘emigrants were obliged to take their turn at cleaning’ (20 June), which indicates some sort of hygiene routine, at least to begin with. These routines, however, often went awry as the voyage progressed and conditions became more arduous.

Access to fresh water was a challenge for both passengers and crew and was strictly rationed. The daily allowance aboard the *Largo Bay* of three pints was for both washing and drinking. Some water would have been allocated to steerage for cooking. Kennedy states that sea water is too harsh for washing in as it ‘sticks to your skin’ (27 June); however, there are reports of passengers washing with it using a special soap.<sup>12</sup> Sea water or collected rainwater was used for washing laundry with soap either brought from home or purchased from the captain. Rainwater must have been an important addition to the allowance and Kennedy describes the disappointment when no rain falls: ‘everybody on board had pots and pans to catch the water but all in vain for it passed to the north’ (19 July).

Clothing required for the first part of the voyage could be kept in the living quarters: the rest had to be stowed away. Access to the hold was only under strict supervision, partly because it was dark and providing lights

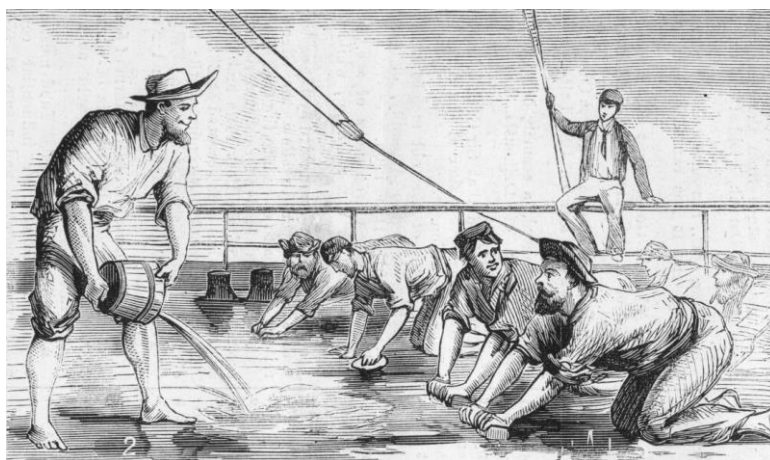


Figure 3. ‘Sketches aboard an emigrant ship’: sailors scrubbing the decks.

From the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1875.

(Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, mp002267)

increased the ever-present risk of fire. On 6 August Kennedy relates that, 'The Captain gave us our trunks and everybody had a look over them'. The contents of some of them were 'covered with Milldew', a consequence of the damp, poorly ventilated conditions in the hold. Clothing for steerage-class passengers was usually made of wool, which was unwashable and generally worn for long periods at a time, although children's clothes were generally cotton. Underwear may have been made of cotton or of flannel, which was less likely to be washable. In bad weather, when washing clothes was impossible, passengers were obliged to wear clothing for the duration of the storms and sleep in bedding which was often damp and dirty. These conditions were ideal for generating illnesses, especially in infants, whose resilience would have been low.

Infestations of lice, which flourished in the crowded and dirty conditions, were a persistent problem for passengers on board emigrant ships. Lice were not simply a nuisance: they were also carriers of the bacterium responsible for typhus. Although this link was unknown until the 1920s, passengers went to great lengths to eradicate them. Outbreaks were kept at bay both with insecticide contained in smoke dispersal or disinfectant powders and with the application of 'lice ointment'. Lice multiply at a greater rate in warm climates and so became more noticeable when emigrant ships entered the tropics. On 15 July, Kennedy worries that 'lice are very thick in the married quarters and will soon be forward'. The spread on board the *Largo Bay* continues until by 4 August the parasite is all over the vessel and 'The great cry on board now is lice-lice-lice'. Kennedy has sensibly packed 'Keatings Insect destroying powder and Camphor that keeps them out of my bunk'. Others are evidently not as well prepared as he remarks that he is disgusted 'to see fellows throw off their shirts and kill a dozen in a few minutes' (4 August). He 'strongly advises' travellers to bring such remedies with them. During his voyage from Plymouth to Sydney in 1883, emigrant Joseph Wrigley recorded in his diary that the lice infestation was so bad that bedding had to be thrown overboard and those affected told to wash in carbolic.<sup>13</sup> There is, however, no mention of this situation occurring on the *Largo Bay*. Rather strangely, Kennedy notices 'it is principally ploughmen who lived on meal and milk that are the worst' (4 August), implying that diet is also a contributory factor; but this may have been a myth as the author can find no reference to this belief. Perhaps a more likely explanation is that the fellows were living in close proximity to one another on board due to their common occupation binding them together.

After the *Largo Bay* rounded the Cape, the weather at first appears calmer and 'the air warmer' (20 August) but it soon deteriorates, and

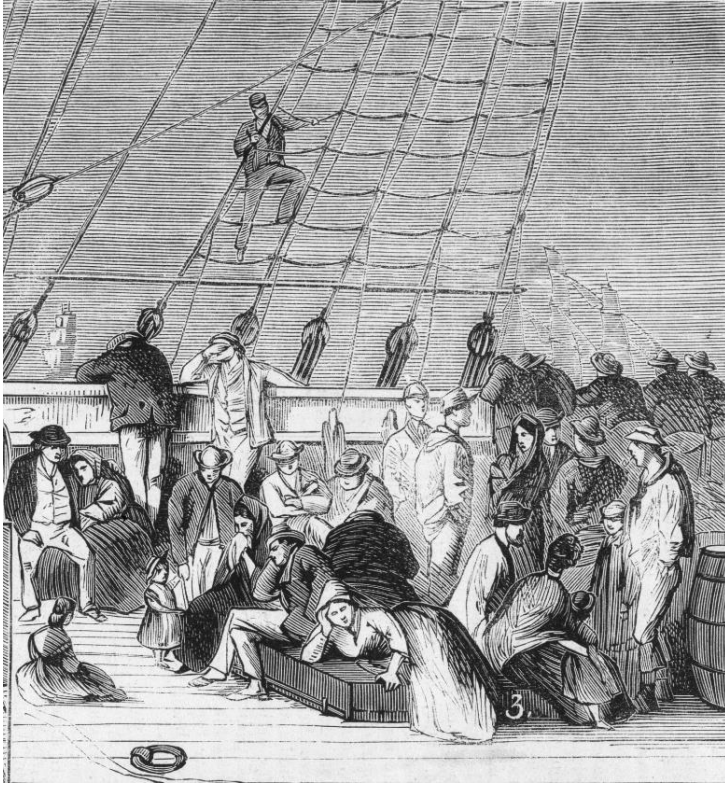


Figure 4. 'Sketches aboard an emigrant ship': sailors watch a passing ship, while the passengers look either bored or seasick.

From the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1875.

(Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, mp002267)

Kennedy writes of 'the sea running mountains high' (26 August). This would have been a terrifying experience and tales of shipwrecks in these waters must have run through the minds of passengers. There is no mention in the diary, however, as to any fear displayed by the passengers. On the following day, 'the hatches are all battened down' to keep water out of the lower decks as much as possible. On some voyages, everyone was confined below decks for days on end resulting in confusion, fear and sickness.

Seasickness in particular affected many passengers, especially in the initial stages of the voyage. To most, sea travel would be a novel experience, and this consequently made for a certain queasiness, nausea and vomiting among those not used to the rocking motion of the ship. Embarrassment was felt by those suffering and Kennedy thinks it comical to see 'dozens of men vomiting at everything they took' (23 June) and appears to be

unaffected himself throughout the voyage. One newspaper report stated that seasickness was 'often used as a vehicle for banter and raillery'<sup>14</sup> and cartoons of the period showed this to be a prevalent perception.<sup>15</sup> Individuals usually gained their 'sea legs' after a few days but this was dependent on weather conditions as rough seas only exacerbated it, with some never feeling any better throughout the voyage. One can only imagine the conditions below deck in bad weather, when seasickness would have affected many, and this must have had a detrimental effect upon the collective morale coupled with physical and mental distress and exhaustion. Did women suffer more than men? Evidence in the diary suggests this may be the case as Kennedy observes, 'There is a great deal of sickness on board and all the women are below' (23 June). Joseph Wrigley wrote that his wife, Ann, is still ill a month into their voyage and finds it difficult to keep anything down: 'Our Ann has a head ache very bad. She cannot eat anything'.<sup>16</sup> Weakness in nursing mothers due to seasickness and other ailments led to an inability to breast feed, which was a significant factor in the rate of infant mortality. Remedies for seasickness included brandy, sherry, caudle (a sweet alcoholic drink), as well as various eye masks and seating contraptions. Kennedy makes no mention of them or any other remedy but being well himself he most likely had little or no interest in the subject.

Passengers on emigrant ships also had to contend with outbreaks of disease. It took a particularly heavy toll on steerage-class passengers, especially the women and children, who were often in a weak physical condition before they set off. Death rates could be as high as 10 per cent and the notorious 'coffin ships' of the 1840s, used to transport Irish famine and Scottish clearance victims to north America, were particularly known for their over-crowded, dirty and disease-ridden conditions.<sup>17</sup> Death rates on voyages to the Antipodes were lower than those to north America despite the greater distance involved. This was in a large part due to privately owned emigrant ships adopting the hygiene and cleaning regulations standard on government-chartered ships. Even so, serious outbreaks of disease did occur. The most notorious case involved the *Ticonderoga*, a double-decker clipper that was carrying around 800 emigrants (predominantly Highlanders) from Liverpool to Port Phillip, Victoria in 1852. A month or so into the voyage, typhus and scarlet fever took hold of the ship claiming the lives of several passengers each day. By the end of the journey (which included a period of quarantine once the ship reached Port Phillip), 168 passengers had died, including 80 per cent of the children under one years of age. An enquiry was held into the causes of the disaster and various measures subsequently implemented. Legal

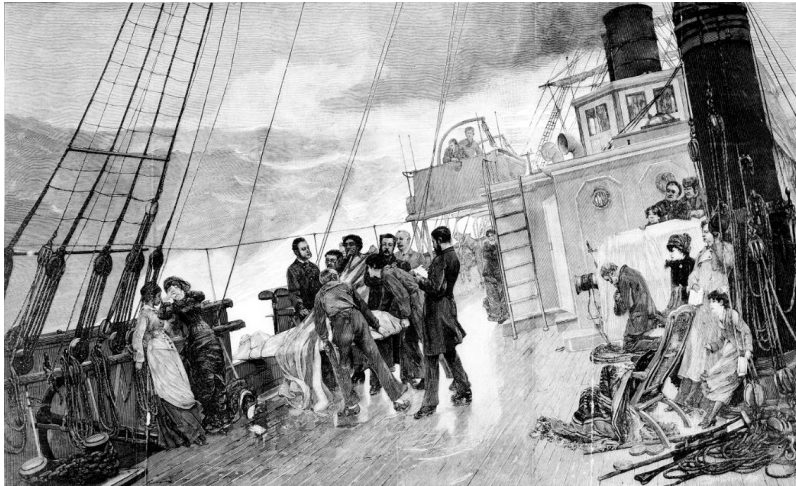


Figure 5. 'A burial at sea'.  
From the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1880.  
(Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, IAN06/11/80/supp)

proceedings also started to be taken against unscrupulous masters of vessels, and together these measures resulted in the gradual improvement in the general health and well-being of passengers. An official report on immigration to Victoria noted that mortality on board emigrant ships heading for the colony had fallen from 5.5 per cent in 1852 to 3.6 per cent in 1853, and that only three of the forty-four ships arriving there required to be quarantined (for outbreaks of scarlet fever, typhus and whooping cough). It attributed this improvement to 'the employment of a superior class of ships, carrying fewer passengers and on one deck only, thus affording better accommodation and improved ventilation'.<sup>18</sup>

Conditions on board emigrant ships continued to improve as the century progressed, especially as new purpose-built ships came into service. These new ships did not escape criticism, however. A report in the *South Australian Advertiser* noted that the compartment for single men on the *Largo Bay* 'would have been a spacious, well-appointed place, but the intolerable nuisance of fixed bunks is still carried out, and prevents that cleanliness and ventilation which the adoption of wood-ended hammocks would ensure' (21 September 1878). Even so, she was a marked improvement on earlier vessels and while Kennedy relates the death of two children by whooping cough (five children in total died on the voyage), he records no instances of any other infectious disease on board, and nothing else was reported in the press after landing.

When illness did break out, it was up to the ship's doctor to do what he could to help those in distress. From 1831, all government-chartered emigrant ships were obliged to employ a doctor; a requirement extended to most privately owned British emigrant ships in 1849. The on-board performance of doctors on government-chartered ships was closely scrutinised, and ship doctors in general were given the authority to enforce regulations necessary to maintain the health of the crew and passengers. In the early years, the doctors employed on emigrant ships were often young and inexperienced and the advice they offered basic at the best of times. Medical provision had nevertheless improved by the later nineteenth century, and according to a newspaper report, the medical staff on board the *Largo Bay* (Dr Cartwright and the matron Mrs Osborne) had 'a great deal of experience';<sup>19</sup> which was undoubtedly reassuring for the passengers who read, or were read, the excerpt before embarking.



Figure 6. 'Sketches aboard an emigrant ship': the ship's doctor issues medicine to passengers.

From the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1875.  
(Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, mp002267)

Kennedy himself generally keeps quite well and describes going about his daily chores and watch duties without much set-back even in stormy weather. 'I have been very well so far and feel satisfied with the ship and food', he reports on 28 June, although he finds it hard to get to sleep in the heat. On 5 July he falls ill but is still able to write his diary and describe a large shark 'prowling about'. He spends the next day in bed 'with a sore head', but by the following day is feeling better. His advice to others is to bring 'a locked portmanteau or carpet bag ... and also plenty of medicines' (3 July) and one can assume that this is what he has done. Along with his fellow passengers, he had also been given lime juice 'to ward away scurvy' (13 June).

In common with some other diarists, Kennedy is keenly interested in the natural world around him, and he makes many entries describing creatures which he has never seen before. His rural upbringing must have brought with it a familiarity with local wildlife in the woods, fields and rivers around his home, although sea life was probably new and fascinating. A description of large porpoises 'and talk of spearing them' is made on 30 June and later that evening he stayed up 'till 12 p.m. and had a right look in the sea' in which he sees 'small globules of a golden color [*sic*]...' which 'glitter very beautifully in the dark'. This is probably the spectacle now recognised as bioluminescence, produced by the glow from millions of tiny organisms and seen usually around coastal waters but sometimes further out to sea. It is at its most spectacular in the warmer waters around the equator.

On 4 July three large whales were sighted passing close to the ship. Whales were seen again on 31 July and 18 August when the *Largo Bay* was in the cold waters of Latitude 42S. These enormous mammals could be a danger to ships if they came too near and Kennedy relates a story he was told, probably by one of the crew, 'where one bull whale sunk a ship' (18 August). They were hunted mercilessly during the nineteenth century to provide oil for street lighting, lighthouses and other purposes. Flying fish were seen on the 8 July and again on the 23 July. Kennedy noted how they fly 'over 100 yards' and are 'very pretty and of a pale green color' (8 July). Kennedy thinks they resemble a 'blue phantom minnow but large and ... have strong wings' (23 July). On the same day Kennedy sees another strange sight: 'A great lot of sailing fish', which he names as Portuguese man of war. Their tentacles can be extremely dangerous, although he makes no mention of this peril only referring to them as 'very pretty of a pale pink colour and sometimes white' (23 July). He gives them another name, 'Nautilus', although this is a separate species and Kennedy's information here, perhaps from a crew member, is confused. However, the sight of the creatures

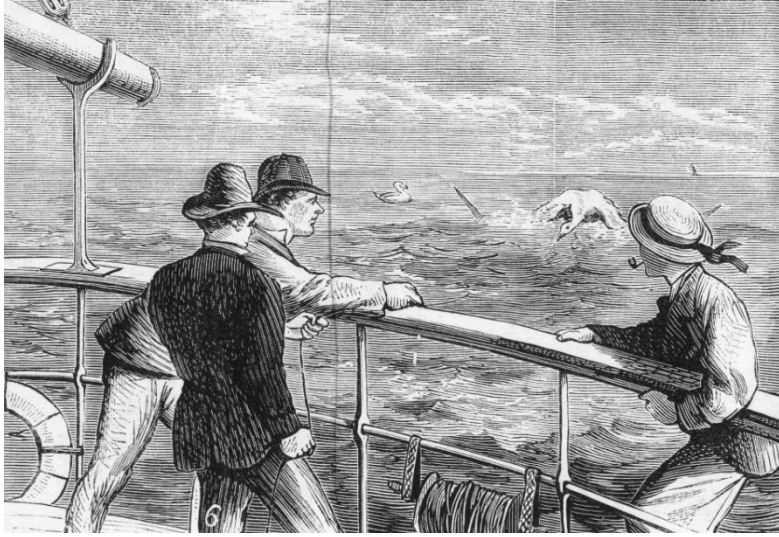


Figure 7. 'Sketches aboard an emigrant ship': two male passengers and a sailor try to snare an albatross.  
From the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1875.  
(Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, mp002267)

brings to his mind a quote from a poem which perhaps he is nostalgically remembering from schooldays.<sup>20</sup>

Men aboard emigrant vessels often whiled away time by attempting to catch fish or seabirds, partly to supplement their diet, although our diarist makes no mention of this. His only reference to catching birds is on 2 September when nearing the island of St Pauls, saying 'The Captain takes a lot [of birds] now and again with bait. They are skinned and the skins are then salted and dried'. These may be Cape Pigeon, a variety seen regularly around the ship in the southern seas. Their habitat ranges from Antarctica in the breeding season to as far north as the Galapagos Islands during winter. Labelled a 'professional' ship follower of the southern oceans, they can circle for hours around a vessel. Captain Cusin or the crew perhaps did a small amount of trade in the skins 'on the side', as according to Joseph Wrigley they 'make a good cap'.<sup>21</sup> Their meat also made a very nice pigeon pie, which must have been a welcome change to a monotonous diet. Other birds mentioned by Kennedy include sightings of 'a black bird with a white breast skimming about' (31 July). Most probably this was a female frigate bird, whose white breast distinguishes it from the male, which has a striking red pouch. These birds frequent the tropics and effortlessly soar for weeks at a time on wind currents in search of food such as squid or tuna and would



Figure 8. 'Sketches aboard an emigrant ship': female passengers pass the time reading, chatting and sewing. From the *Illustrated Australian News*, 1875. (Courtesy of the State Library Victoria, mp002267)

have been a common sight for sea-going travellers on emigration ships. As the mainland of Australia approaches, many more birds are seen such as the mutton bird, the land mavis and the shelvie (chaffinch), all of which are native to Australia. The sight of these birds must have been a relief to those on board, now safe in the knowledge that their destination was at hand.

The tediousness of spending months at sea, especially in calm waters, was alleviated by various sorts of entertainment. As chores were generally completed in the morning, this left the afternoon and evening free for leisure. Some took this opportunity to write a journal of their voyage, others worked on mending or sewing clothing. Later in the evening some found distraction in playing cards. This must have been a common form of entertainment as packs of cards were small and easily transportable and a convenient way of whiling away an hour or so. Card-playing on a rolling ship came with its drawbacks, however, and Fanny Shorter, a single girl travelling to Brisbane in 1884, describes the challenge saying, 'Some of the girls were playing cards – the ship lurched; away went girls, cards, stools and all ...'.<sup>22</sup> Kennedy notes that he amuses himself 'playing card games Euchere [Euchre], Whist and Napoleon etc being great games' (1 August). These are all trick-taking games that require only a small number of players, and they would have been familiar to him from home and ideal for playing on board ship. Sometimes Kennedy played with the crew as well as other passengers.

Dancing would have been an eagerly looked-forward-to entertainment, arranged by the passengers themselves generally within their respective quarters. Kennedy first mentions it shortly after departure when

he had ‘two hours dancing after tea ...’ (26 June). Poor weather must have limited any sort of entertainment, but it seems that dancing was organised regularly whenever circumstances allowed. Single girls, however, were generally prevented from mixing with male passengers and Kennedy records, perhaps to his disappointment, ‘the young girls are not allowed to leave the poop so we had to dance with the wives of the married men’ (28 June). The strict segregation of the girls under the watchful eye of the matron must have led to a more limited experience and they had to make their own entertainment without fraternising with the rest of the passengers or crew. Girls were, however, allowed to take part in singing lessons and to perform in concerts.<sup>23</sup> Kennedy’s remark about being allowed to dance only with married female passengers underlines contemporary attitudes to women, when it was imperative to preserve their moral character at all times. Interestingly, in 1895 women in South Australia were some of the first to get the vote and stand for parliament. The age of equality, however, was still a long way off.

The stormy weather encountered by the *Largo Bay* after rounding the Cape calmed after a few days and the ship ‘is going well’ (31 August), reaching speeds of 13.5 knots by 4 September. Two weeks later the lighthouse on Kangaroo Island is sighted. For passengers who had spent the best part of three months at sea it must have been exciting and an enormous relief to know that their destination was near. The following day the mainland of Australia is ‘seen to the east of us’ (15 September). They anchor off Port Adelaide on 20 September so that the passengers can be inspected and passed for landing by the assistant local sanitary officer. The immigration agent also visits the ship and holds a muster of the passengers. Kennedy and his fellow emigrants finally arrive in Port Adelaide on 21 September. They are given permission to sleep on the ship for another week, but Kennedy declines the offer, noting ‘the lice were too much for me. I got my box ashore also and lived in a boarding house in the Port till I started work’.

Two days after landing in Adelaide, the long-awaited passengers on board the *Largo Bay* ‘were treated to a dinner and concert by the Scotsmen here’ (20 September). Kennedy started work the following day. What that work was we can only speculate. As a mason his skills would have been sought after, and he perhaps found employment on one of the new building projects in and around the city. His immediate start suggests that he had secured employment before setting off from Scotland, perhaps through friends or relatives already in Australia. Kennedy makes no hint to this being the case, however, and it is interesting to note that all the passengers on the *Largo Bay* had found employment a week after arriving in Adelaide.<sup>24</sup>



Figure 9. Port Adelaide, c. 1878.  
(Courtesy of the State Library of South Australia, B 3106)

Alexander Kennedy was one of many Scots to seek out a new life in Australia during the nineteenth century. As Malcolm Prentis remarks, ‘Though [the Scottish identity was] diverse in the nineteenth century, Scots had more in common with each other than with any other British nationalities’;<sup>25</sup> and this strong cultural bond and national consciousness remained with them in their new lives. Although less evident in Australia than in, say, Canada, the persistence of such ties can be seen in the creation of various Scottish societies. It was the St Andrews Society of Adelaide, for example, that provided Kennedy and his fellow passengers with the aforementioned welcoming dinner on their arrival in Australia. The welcoming poem that appeared in *South Australian Register* on 24 September (‘Greeting to the Largo Bay Immigrants’), moreover, was based on Robert Burns’ ‘Scots Wha Hae’ (see Appendix).

Some Scots were influential in shaping the emerging nation, and Scottish names came to the fore in a wide range of fields, from politics, economics and law to religion and education. Lachlan Macquarie, 5<sup>th</sup> governor of New South Wales, has several places named after him, as does Thomas Brisbane the 6<sup>th</sup> governor of New South Wales. Other notable Australian Scots include John Mackay the explorer, William Lithgow the auditor general for the colony of Sydney, Catherine Spence the writer and politician, and prime ministers George Reid and John Fisher. The great

majority of Scottish emigrants, however, have left no trace in the historical records. The men and women who arrived on the *Largo Bay*, and on the many other emigrant ships that sailed from Scotland, nevertheless helped to shape modern Australia, many of them making it their permanent home and one in which their descendants live and flourish today.

Catherine Woolnough

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Harper, M. *Adventurers and Exiles. The Great Scottish Exodus*, London, 2004, 1.
- <sup>2</sup> Devine, T M. *Exploring the Scottish Past: Themes in the History of Scottish Society*, East Linton, 1995, 238. Almost two million Scots emigrated in the nineteenth century, equal to 42 per cent of the country's population at the 1911 Census. Harper, 2004, 3.
- <sup>3</sup> 1861 Census.
- <sup>4</sup> From cuttings affixed to the back page of the diary at a later date.
- <sup>5</sup> From cuttings affixed to the back page of the diary at a later date.
- <sup>6</sup> Prentis, M. Haggis on the high seas: shipboard experiences of Scottish emigrants to Australia, 1821-1897, *Australian Historical Studies*, 36 (2004), 294-311, at 294-5.
- <sup>7</sup> Prentis, 2004, 294-5.
- <sup>8</sup> A rare example of a diary written by a steerage-class family man is that of Joseph Wrigley, who travelled with his wife and five children from Plymouth to Sydney aboard the *Cardigan Castle* (May-August 1883). Although the contents of the diary are very detailed, his spelling and grammar are both poor thereby displaying a lack of education. Wrigley was the great-grandfather of the author of this introduction. The diary is now in the archive of the Australian National Maritime Museum [ANMM], Sydney (object reference 00046090).

- <sup>9</sup> A report in the *Glasgow Herald* (22 June 1878) reports 400 emigrants but this was probably an estimation as the listings give a more accurate account.
- <sup>10</sup> *Passengers in History* website:  
<https://passengers.history.sa.gov.au/people-search>.
- <sup>11</sup> Mactaggart, J. *The Scottish Gallovidian Encyclopedia*, London, 1824, 198.
- <sup>12</sup> Wilson, J. The voyage out – life on board, *Te Ara: the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, online: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/the-voyage-out/page-4>.
- <sup>13</sup> ANMM, 00046090, Diary of Joseph Wrigley, 17 July 1883.
- <sup>14</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, 26 October 1907.
- <sup>15</sup> See the examples reproduced in Russell, R. 'Nausea and vomiting: a history of signs, symptoms and sickness in nineteenth-century Britain', PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 2012.
- <sup>16</sup> ANMM, 00046090, Diary of Joseph Wrigley, 29 June 1883.
- <sup>17</sup> Roos, D. America's first immigration law tried (and failed) to deal with nightmarish sea journeys, *History* website:  
<https://history.com/news/steerage-act-immigration-19th-century>.
- <sup>18</sup> The report by Edward Bell, immigration agent for Victoria, which was commanded by the lieutenant governor and published in Melbourne in 1854, is available at:  
<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/papers/govpub/VPARL1854-55NoA8.pdf>.
- <sup>19</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, 22 June 1878.
- <sup>20</sup> See diary entry for 23 July 1878 and endnote.
- <sup>21</sup> ANMM, 00046090, Diary of Joseph Wrigley, 16 July 1883.
- <sup>22</sup> State Library of New South Wales, MLMSS 5003, Fanny Shorter diary of her voyage as an unmarried immigrant on the ship S.S. Duke of Buccleuch from Plymouth to Brisbane, 3 April-28 June 1884, page 6.

- <sup>23</sup> Joseph Wrigley tells of ‘music and singing on Board’ and of concerts and parties, arranged especially when nearing their destination; and of a special children’s party. There is no mention of such diversions on the *Largo Bay*. ANMM, 00046090, Diary of Joseph Wrigley, 1 June, 5 August and 6 August 1883.
- <sup>24</sup> *Evening Telegraph*, 23 November 1878.
- <sup>25</sup> Prentis, 2004, 296.

Notes  
on voyage of Sailing Ship “Largo Bay” bound from Glasgow,  
Scotland  
to Port Adelaide, South Australia  
Sailed 20<sup>th</sup> June 1878  
Anchored off Semaphore 20<sup>th</sup> September 1878

Alexander Kennedy

**20 June 1878**

I sailed from Glasgow on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> of June per steamer “Hero”<sup>[1]</sup> to join our ship at the Tail of the Bank off Greenock and got on board at 11 a.m. We were told off at once to our quarters – the fore hatch of [*i.e.* for] single men – the main hatch for married and the poop for single women. Our bunks measure 6 feet by 2 feet and we have each a pillow, mattress, blanket and cover sheets being provided by ourselves. There are 350 people on board and the young men’s bunks number 80. There are codes of Rules posted up to the fore-mast in which it is stated that we require to get up between 6 and 7 a.m. Emigrants are also obliged to take their turn at cleaning, watching, etc.

We lay all day at anchor and amused ourselves at dancing.

**Friday 21 June**

We were taken in tow at 9 p.m. by the tug “Tay” to bring us out to sea.

**Saturday 22 June**

I got up at 6 a.m. and on going on deck found the ship in full sail with a light wind. We passed Ailsa Craig, The Mull of Cantyre [*i.e.* Kintyre] and the north of Ireland and I could see the green fields and woods in the latter island. I took a last view of the western islands in the evening. The ship is steering west and by morning we will be out in the Atlantic Ocean. I went on duty at 10 p.m. as night watch man and remained till 2 a.m.

**Sunday 23 June**

I got up pretty early and washed. There is a fine breeze blowing and the ship is going 8½ knots an hour. There is a great deal of sickness on board and all the women are below. I felt rather dull but not sick. It was very amusing to see dozens of men vomiting every thing they took. We had no service of any kind and the sailors work as on week days. I was caught with the tail of a wave and got drenched.

**Monday 24 June**

Very fine morning but towards noon the wind increased which caused the ship to roll very much.

**Tuesday 25 June**

We passed a very stormy night with heavy rain. Everybody is sick and vomiting. I slept very little owing to the tossing of the ship but I don’t feel sick.

### **Wednesday 26 June**

This morning the wind and sea having settled during the night I got up at 7, washed and then had coffee and sea biscuit. After that I washed the dishes of our mess which number 8. We take turns about at scullery maid. We have a fair wind and going well. In the afternoon the wind died away and it looked very fine. I saw a number of porpoises sporting around the ship. A ship passed us about a mile away but I could get no information about her. I was making a plum duff<sup>[2]</sup> for dinner tomorrow. I had two hours dancing after tea and then played cards with some of the sailors.

Cape Clear, the south westerly point of Ireland was sighted from the first landing on mast about 4 p.m.

### **Thursday 27 June**

Wet and stormy, I got up early and cleaned out my bunk. I also washed a pair of socks and had the [*sic*]<sup>[3]</sup> dried by the afternoon. It is blowing fresh and the ship is going 12 knots.

We are allowed 3 pints of water daily for drinking and washing. It is not possible to wash your face or clothes with salt water as it is so strong that the salt sticks to your skin in rubbing.

### **Friday 28 June**

We are a week at sea. I have been very well so far and feel satisfied with the ship and food. We had dancing in the evening, but the young girls are not allowed to leave the poop so we had to dance with the wives of the married men. The day is getting short and it is dark at 9 o'clock. I take my grub and sleep well. The sea biscuit is very hard and I can't grind much of them. We are going at a good rate, the ship made 220 miles in the last 24 hours.

### **Saturday 29 June**

It was raining all night. Saw 10 ships today and one steamer but we spoke to none. I amused myself in the afternoon getting up the rigging.

### **Sunday 30 June**

We have still a fair wind and are making good progress. We spoke [to] a vessel today, the "Albion" from West Indies bound for England with sugar. I stayed up till 12 p.m. [*i.e.* ?12 a.m.] and had a right look at the sea. It is full of small globules of golden color [*sic*] here and they glitter very beautifully in the dark. There were plenty of large porpoises about today and a talk of spearing them.

**Monday 1 July**

The sea is dead calm today and the ship is making no progress. We had a concert in the evening and some dancing.

**Tuesday 2 July**

It is very wearisome to be making no progress. I am very ticklish all over my skin and feel very uncomfortable. The day is very calm with a cloudless sky and very warm. I would advise everybody who goes to sea to take a locked portmanteau or carpet bag with them so that they might be able to have it beside them in their bunk and also plenty of medicines. It is very hot and registers 80° below deck.

**Wednesday 3 July**

I was up at 2 a.m. as I was not able to sleep with the heat below. The sky was very clear and it is nice and cool on deck with the breeze.

**Thursday 4 July**

I saw about 1000 porpoises in one shoal today. Some of them passed below the ship and came up on the other side.

About midday a boy fell overboard. Four sailors leaped in after him and got him up but one of them got his hand very severely cut. I saw three very large whales. They passed very close and played round the stern for a time. I see a good number of ships about us as the wind is very light and they can't get away.

**Friday 5 July**

Not very well. 1 large shark is prowling about and there are three pilot fish with him. They are about the size of a 10 lb grilse and marked black and white. The shark is about 13 feet long.

**Saturday 6 July**

I am in bed all day with a sore head.

**Sunday 7 July**

I am better today. The Captain gave us a sermon at 11 a.m. It is blowing pretty smartly and the ship is going very well. The sailors are a nice lot of fellows and we get on well with them.

One poor north country green horn was sorted nicely today, he wanted to go up the rigging against the wish of the sailors and did go but after getting

## NOTES ON A VOYAGE FROM GLASGOW TO PORT ADELAIDE

half way up to the first landing four sailors tied him hand and foot and left him for an hour – a laughing stock to the whole of us.

### **Monday 8 July**

I was on watch during the night and didn't go to bed at all. The ship is rolling a great deal and lots of people are sick. We have now got the N.E. trade wind and are blowing right away south. I saw a lot of flying fish today; they are very pretty and of a pale green color. I saw them fly over 100 yards.

### **Tuesday 9 July**

Fine fair wind. Very hot. all's well.

### **Wednesday 10 July**

We have still a fair wind and getting on very well. It is very hot on board.

### **Thursday 11 July**

Very hot. Strong breeze.

### **Friday 12 July**

Very hot. I am in a suit of thin canvass [*sic*] but still I feel the heat very much.

### **Saturday 13 July**

We passed the sun today so that it is now to the north of us. The position is 20° North and 20 West. We had lime juice today to keep away scurvy.

### **Sunday 14 July**

Very warm. We had a short service and a debate in the afternoon. I see plenty of flying fish about. A large shoal of porpoises passed today.

### **Monday 15 July**

We are nearly becalmed now and it is terribly hot over 130° on deck. As the sun sets it gets better but still the wind is hot. I think the wind blows off the Sahara and Morocco in Africa. It is impossible to stay below with the heat and I sleep on deck.

There are plenty of hens on board for the Captain's use also a few sheep but they are gradually disappearing before the butcher's knife. We are not troubled with any fleas on board but I believe lice is very thick in the married quarters and will soon be forward.

**Tuesday 16 July**

Very hot and nearly calm.

**Wednesday 17 July**

Today is the hottest day we have had yet. I can see the pitch boiling up between the joints in the deck. I had a fine salt water bathe at 2 a.m. and slept fine after it. There was a kind of concert at the main hatch in the evening. It is dark at 6 and is always the same at the line.

I had a bathe early in the morning. The salt water is very warm here. The sun is perpendicular above us at 12 o'clock.

**Thursday 18 July**

I slept on deck with a sheet about me. A lot of the Emigrants prowls on deck all night. About 1 a.m. I had the pleasure of seeing a shoal of black fish – tremendous monsters. I could hear them quite distinctly breathing when a mile away. They came along side and played for half an hour. The sky is overcast and looks like thunder.

I had a long chat with Mr. Alex Kennedy's friend all in my native tongue.

I see numbers of small birds very like water divers flying about. They are called "Stormy Petrels". I see a ship in sight.

**Friday 19 July**

Slept on deck. The moon is full and I had to cover my head from its rays. It is very calm and the ship is scarcely moving.

There are plenty of water clouds about but there has been no rain on board. I had the pleasure of seeing a very beautiful water spout today. The appearance resembled a spiral screw and I could see the water passing between a very black cloud and the sea. Everybody on board had pots and pans to catch the water but all in vain for it passed to the north.

I saw a new kind of fish today called Albaroes.<sup>[4]</sup> They are very sportive and plunge in the sea like trout. They resemble large salmon very much. We spoke a ship today which proved a Spaniard bound for the Brazils. It is very hot still. We were in Lat. 9. at 12. and the ship going pretty well. There was a concert in the evening but it was very tame.

**Saturday 20 July**

The sky is very black today and I see plenty of water spouts about but they

all keep clear of us. We had great fun trying to spear porpoises but didn't succeed. It began to rain before I went to bed.

### **Sunday 21 July**

It was raining like blazes this morning when daylight came in. Every boat on the deck was full and every body washing away. I got my washing through early. The sea is very rough and two of our sails were blown away.

No service of any kind.

### **Monday 22 July**

I was on watch all night till 2. a.m. I was up early and got my shirts and socks dried so I am all right. It was blowing a strong head wind which necessitates tacking the ship.

We had preserved meal and preserved potatoes also some rice for dinner.

### **Tuesday 23 July**

Today is stormy and wet. I slept 10 hours at a stretch the first time since I came on board. There is any amount of flying fish here. They greatly resemble a blue phantom minnow but large and of course have strong wings. There is also a great lot of sailing fish on the surface called Portuguese Men of War or Nautilus [*sic*].<sup>[5]</sup> They are very pretty of a pale pink color and sometimes white. The sail is circular and I saw one today whose sail measured 6 inches through.

“See the nicely fashioned boat  
O'er the billowy waters float.”

### **Wednesday 24 July**

It is blowing stiff and the ship is taking in lots of waves. There was a death on board – a child 10 months old, it is to be buried in the sea tomorrow.

### **Thursday 25 July**

The child which died was buried. The body was sewed in a canvas bag and slipped out into the sea through one of the port holes. The Captain gave a short prayer and all was over. The ceremony brings to my mind –

“The sea, the blue lone sea has one  
He lies where perils lie deep  
He was the loved of all, yet none  
O'er his low bed may weep.”<sup>[6]</sup>

## NOTES ON A VOYAGE FROM GLASGOW TO PORT ADELAIDE

We expect to catch the South East Trade wind tonight which will blow us away to the south west.

### **Friday 26 July**

Ship in sight. There was a shower of rain at midday which makes everything very cool. I see a shark about now and again after his belly. All the birds are away from us I fancy with the hot weather.

### **Saturday 27 July**

I saw a very beautiful sunset last night it gets dark at once when the sun goes down and no twilight. I also saw the Southern Cross for the first time, it fulfils the same purpose as the north pole [*i.e.* star].

### **Sunday 28 July**

We crossed the line at 12.30 and are now in S. Latitude. The sun rises in the North East and sets in the North west, a strange difference from Scotland. We had a short sermon and afterwards the roll was called.

### **Monday 29 July**

We dismissed our Captain of Mess today, having found him dishonest. We have a strong wind and the ship is doing well. We passed two large ships on the same course as this one.

### **Tuesday 30 July**

Beautiful morning. It is cooler now. Lat. 4.27 S. Long. 25 W.

### **Wednesday 31 July**

I saw a very large whale today just ahead of the ship – she rose to the surface twice and then steered away.

I saw a black bird with a white breast skimming about. It is blowing very hard and some of the rigging is giving way.

### **Thursday 1 August**

The wind is very strong and the ship is rolling about a good deal. The air is much cooler now than it was a week ago and I expect it will be cold enough bye [*sic*] and bye. I generally amuse myself playing card games Euchere [*i.e.* Euchre], Whist, Napoleon etc being great games.

### **Friday 2 August**

It is blowing very hard and the ship is under close reef canvass. A wave

washes the decks now and again which is very disagreeable to the parties who get wet as there is no way of drying clothes.

There was a birth on board today, the second since we sailed.

### **Saturday 3 August**

We had a new moon today and the sunsets are really very beautiful. I never saw anything so grand before.

We are getting on well being in Latitude 15 S. today but we are very far west near the Brazilian Coast. I saw a large black bird today the first fowl I saw since we crossed the line. It is like a cormorant but of stronger build.

### **Sunday 4 August**

We had a fine morning but it is now cold and fresh. The great cry on board now is lice - lice - lice, everybody complaining of them. I very fortunately brought with me some blue Ointment Keatings Insect destroying powder and Camphor and that keeps them out of my bunk.<sup>[7]</sup> It is very disgusting to see fellows throw off their shirts and kill a dozen in a few minutes. I would strongly advise everybody who travels by sea to bring plenty of the foresaid specifics with them as lice breeds naturally on board ship. I also notice that it is principally ploughmen who lived on meal and milk that are the worst. No service on account of the breezes.

### **Monday 5 August**

Nothing new today, good breeze and air cool.

### **Tuesday 6 August**

This is a busy day on board ship. The Captain gave us our trunks and everybody had a look over them. I found mine all right but I saw a great lot of trunks with the clothes in them covered with Milldew [*sic*].

As I was having a stroll on deck last night before going to bed a flying fish jumped in and was killed. It is very pretty with fins as long as a bird's wing.

### **Wednesday 7 August**

We are in Latitude 28.37. We have a fair wind tonight and doing very well. 1 child died thro' the night and was put into the sea in the morning.

I see any amount of Cape Pigeons<sup>[8]</sup> flying about now. They are very pretty, marked black and white and about the size of the Wild dove at home. There is also another strange bird about the ship it is named the Boatswain black with white breast and about the size of a buzzard.<sup>[9]</sup>

A lot of flying fish came into the ship tonight.

**Thursday 8 August**

We have a fine fair wind today and running 12 knots to the south east.

**Friday 9 August**

Calm and cloudy.

**Saturday 10 August**

Still very calm but the sky is heavier and it looks like rain. I had the pleasure of seeing that much spoken off [*sic*] bird the Albatross today. It is flying about the ship quite tame and I think would measure 8 feet from tip to tip. Some have been killed which measured 15 feet. The color is generally red brown and white and sometimes all white. There is also another large black bird about called the Molly hawk.<sup>[10]</sup>

**Sunday 11 August**

Today passed very quietly. There are myriads of birds flying about the ship.

I see immense shoals of small birds called Whale birds they are very like a red shank.<sup>[11]</sup>

It is very cold and everybody is muffled up. A child died today.

**Monday 12 August**

We have a fair wind and we are running very fast today to the east. All the northern stars I used to see at home are gone and new ones are seen. The moon is full tonight and it shines very brightly here.

I was playing at pitch and toss all day for amusement.

**Tuesday 13 August**

It is blowing very hard today. In the afternoon we sighted the Islands of Tristan D' Cunha [*i.e.* Tristan da Cunha] in the South Atlantic Ocean about 37 latitude S 14 Longitude W. They are three in number. Two of them are inaccessible but the third is flatter and I understand there is a number of men who fish for seal etc. living there. I was very glad to see land but it passed like a shadow.

**Wednesday 14 August**

It is very cold now. I can hardly sleep with it. The sea is very rough with an enormous swell on, swells as high as a house. I am always well and very hungry.

**Thursday 15 August**

We are getting along like the Derby Winner, 300 miles in the last 24 hours. The sea is very rough but as the swell is with us it helps us on. It is dark at 5 o'clock and as the decks are always wet it is very disagreeable. Any quantity of fowl flying about.

**Friday 16 August**

Fine morning but black clouds are about and I expect squalls bye and bye.

**Saturday 17 August**

We had a very severe gale this morning at 2 o'clock. The wind broke the jibboom of the ship and all the fore stay sails fixed to it went overboard. We will have to reach our port before it can be repaired. It is still very wild and the sea is running fearfully. Most of the passengers were up all night but I slept like a stone.

**Sunday 18 August**

It is still very stormy and snowing now and again. The wind is from the South East and that causes the ship to take in a great deal of water.

It is now very cold and cheerless. I could not sleep all night with the cold draught thro' the decks. We are in about Latitude 42 S. which is as far as the Captain is allowed to go with passengers.

I saw a large shoal of sperm whales about. They are said to be very dangerous and instances are known where one bull whale sunk a ship. It however killed itself with the blow.

**Monday 19 August**

We had another severe gale today. We passed two ships today evidently bound for the Indian Ocean. We passed the Longitude of the Cape of Good Hope today. This cape was once called the Cape of Storms. I think very appropriately.

I was on watch from 2 a.m. and wearied terribly, it being so cold.

I was dreaming of home last night and all my friends.

“How swift is a glance of the mind  
Compared with the speed of its flight  
The tempest itself lags behind  
And the swift winged arrows of light.”<sup>[12]</sup>

**Tuesday 20 August**

What a contrast between today and yesterday, it is nearly calm and the air is warmer with no sea on but a great rolling swell.

**Wednesday 21 August**

There are some very large Albatrosses about today. One I am sure is over 10 feet from tip to tip. They are very tame and pick up every thing [*sic*] thrown overboard. I see a strange gray [*sic*] bird flying about, it is called a Cape Hen.<sup>[13]</sup>

**Thursday 22 August**

It is very calm and nice and warm but the ship is making no progress.

**Friday 23 August**

Still very calm, whales about.

**Saturday 24 August**

We are getting on better and the sky looks stormy.

**Sunday 25 August**

Stormy with head wind.

**Monday 26 August**

Very stormy in the afternoon and the sea exceedingly wild. I can fully understand now when reading of the "sea running mountains high."

**Tuesday 27 August**

This is the most stormy day day [*sic*] we have had yet. The hatches are all battened down to keep the waves on deck but it is very wet and cold below.

I am housemaid today.

**Wednesday 28 August**

The same old game.

**Thursday 29 August**

It is very calm today and warmer than usual. There was a dance at the main hatch in the evening. I saw the new moon tonight.

**Friday 30 August**

We had porridge and treacle for breakfast this morning, it would run a mile on a flat table without any trouble.

**Saturday 31 August**

The ship is going well. Our position is Lat. 37.15.S. Long. 60.25.E.

**Sunday 1 September**

Passed very quietly. No service of any kind. It was bitterly cold all night.

**Monday 2 September**

If all goes well we expect to see the Island of St. Pauls tomorrow. There are lots of all kinds of birds flying about. The Captain takes a lot now and again with bait. They are skinned and the skins are then salted and dried. The wind is bitterly cold and blowing from the south.

**Tuesday 3 September**

I see two new species of sea birds now. One of them is called the Mutton Bird pretty large and dark.<sup>[14]</sup> The other is very slim but I havn't [*sic*] learned its name.

**Wednesday 4 September**

I understand from the mates that we passed the Island of St Paul at 4 a.m. but as it was dark and stormy I didn't see it.

I was up on watch at 2. a.m and saw two beautiful balls of fire. I also saw for the first time since I crossed the line 3 stars called the Elfin at home and also the Seven Sisters ~~round~~ supposed to be the centre of the Universe and round which all the planets revolve.<sup>[15]</sup> I expect to reach Adelaide in 10 days if all's well. The ship is going 13½ knots today.

**Thursday 5 September**

Some sails were torn up thro' the night with the wind.

**Friday 6 September**

Raining all day.

**Saturday 7 September**

We are in Long. 94.25 E. Everything is very quiet but I notice some of the sailors are cleaning the boats which says we aren't very far away from land.

**Sunday 8 September**

I see a strange bird about a Land Mavis of a dark brown color.<sup>[16]</sup>

**Monday 9 September**

Passed Cape Leeuwin the south westerly point of Australia.<sup>[17]</sup>

**Tuesday 10 September**

Fair wind. Ship going well.

**Wednesday 11 September**

Still going well. Long. 113. E.

**Thursday 12 September**

Cleaning up the ship.

**Friday 13 September**

Going very well. Long. 122.

**Saturday 14 September**

I saw a strange bird today, a land bird I am sure from the style of his flight.

**Sunday 15 September**

It is very calm and the air warm. A bird very like a shelvie<sup>[18]</sup> or Chaff finch [*sic*] lighted on the rigging and is still sticking there. I see lots of porpoises playing about.

**Monday 16 September**

Very calm and warm.

**Tuesday 17 September**

We are in Long. 135 E. about 60 miles from Kangaroo Island. We expect to see it tonight.

**Wednesday 18 September**

The lighthouse on the North west corner of Kangaroo Island was sighted this morning at 2.a.m and by 6 o'clock a.m. we were so near that we signalled to the Keeper. The Island is very large about 120 x 70 miles and the seaboard greatly resembles the North shore of Ireland. Cliffs over 200 feet high and perpendicular skirt the coast which looks barren. A steamer passed in the morning and I think one of the Mail Boats. I saw the Island in the mouth of the Gulf of St Vincent and also the Cape at the south end of York [*i.e.* Yorke] Peninsula. The land there is low to appearance but as it is nearly dark it is not possible to get a proper view.

**Thursday 19 September**

We got on well thro' the night and as morning came I could see the Mainland to the east of us. We got up the Gulf about 60 miles and will be

## NOTES ON A VOYAGE FROM GLASGOW TO PORT ADELAIDE

at anchor by morning. I see any amount of fish, and strange birds flying about. The shore is all wooded and there is little cultivation on the land about. I saw the lighthouse off Port Adelaide before going to bed and will be up with the lark to see the shore.

### **Friday 20 September**

I cast anchor at 8.a.m and will be landed on shore tomorrow. Everybody is bundling up and so am I.

We got ashore on Saturday and I bid farewell to the ship. We had liberty to sleep on board for a week but the lice were too much for me. I got my box ashore also and lived in a boarding house in the Port till I started work.

We were treated to a dinner and concert by the Scotsmen here on the Monday and I started on the following day.<sup>[19]</sup>

## APPENDIX

*A selection of newspaper excerpts relating to the voyage of the Largo Bay and the reception of its passengers in Adelaide.*

‘FREE EMIGRATION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA. THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA GRANT FREE PASSAGES to the following Artisans, viz: Carpenters, Bricklayers, Masons, and Plasterers, and bona fide Agricultural and Railway Labourers, not exceeding 40 years of age (Single or Married), with not more than Three Children; also, to Single Female Domestic. No Misers wanted. All persons who are considered eligible by the Emigration Agent, paying their own full passage, receive a Land Order Warrant of the Value of £20 for every Adult above 12 and not exceeding 48 years of age, and £10 for Children between 1 and 12 years of age. No Money, or Fee of any kind, is to be paid by intending Emigrants to the Local Agents for their remuneration. Full particulars and information, with Forms of Application, to be obtained at the Office of the Government of South Australia, 8 Victoria Chambers, Westminster, S.W., London; at the Office of the Special Selecting Agent for Scotland, 37 Hope Street, Glasgow’ (*Wishaw Press*, 5 January 1878)

‘KINGHORN. – Yesterday forenoon Messrs John Key & Sons launched from their building yard a finely-modelled iron sailing ship of about 1260 tons gross register, built to the order of Messrs Hatfield, Cameron & Co., Glasgow, for their Bay Line, to the highest class in Lloyd’s register. The vessel received the name of “Largo Bay” from Mrs James E. Gilchrist, Greenock. The Largo Bay is to be commanded by Captain Cusin, and is chartered to load at Glasgow for Adelaide.’ (*Glasgow Herald*, 14 May 1878)

‘LAUNCH. – On Monday a large barque was launched from the shipbuilding yard at Abden, Kinghorn. The vessel was named the Largo Bay, by Mrs Gilchrist, of Glasgow, wife of one of the owners. Her dimensions are – length, 220 ft.; beam, 35½ ft.; depth in hold, 21 ft. 3 in.; tonnage, 1200 net; built to Lloyd’s highest 100A. She is chartered for the first voyage by the South Australian Government to take emigrants to Adelaide.’ (*Dundee Courier*, 15 May 1878)

‘AT GLASGOW for ADELAIDE Direct. The Magnificent New Iron Clipper Ship “LARGO BAY,” 100 A1, 1250 tons register, is now actively Loading at Springfield Shed, and will meet with prompt despatch. This beautiful New Vessel will receive Goods engaged for all Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> curt.’ (*Glasgow Herald*, 14 June 1878)

‘EMIGRATION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA. – For many years the Government of South Australia have granted free passages to emigrants from all parts of Great Britain, who have embarked on board ships at Plymouth and London, but hitherto the proportion of Scotch people obtained has been very limited. In order to cultivate emigration from Scotland, the Government of South Australia, under the advice of their Agent-General, Sir Arthur Blyth, established in Glasgow a few months ago an agency for Scotland, and appointed as inspector of emigrants Dr Robert Robertson, who resided in the colony for 20 years. The fine new iron ship Largo Bay, 1250 register, was chartered to convey emigrants from the Clyde to Adelaide, and was specially fitted up for the purpose on an improved system by Messrs Johnson, Gregson, Curry & Co., of London. After taking on board at Glasgow cargo and passengers’ luggage the Largo Bay went down the river on Tuesday in charge of two tugs, and on Thursday the emigrants, to the number of 400, from all parts of Scotland, who had been previously mustered, embarked on board the river steamer Hero at Kigston Dock, under the superintendence of the Agent-General, Sir Arthur Blyth; Mr T. F. Smith, Government despatching officer; Dr Robertson, and Mr William Simpson, secretary for Scotland. They were afterwards put safely on board the vessel at the Tail of the Bank, off Greenock. Mr Samuels, berthing-master, had made all arrangements for their reception, and in a very short time each one was comfortably settled in their respective berths, and left under the charge of Dr Cartwright and Mrs Osborne, the surgeon and matron appointed by the Government to proceed with the vessel, and who have had a great deal of experience. Yesterday, the vessel and emigrants were inspected and cleared by the Board of Trade and Customs officers, and proceeded to sea in tow of the screw tug Tay. Every provision has been made for the comfort of the emigrants while on board. We understand it is intended to despatch another vessel at an early date.’ (*Glasgow Herald*, 22 June 1878)

‘ARRIVAL OF THE LARGO BAY. The Largo Bay is a Scotch-built ship, commanded by a Scotchman, belongs to a Scotch port, and her passengers are Scotchmen. Judging from a few minutes’ careful observation, those on board may be put down as such people as the colony will be benefited by. There was little appearance of gilt or finery about the crowd, but a kind of earnest aspect as if they were ready for hard work. From the report of the Surgeon-Superintendent, the general conduct on the voyage has been decidedly good, although a few trifles such as are usually found at sea have sometimes ruffled the serenity of the passage. The people are in good health, except a few cases of whooping cough, which broke out at an early stage of the passage, and took away five of the juveniles. There were seven births to make up the deficiency, and therefore the increase in number is two. The single girls are under the care of Mrs. Osborne, a matron who has before been here, and is highly spoken of. The midship section has its customary lot of little ones, about 112 children under twelve years being quartered there. The foremost compartment, belonging to the single men, would have been a spacious, well-appointed place, but the intolerable nuisance of fixed bunks is still carried out, and prevents that cleanliness and ventilation which the adoption of

wood-ended hammocks would ensure. Immediately on reaching the roads the vessel was boarded by the Assistant Sanitary Officer, who reported to Dr. Gething; and that gentleman having paid his official visit of inspection was followed by the Immigration Agent, Mr. Duffield, who mustered the people and made such arrangements that this morning the vessel will moor in harbor and the single girls be sent up to the Home. During Friday afternoon several friends of the people on board visited the vessel.' (*South Australian Advertiser*, 21 September 1878)

'GREETING TO THE LARGO BAY IMMIGRANTS.

Scots! wha noo wi' Milne have fed;  
Scots, wham Robertson has led,  
Be carefu' how ye mak your bed,  
For sae ye'll lie on't!  
Now's the day ye hae the power  
Swift to rise o'er fortune dour;  
Haud out your hand, they are na sour,  
The grapes ye long for!  
Wha would be a sluggard here?  
Wha would fortune's buffets fear?  
Wha sae weak as shed a tear?  
Gang back tae Scotland!  
Wha in this bright and sunny land,  
Wi' blithsome heart and honest hand  
Will join our Caledonian band?  
Right glad we greet ye!  
By all the mem'ries of the spot  
Sae dear to heart o' truant Scot!  
We'll stand beside ye while a shot  
Lies in our lockers!  
Then join us tho without the pale  
Of Scotia, "Land o' Cakes," and bail  
With cheers the day ye heard the tale  
O' South Australia!

(*South Australian Register*, 24 September 1878)

'ARRIVAL OF THE LARGO BAY. Several of the immigrants by the Largo Bay appear to have had a lively time of it at Port Adelaide on Saturday night, September 21. A number of them left the ship during the day, but on their returning to her late at night they were from some cause not allowed on board, and were consequently left to the tender mercies of the police, who did the best they could for them. Three of the immigrants who were the worse for liquor, and were too late for the ship's boats, got a waterman to take them to the vessel. This was between 10 and 11 o'clock. On their reaching her side they found the ladder taken up, and they were told they could not go on board. They then returned to the wharf, but before they could mount the landing-steps they fell into the water.

Two of them managed to get safely to the steps, but the third, a man named Robert Winn, had a narrow escape of being drowned. Constable Douglas, of the water police, who at this juncture appeared on the scene, assisted in the rescue, and took Winn to the Police Station, where he was stripped and rolled in blankets, and was sufficiently recovered to leave the Station on the following morning. The Sergeant thought that he had suffered sufficiently for his drinking bout, and allowed him to go without preferring a charge of drunkenness against him. Later in the night other immigrants, some of whom had evidently been testing the merits of our colonial liquors, went to the Police Station and said they had been refused admission to the vessel. Dr. Gething was applied to by the Police, but it appears that that gentleman has only been appointed Health Officer, and consequently cannot exercise any other functions in regard to the immigrants. Dr. Duncan, his predecessor, was Health, and Immigration Officer, and was in the habit of sending immigrants to their ships at any hour during the night, should they be too late for the vessel's boats. Dr. Gething, it seems, has no power in this respect. Sergeant Sullivan was thus left to his own resources. He locked up those who were intoxicated, and procured lodgings for the others at the Family Hotel. A very hard case has come under our notice. One of the immigrants went to the Adelaide Hospital on Saturday with his wife, who was ill, and returned late. He was also refused admission on board the vessel, although he was perfectly sober and had on board a little girl between seven and eight years of age, who was of course anxiously awaiting the return of her father. The poor man had to go to the Police Station, taking with him a folding chair, which he had used while conveying his wife to Adelaide. Lodgings were procured for him also. These circumstances show the necessity of the Government appointing at once a resident immigration officer if they do not propose to give the power to Dr. Gething. We can quite understand the captain or doctor of a vessel of this kind framing regulations for the proper discipline of those on board, but sorely because men return late and the worse for liquor the first day they are allowed to go on shore after a long voyage they should not be compelled to go back to the shore to rove about. There was a constable on board the vessel who could have maintained order with the assistance of those who were quietly disposed. Some consideration ought also to have been shown to those who were sober, and who had no knowledge of the railway time-table.' (*South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail*, 28 September 1878)

‘WELCOME TO THE SCOTCH IMMIGRANTS. The public dinner tendered by the St. Andrew Society as a welcome to the immigrants by the Largo Bay at the Town Hall, Port Adelaide, on Monday evening, September 23, was a striking manifestation of the love of country and countrymen which is supposed to exist in a preeminent degree in all those who hail from the Land o’ Cakes. About 250 persons sat down to a substantial repast, which exhibited a striking contrast to the majority of similar gatherings – there were no intoxicants on the tables. When it became necessary to honor a toast the request was “Charge your cups” and an enthusiastic cheering showed that the lack of what is generally supposed to be a necessary concomitant to the Scotch festive board was no bar to the hilarity of the

company. The Hon. Sir William Milne, President of the Legislative Council, occupied the chair, and was supported on his right by the Hon. T. Playford, M.P., Commissioner of Crown Lands, and on his left by Captain Cussens, of the Largo Bay. The following gentlemen also occupied seats on the platform: The Revs. Professor Davidson, D. Paton, B.D., T. Henderson, and J. Lyall, the Hon. J. Crozier, M.L.C., the Hon. T. Hogarth, M.L.C., Messrs. G. S. Fowler, M.P., D. Bower, M.P., Mayor of Port Adelaide, J. Darling, M.P., Dr. Patterson, Dr. Cartwright, of the Largo Bay, and Messrs. J. Wallace and McCallum. After the more serious business of eating had been attended to, the Chairman stated that the dinner and meeting were the result of the endeavors of St. Andrew's Society to tender a hearty welcome to their brother Scots lately arrived per Largo Bay. The objects of the Society were to help Scotsmen landing in this colony either by enabling them to obtain situations or by assisting them in a pecuniary manner. The Society thought that those who came to the colony by the first vessel hailing direct from Scotland should receive a hearty welcome from their fellow-countrymen in South Australia. He thought that it must have been a glad surprise to those who had come in the Largo Bay to find in this far-off colony "brither Scots" to welcome them. He could assure them that the circumstances under which they had come to the colony were very different to the state of things existing when many of their fellow-countrymen arrived. They had to plant their fields, make their own houses, and undergo other difficulties and inconveniences. He hoped that this colony would become endeared to those who had recently left their native land. It should not be forgotten that all that they saw, the streets and buildings of the city, and the generally advanced state of the colony were the results of less than 40 years of labor. He wanted them to remember that although there were many Scotsmen who had been in the colony for nearly 40 years, yet they still had a warm affection for the Land o' Cakes, the criterion of which was in the present meeting to welcome them. (Hear, hear.) Hitherto the rule followed had been to select immigrants according to the population of the respective countries, and thus very few Scotch, were received into this colony. Now he hoped they would have more of their fellow-countrymen than before. He could assure them that Scotch immigrants had a very high character in South Australia. (Applause.) He did not hesitate to say so, although he himself was a Scotsman, and hoped that the immigrants by the Largo Bay would keep up that high character. (Hear, hear.) They had really come to a land of promise, and were in many respects better off than the capitalists. They would obtain good wages, and if sober and energetic the servant of to-day would soon become the employer of labor. He hoped that the immigrants arrived by the Largo Bay would fulfil all the hopes that had been formed of them. (Hear, hear.) After the usual loyal toasts had been honored, Mr. D. Bower, M.P., proposed "The Ministry." He said that the Ministry of the day was composed of men of talent and ability. As far as possible he supported all Ministries in their endeavors to legislate for the good of the colony. During the evening he had been taunted with not being a Scotchman. In reply he could only say that if he had not been in Glasgow he would never have come to this colony. While he had been here he had fought the battle, and had endeavored to do his

duty. He was sure that they would never regret leaving Scotland and coming to South Australia. (Hear, hear.) The toast was honored with cheers. The Commissioner of Crown Lands, the Hon. T. Playford, M.P., responded, and said the Ministry to which he belonged might be looked upon as rather an old Ministry, gauged and measured by other Ministries. (Laughter.) Ministries in this colony might be looked upon as being very like children. An immense number were born into the world, but many died before reaching boyhood, a still greater number died before reaching manhood, and comparatively few attained to the three score years and ten. So it was with Ministries, many were strangled at their birth. (Laughter.) The one he belonged to had reached middle age, it was nearly 12 months old. (Laughter.) He was very glad that under his auspices the first immigrant ship had left Scotland for this colony. He was also glad that there were so many Scotch citizens present to give the immigrants a welcome. They were the first shipment, but they would not be the last, as he had already given instructions for another ship to leave Scotland with immigrants. It was not his desire to lecture them, but they must be sober, energetic, and saving, and they would be sure to get on. (Hear, hear.) Mr. J. Wallace proposed "The Parliament," and referred to its comparative excellence in the usual terms. He further remarked that the people of South Australia ought not to be satisfied with their Parliament being equal to the Parliaments of the other colonies, they ought to insist on its being better, as it possessed the necessary talent and ability. He would remind those present that Scotchmen in the colony had ever taken a prominent position in the politics of the colony, and he hoped that the immigrants by the Largo Bay would take their position in the political world, and reflect credit on the land from whence they came. (Cheers). The toast was honored with cheers. The Hon. J. Crozier, M.L.C., responded on behalf of the Legislative Council, and observed that when he landed in this colony 40 years ago he thought as little of becoming a member of Parliament as any of those who had recently arrived by the Largo Bay. He had often been beaten in his career, but had struggled on, and had ultimately succeeded in achieving his present position. (Hear, hear.) Mr. G. S. Fowler M.P., responded on behalf of the House of Assembly, and said that that House was but a reflex of the people. A very few months' residence in the colony would give a man a right of voting for it. In this community the truth was constantly exhibited that "the rank is but the guinea stamp, the man's the gowd for a' that." They were much freer in this country than in Scotland. There they had a State Church, and Scottish liberty was often overshadowed by English toryism. (Applause.) He could only re-echo the words which had fallen from Mr. Crozier, that if they (the immigrants) were sober, energetic, and saving, they would be sure to get on. The Rev. Jas. Henderson then proposed, "Welcome to the Immigrants." He observed that there would be no doubt but that that meeting would be criticised by various other fellow-colonists. It had been suggested that by their action they would raise the immigrants above their position; but he did not see how giving them a good dinner and helping them to find employment were opposed to bringing them into contact with the industries of the colony. They were following a well-known custom of hospitality expressed in the saying "a Highland welcome." It was well that those

arriving on the shores of this land should feel that they were amongst those who cared for their temporal and spiritual welfare. (Hear, hear.) It might be asked why had the Society not taken this step before? The reply was that this was the first formal opportunity presented to them. While shiploads of English, German, and Irish immigrants, numbering perhaps 300 each, were arriving in the colony they come upon such reports as the following: 4 Scotch, 2 Scotch, 1½ Scotch. (Laughter.) It often appeared to him that the immigration agents had but a very limited knowledge of the geography of Britain. It never seemed to have struck them that there were large towns with teeming populations north of the Solway. He trusted that the immigrants by the Largo Bay would lose no time in identifying themselves with the colony. If they exhibited that diligence and settled perseverance and enterprise that was supposed to be the special characteristic of their countrymen they would surely succeed. (Cheers.) Mr. J. Strachan, one of the immigrants, replied, and expressed the gratitude felt by all his fellow-passengers for the welcome tendered them by the St. Andrew's Society. Mr. Crosby, another immigrant, proposed "The Health of Captain Cussens, the Officers of the ship, and the Doctor." The toast was honored with cheers. Captain Cussens briefly replied, saying he had been agreeably surprised while bringing out these Scotch immigrants. He had found the difficulties were far less than he had expected. They had been fortunate in their weather, and the orderly conduct and steadiness of the immigrants as a whole was a matter of congratulation. He hoped, if he ever had to bring out immigrants again, they would be from Scotland. (Cheers.) Mr. J. Eunson then sang "The boatie rows" in good style. The next toast, "The Land o' Cakes," was proposed by Professor Davidson in a humorous speech. He remarked that the first thought suggested to the mind was the complete change of circumstances surrounding, the immigrants who had just arrived. They had not even an oatmeal cake in the room. (Laughter.) He thought when going to the meeting that he would like to have a Scotch thistle to bring with him, but alas! he could not, as their destruction was insisted on by Act of Parliament. (Laughter.) He felt sure that the residence of his newly-arrived countrymen in this colony would never let them forget the land of brown heath and shaggy wood, the land of mountain and flood. (Hear, hear.) He trusted that their patriotism, although going out in its full intensity to the land of their birth, would also lead them to love this their adopted land, which would become a home to their children. (Cheers.) The Hon. Thomas Hogarth responded, and hoped that if any slinking lazy Scotchmen had arrived by the Largo Bay they would take their departure from the colony as soon as possible. He had been 40 years in this colony, and would recommend them for the next three months to do as they were told, as they were still very soft and had to be trimmed up. (Laughter.) They had two good specimens of Scotchmen in Sir Thomas Elder and Mr. Hughes, who had each given £20,000 towards the University. (Hear, hear.) Mr. J. Darling, M.P., gave "The Land we live in," and referred to the superior social position occupied by working men in this colony compared with that of the old country. Their knowledge of Scotland must soon grow into a memory but it would be a memory with a very great influence. After 20 years' residence in South Australia he had

gone home on a visit to the old country, and found his old fellow-workmen occupying the same positions as when he left. If they did right they would soon occupy higher positions than at present. He strongly urged them to cultivate saving habits, and above all things not to touch the whisky. (Hear, hear.) The Rev. J. Lyall briefly responded, and said that when he was on a visit to Scotland four years ago he was struck by the absence of home comforts among the working classes as compared to those enjoyed in South Australia. Mr. G. B. Sketheway then gave "The Song of Australia," which was followed by a recitation in character by Mr. McKechnie, entitled "Tibbie Leery." The toast of "The St. Andrew's Society" was proposed by Mr. Jno Ramsay and responded to by Mr. Jno. Clark. Other toasts and songs followed and the proceedings were brought to a close shortly after 9 o'clock by the company singing "Auld Lang Syne." (*South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail*, 28 September 1878)

'EMIGRATION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA. The South Australian papers just to hand contain an account of the arrival at Port Adelaide, on the 20<sup>th</sup> September, of the ship *Largo Bay*, which sailed from the Clyde with emigrants on 21<sup>st</sup> June last. The voyage has been remarkably pleasant, and the people were in good health, except that a few of the children suffered from whooping-cough, which broke out at an early stage of the voyage, and was the cause of the death of five of them, but there were seven births to make up the deficiency. This being the first emigrant ship chartered direct from Scotland, the immigrants were entertained to dinner in the Town Hall of Adelaide by the St Andrew's Society, Sir William Milne occupying the chair, and most of the leading Scotchmen of the colony being present. A hearty welcome was given to the new-comers, and it is satisfactory to know that within seven days of their arrival all had found employment. There is a large demand in South Australia for all kinds of labour, particularly for domestic servants and in connection with agriculture and the building trades. The second vessel from the Clyde – the *Loch Fyne* – will sail in a few days, and no doubt other vessels will follow.' (*Evening Telegraph*, 23 November 1878)

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The *Hero* was an iron paddle steamer, which in 1878 was employed on the Glasgow-Arran route.
- <sup>2</sup> The word ‘duff’ has been underlined and ‘dough’ written above it, apparently at a later date.
- <sup>3</sup> Amended to ‘them’ at a later date.
- <sup>4</sup> Perhaps a mishearing of ‘albacore’ (*Thunnus alalunga*), an alternative name for the long-finned tuna.
- <sup>5</sup> Kennedy is confused here: the Portuguese man of war and the nautilus are two different types of sea creature. His description seems to fit the former’s sail-like float and colour, although the shell of the argonaut (paper nautilus) also looks like a sail and at the end of this entry the opening lines to the popular poem ‘The Nautilus’ are quoted.
- <sup>6</sup> A verse from Felicia Heman’s ‘Graves of a Household’ (1828).
- <sup>7</sup> All three were popular anti-lice treatments: blue ointment, also known as mercurial ointment, was used to destroy crab lice in particular; Keating’s Persian Insect Destroying Powder claimed to be effective in killing ‘fleas, bugs, emmets, flies, cockroaches, beetles, gnats, mosquitoes, moths in furs, and every other species of insect in all stages of metamorphosis’; while camphor was used dissolved in oil for head lice and in alcohol for general application.
- <sup>8</sup> Known also as the Cape petrel (*Daption capense*), it is a common seabird of the Southern Ocean.
- <sup>9</sup> It was known as the boatswain (or bosun) bird due to the similarity of its shrill call to a boatswain’s whistle. It is better known now as the red-billed tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*).
- <sup>10</sup> A mollyhawk is a type of albatross.
- <sup>11</sup> Prions, a type of petrel, were known as whalebirds due to their habit of flocking over surfacing whales to seize the fish that rose with them.
- <sup>12</sup> A verse from William Cowper’s ‘The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk’ (1782).

- <sup>13</sup> A large shearwater, also known as the white-chinned petrel (*Procellaria aequinoctialis*).
- <sup>14</sup> The name mutton bird was most often applied to shearwaters.
- <sup>15</sup> The word has been underlined and a question mark placed after it, in a later hand.
- <sup>16</sup> Mavis is Scots for a thrush.
- <sup>17</sup> There is some confusion here. The longitude of Cape Leeuwin is 115° East, and according to Kennedy the ship was only at 113° East two days later.
- <sup>18</sup> More commonly 'shelfie', Scots for chaffinch.
- <sup>19</sup> The final entry is followed by a flourish, and at the bottom of the page is written: 'Ley's Hotel, Grote Street, Adelaide, S. Australia'.

## FURTHER READING

The original document is held by the National Library of Scotland: Journal of Alexander Kennedy kept during a voyage to South Australia as an emigrant, Acc.10673.

There is an extensive and varied literature on Scottish emigration. General surveys include: Bueltmann, T, Hinson, A and Morton, G. *The Scottish Diaspora*, Edinburgh, 2013; Devine, T M. *To the Ends of the Earth: Scotland's Global Diaspora, 1750-2010*, London, 2011; and Harper, M. *Adventurers and Exiles: the Great Scottish Exodus*, London, 2010. For emigration to Australia in particular, see: Macmillan, D S. *Scotland and Australia, 1788-1850: Emigration, Commerce and Investment*, Oxford, 1967; Payton, P and Varnava, A, eds. *Australia, Migration and Empire. Immigrants in a Globalised World*, London, 2019; Prentis, M. *The Scots in Australia*, Sydney, 2008; Wilkie, B. *The Scots in Australia, 1788-1938*, Woodbridge, 2017; and the works of Eric Richards, including 'Australia and the Scottish connection 1788-1914' in *The Scots Abroad: Labour, Capital and Enterprise 1750-1914*, ed. R A Cage, London, 1985, and 'Scottish voices and networks in colonial Australia' in *A Global Clan: Scottish Migrant Networks and Identities since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. A McCarthy, London, 2006.

Charlwood, D. *The Long Farewell: the Perilous Voyages of Settlers under Sail in the Great Migrations to Australia*, Melbourne, 1983, uses diaries and other contemporary records to evoke the shipboard experiences of emigrants. For a Scottish perspective, see Prentis, M. Haggis on the high seas: Shipboard experiences of Scottish emigrants to Australia, 1821-1897, *Australian Historical Studies*, 36 (2004), 294-311.

Hassam, A. *No Privacy for Writing: Shipboard Diaries 1852-1879*, Melbourne, 1995, reproduces eight diaries written by migrants to Australia, whose experiences can be compared with those of Kennedy. See also by the same author *Sailing to Australia: Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*, Melbourne, 1995, which explores the practice among emigrants of keeping diaries when sailing to Australia.

There are several online resources that tell the story of emigration to Australia during the age of sail. See, for example, Museums Victoria's [Journeys to Australia](#), History Trust of South Australia's [Bound for South Australia](#) and the State Library of New South Wales' [Shipboard: the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Emigrant Experience](#).

Other relevant works can be found in the notes to the Introduction.

# SOURCES IN LOCAL HISTORY

GENERAL EDITOR: KENNETH VEITCH

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