

ANNE GRATTON DIARY
Manuscript 3304
National Library of Australia

This diary was written during the voyage of the “Conway” from Liverpool to Hobson’s Bay, Melbourne in 1858. It is one of three diaries written during such voyages, providing unique insights into the lives of passengers and crew on these intrepid journeys that helped settlers to Australia.

My dear Friends

I am about to make a few remarks on our voyage to Melbourne, it will not be a log nor yet a journal but merely the incidents of the voyage at the particular request of my dear friends. We went on board the “Conway” on Saturday 5th June 1858 and were not a little delighted to get out of the Depot. We then spent the time as well as we could until Tuesday the 8th when we hauled out of Birkenhead dock and went down the river. It was a beautiful evening and many people had assembled to watch us go. It was very affecting to see those who had friends waving their handkerchiefs and weeping as they gazed at them perhaps the last time on this earth.

FANNY DAVIS DIARY
Manuscript 10509
State Library of Victoria

This diary was written during the voyage of the “Conway” from Liverpool to Hobson’s Bay, Melbourne in 1858. It is one of three diaries written during such voyages, two of them on this particular voyage. The diary provides unique insights into the lives of passengers and crew on these intrepid journeys that helped settlers to Australia. Fanny Davis was born on 10 October 1830, married Mr George Ingram Jones in Australia, and died on the fourth of February 1882. The diary commenced on June 3rd 1858.

Thursday June 3:

Having got all prepared to sail for Australia I go to the Depot at Birkenhead to prepare for embarkation. I think such a bustle was never seen. I expected to have found everybody looking miserable and melancholy, but with only one or two exceptions all seem merry and amused at the novelty of their situation though a greater confusion cannot well be imagined.

Friday June 4th:

More people arrive at the Depot. I think they cannot all be intending to go in one ship there are so many. One young woman was heard to say that she would not go although she has traveled a long distance with her luggage, and this morning she is nowhere to be found; she must have made her escape somehow during the evening. All the people have passed the doctor but one poor lad who has got inflammation in his arm – he is not to go – and the poor lad has come from the other side of Dublin and has not a penny to take him back. Each person has two canvas bags given them and are told to put a month's clothes into them as all the boxes are to be put in the hold of the vessel today and only to be taken out once a month to get out another month's clothes and put our dirty ones away. I have been told they would keep us in the Depot a fortnight or more so that I am surprised to hear that we are to go on board tomorrow.

Saturday, June 5:

All very busy getting ready to go on board tomorrow; at eleven o'clock comes the order to go on board – and we march on board. We must have looked very much like the Children of Israel going out of Egypt. We all march on board with a canvas bag on each arm and nothing is allowed to go on board but what they [the canvas bags] will contain so that many of the people are obliged to leave sundry things behind, such as baskets and large jars. First the English go on board, then the Scotch; after them the Irish. Next come the married women who have children with them and are going out to their husbands; after them the married men and their wives and families, and last of all the single men. Nearly all the single women sit down and have a good cry the first thing, and I feel very much inclined to join them; but first ask myself what there is to cry about and as I cannot answer it to my own satisfaction, think it would be very foolish so begin to put things in order in our berths. The name of each person is written on a card and nailed to the front of the berth which is appointed to them, which is a very good plan as it saves a good deal of bother. I am glad that my berth is at the bottom of the main hatchway as we shall all be right for air in the hot weather, besides the nice light it gives. There are two persons in each berth. I have got a very nice agreeable companion by the name of Miss Wellington, a native of Penzance in Cornwall. (Contd)

I am appointed captain of the Mess; that is to make all the things ready for cooking for eight people and to attend at the storeroom when the stores are given out. In my Mess I have of course myself and Miss Wellington, two sisters likewise from Cornwall are going out to be married, and one more Cornish girl who is going to be married to a man she has never seen. She has been recommended by friends. And one little married woman with no children going out to her husband, and a young girl who is going out to her mother and step-father who she has never seen. I hope they will all be agreeable and then we shall get along nicely. The commissioners came on board and said we could all go out for the day if agreeable to us.

Sunday, June 6:

Left the Depot at ten o'clock to go the Paalton to spend the day. It was such a treat to me – I shall never forget the kindness of all there if I live an hundred years. At parting I could not find words to express my thanks and was very much afraid that they would think me ungrateful, but they would not think so if they knew what was in my heart.

Monday, June 7:

We all got nicely to rights and the Matron of the Depot came to spend the day with us and in the evening wished us all good-by thinking we should sail the next morning. The commissioners came to inspect the vessel and express their satisfaction at all the arrangements and at the respectable appearance of the emigrants.

Tuesday, June 8:

All in suspense expecting to sail and the day wears away but no Captain makes his appearance – we have not seen him yet.

Wednesday 9th

Very wet morning but it cleared up during the day. All very anxious to be off, the muster roll called us and the rules read. We then had to go on deck whilst the officers looked if there were any stow-aways, the steamer then went away, took letters and Government Inspectors to whom we gave three heart cheers. We could no help feeling it deeply as the Gentlemen took off their hats in return and wished us a pleasant voyage. In the evening we all felt rather dull and disappointed as we fully expected to sail today.

Thursday 10th

Many rumours as to whether we shall go today or not, received letters from our dear friends and hear that they are to be the last at present. The Steamer has come to tug us out on our long voyage. We all assembled on deck to take a long farewell of our dear and native land. We had some very appropriate songs sung by the young ladies who all appeared very merry.

Thursday, June 10:

The morning passes and still no signs of us sailing – four o'clock in the afternoon a steamboat comes alongside with the Captain and soon all is hurry and bustle as the Captain has the old-fashioned superstition about it not being lucky to sail on Friday so they fix the steamboat on to the ship and off we go

Friday 11th

This morning all or nearly all felt the effects of a night's shaking at sea which lasted through the day. The packet left us a 2 o'clock called for letters but many were too ill to write. We are now left to the mercy of the wind and waves. The Doctor visits us often and tells us to keep on deck as much as possible which we find much the best. It is a splendid evening and we are making about two knots per hour. The sea looks magnificent and we are out of sight of land.

Friday June 11:

We have lost sight of land but the steamboat has not left us – about noon the steamboat leaves us and now our vessel has got to make its own way over the pathless deep.

Saturday 12th

Awoke about one o'clock with the most deafening thunder I ever heard. It appeared to roll on the water and explode around our ship. The rain descended and the lightning was terrific. Many of the young ladies were much frightened and got up to read and pray. We were all very thankful when it passed over and again went to sleep and passed a very quiet day not making much progress about six knots per hour. We have been on board one week and are very happy and comfortable. We have to get up early, each one folding up their bed clothes and roll up the mattress, sweep out her own Berth. Then we take it in turns for cleaning out the Cabin. Wednesdays and Saturdays it is scoured and the rest of the week, swept and rubbed with a stone and with sand, all done before breakfast at 8 o'clock. This evening they gave us raisins and flour and suet. Tornake our puddings ready for tomorrow.

Sunday, June 12: [13th the date appears to be an error]

We all went to bed last night expecting to have a comfortable night but we had hardly got to sleep when we found our troubles were not yet at an end for the wind rose very high and poor me, among the rest, began to feel very funny towards morning. It turns out I am seasick; I do not feel very bad only when the fits of sickness come on, and I am the only one except Miss Wellington out of twenty who is able to crawl out of bed in the course of the day long enough to get a cup of tea and then go back to bed again. Some of the people are nearly dead with seasickness, they reach so violently and with little intermission.

Monday, June 13:

All still very ill and the sailors are obliged to come down with buckets of water and mops and clean our apartment up as there is no one able to do the least thing but lay in bed and groan. I am much better and think I shall not be sick any more. The Doctor says if we can keep up we shall be much better, so I mean to try what I can do. The wind keeps very high.

Tuesday 13th

Awoke this morning by the tremendous rolling of the ship which continued all day. Never shall I forget what poor objects we looked, being all sick, our nice dinner of boiled pork and plum dough was never tasted, but was rolling in all directions up and down the cabin floor. Such was our first Sunday at sea. Went to bed early but not to sleep. About 12 o'clock we skipped a sea and the water poured down the hatchways by bucketsfull. I shall not attempt to describe it, as it would be impossible to convey any idea of our feelings. Some of the young ladies screaming and some jammed up the hatchway calling for officers to be let out. Our waterbarrels were rolling from side to side and our teapots, plates and cooking utensils adding to the confusion by bouncing down one after another. At length our shrieks brought the Captain and Doctor into the Cabin. It was really amusing to see the poor frightened creatures clinging to them crying pitifully, "Oh are we in danger," "Do let us out." I shall not forget their kindness and sympathy. I felt very frightened but did not get up and succeeded in persuading Mrs. Dyer to remain in also because I felt that we were just as safe in the berth and it would only add to the confusion to be running about in the wet.

Tuesday, June 14:

Of all the nights we have had yet, last night was the worst. The wind rose to a perfect hurricane; they fastened down the hatches but that did not prevent the water making its way down to us and, to make the matter worse, the ship began to leak in under the bottom berths under us and the carpenter had to be sent for in the middle of the night to stop it, and the waves washed over the deck the whole night. All at once there was a cry that we were sinking and, or course, that added to the general confusion and many were on their knees praying who had perhaps never thought on the name of God before, and the Matron was as much frightened as the rest. She did so beg to be let out on deck. I suppose she thought that she would be safer if the vessel went down up there. I don't know how it was that I was not at all frightened, but I felt that there was One able to calm the tempest and it seemed as if somebody whispered "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed for I am thy God" and I tried to comfort the others. About the height of the tempest we heard a rush of feet on deck and the cry of a man overboard. We all listened breathlessly but could hear no more.

Tuesday 15th..

The Doctor ordered us all on deck this morning. Those who were not able to walk were carried and laid there, indeed we presented a fine picture. No one can form any idea of sea sickness, we care for nothing, nor one, only let us alone. We should certainly lie and die, well here we lay until evening, having nothing but a drink of arrowroot and wine, we were then helped down again and to bed.

Wednesday, June 15:

It was, alas, too true that a fine young man, one of the sailors, washed out of the rigging. They say he must have broken his back against the side of the vessel as he fell in the water; but it is so dreadful to think he cried out three times for the life-buoy to be thrown out to him, but the tempest was so high that they could not make the least attempt to save him. It has cast a gloom over the whole ship. His chest has been taken to the Captain this morning and he had in it the likeness of his father, mother and sweetheart. He seemed the most respectable man amongst all the sailors.

¹ The Captains Log records the following: "Elias Anderson while going aloft to let the close reef out the fore topsail fell from the Fore Top struck the Top gallant rail and fell overboard. The life buoys were thrown overboard, as I felt quite certain the Life Boat would not swim in the heavy breaking sea that was running I did not order men into the boat but asked for volunteers but only one man volunteered and so the boat was kept fast. Official Log Book, BT 98 6427.

Wednesday 16th

Passed a very quiet night and felt more comfortable although I cannot say well. We are again helped on deck and soon begin to feel better and the first time since Saturday was tempted to taste dinner, boiled pork and pickles. We were much pleased in the evening to see them signal a fine looking ship from the West Indies homeward bound, no doubt she will report us. What a treat to our friends. We also saw a great many porpoises rolling about in the Atlantic Ocean, where they tell us we now are. The moon too has made its appearance, our first at sea.

Thursday, June 16:

The wind has fallen very much. Many of the people keep very ill. I am alright again – it was a great mistake me being ill as I did not mean to be. The wind is not at all fair for us.

Thursday 17th

We are afraid we are not making much progress. Some say one of two miles an hour, others not that, it is beautiful weather and we enjoy ourselves first rate on deck, where we are almost together. I wish I could say the same about our food, but oh that is a stale game, salt junk, preserved cabbage, preserved potatoes for dinner today. I need not say there was not much eaten, the biscuits too are horrible.

Friday, June 17:

A very fine morning but many of the people seem worse. I expect the frights they have gone through have something to do with it. A girl ordered to keep below for a week for speaking to one of the sailors as it is against the rule.

Friday 18th

Do not feel at all well this morning – not used to the ship life, we had a good dinner today, preserved beef made into a pie. Sewed fancy work on deck this afternoon and got a loaf and some Scarboro butter for tea. We are not making much progress, about four knots an hour.

Saturday 19th

Wet and squally could not sit to work on deck. Got very sick again. Doctor came down to inspect our dinner. Said it was not fit for a dog. Salt junk and rice not half boiled. He gave the cook a lecture about it.

Saturday, June 18:

Some of the people are a little better today, but I hope they will not all get well at once as they are so hungry after it, that there will be a famine if they all get as hungry as me, for I can eat more than my share. A sailor sent up aloft all day for speaking to one of the young women.

Sunday 20th

Fine morning. We had prayers on deck, read by the Schoolmaster and also a sermon. I think I may say we all joined heartily in the responses and the singing was much better than anyone would imagine. I for one will long remember how much I enjoyed our first Church Service on board. We had a first rate dinner, boiled pork, plum dough, preserved carrots. We had also a birth on board, a fine Boy, a young Conway.

Sunday, June 19:

All the Catholics held their service downstairs, and prayers being read by one of the young women. We had ours on deck, service being performed by the schoolmaster; and I believe it is to be the same every Sunday. We begin Sunday by getting up at six o'clock. By the time I am dressed it is time to take the water keg on deck to get it filled with fresh water, then after that to take a can for the porridge for breakfast, then we go to the storeroom for the bread; after that we take the coffee pots to get them filled, and sit down to breakfast.

The Captains Log for 21 June indicates that Elizabeth McLachlan had a son.

After breakfast I have to make the plum pudding and take it down to be baked, the materials for which is always given out on Saturday afternoon as is also the pork which have to put in a net and take to the cook as it lays in fresh water to soak till Sunday morning. After the pudding is gone to the bakehouse I tidy myself and at ten o'clock the names are all called over the Doctor and at halfpast ten our service begins. We begin by singing a hymn and then the schoolmaster reads the morning prayers from the Church Service, then we sing again; after that he reads a sermon and concludes with singing. Then we go and put the tables ready for dinner and at one o'clock the captain at each mess goes on deck and gets the pork first, then the boiled puddings then the baked puddings, a portion of preserved vegetables for each mess and a can of peasoup, and then we fall to with good appetites and always enjoy our dinner. After dinner we take our books on deck and either read or go to sleep which we like. Tea at five, and then take a shawl for fear of cold and stop on deck till half past eight. Just as prayers were about to commence this morning one of the married women had a son and heir. He is to be called "Conway" after the ship. They were all in high glee as they said it brings good luck and a fair wind to have a birth on board. We all laughed at the idea but it proved true for in the evening the wind changed and we had it much fairer than it has been since we sailed. The birth might not have had anything to do with it.

Monday 21st

A fine morning with a light but fair wind passed a very pleasant day, had dancing on the poop in the evening. One of the young ladies played an accordion. It is indeed annoying¹ to see how some appear to enjoy it, some singing songs, others hymns, others playing at some game. It is also hard to convey any idea how unpleasant it is for those who do not feel well enough to enjoy it.

Tuesday 22nd

Sea mountains high this morning, we had made ninety miles last night and are now leaving the Bay of Biscay with a fair wind making ten knots an hour. We are rolling tremendously from side to side. It is quite a task to keep things on the table.

Wednesday 23rd

We have made seventy miles last night and are now making eight knots per hour. The sea looks magnificent. It is impossible to describe it, rising like huge rocks and then breaking into the most exquisite colors, dark and light blue with the most splendid white spreading around.

Monday, June 20:

The wind still fair – all the sails set – much warmer today. Young Conway and his mother both doing well.

Tuesday, June 22:

Still a fair wind. I have been sitting looking over the stern of the vessel at the seas; never saw anything so beautiful, the waves are like mountains and the colors of them most magnificent, I enjoyed it above everything. After dinner the Captain tells us we have just finished passing through the Bay of Biscay – he did not tell us till we were well out of it as the place has an evil name. The ship is flying through the water. Lots of dancing on deck in the evening – only a few still seasick.

Wednesday, June 23:

The wind and waves still very high but fair for us. Whilst we are at breakfast the ship gives a roll and over come the teapots full of coffee into my lap, followed by everything else on the table. It gives us all a good laugh. A little boy fell down the hatchway and hurt his head very badly.

Thursday 24th

We find it very much warmer today, but we have still thank God a fair wind. The muster roll is always called over on Thursday, a great deal of sickness still prevails. It is astonishing to see the different characters there are amongst us, some very kind and agreeable and others as disagreeable. The Misses Merigan have proved very deceitful. They mix and talk to everyone on board so that we are obliged to be very distant from them.

Friday 25th

This is the best day we have had. We are making twelve knots per hour, it is very hot and we perceive the days are getting very short. It is dark by 8 O'clock in the evening. We then have to go below. It is very amusing to see the different groups assembling for prayers. As we have no fixed prayers, we all have our own, the Catholics in one part, the Methodists in another, and the Protestants. I think I may say our mess is the head of them, as I am generally called to read a chapter in the Bible and another to read the prayers, whilst those who profess no religion talk, laugh, sing and make as much noise as ever they can to annoy us.

Thursday, June 24:

A very fine day – all on deck the whole of the day – everybody seems happy, and a more industrious set I never saw. There is enough embroidery in hand to stock all Melbourne. The days pass so fast and pleasantly it is like a dream. In the evening I generally read a long story to about a dozen whilst they work. There are only two people in the hospital; that is Conway's mother and Scotch woman who has a low fever through violent seasickness.

Friday, June 25:

Another fine day; the wind still fair for us. Since the birth of Conway we go about two hundred and forty miles in twenty-four hours. It is getting very hot, but we shall have it hotter before long as we get nearer the "line." The days have drawn in an hour since we left England.

Saturday 26th

We are making about seven knots per hour. Had to scour our cabin today and in the evening make our pudding ready. We heard them signalling a ship after we were in bed.

Saturday, June 26:

Another fine day. After we got to bed last night we were somewhat alarmed at hearing guns firing seemingly close to our vessel and some of the faint-hearted ones began to cry out the pirates had come; but we heard some of the sailors say a large ship was passing full sail. That is all we can hear about it as they keep things very close.

Sunday 27th

Prayers on the Poop, the men occupying one side and the women the other. It is very hot, we are near the Canary Islands making seven knots per hour. Today the sea looks like blue vitrol. It is calm as a fish pond, not a wave to be seen. It is very beautiful to see the ship cutting through the blue glassy surface.

Sunday, June 27:

All up at six – it is now too hot to lay in bed. I am very glad to be able to get on deck for a little fresh air for it is very near suffocating down below though the hatches are left with only iron bars over them all night. At half past ten we all assemble on the poop for prayers.

Monday 28th

There is an awning put over the Poop and I think I may picture us sitting in a large Gypsy's tent in all directions. It is very hot and we think we are not far from the line. We enjoyed our tea on deck this afternoon and afterwards had a Dance.

Monday, June 28:

Very hot – almost a calm – have an awning put up over the whole of the deck and stay on deck all day. It begins to turn the color of our skins – we shall all be black soon if the sun gets any hotter.

Tuesday 29th

We are making six knots still very hot, but everything is done that can be done for our comfort and happiness. We now have to stay on deck till 9 o'clock to enjoy the cool air. There is not half the strictness I expected to find but the most respectable are soon signaled out by the Doctor and Captain who are extremely kind and show us many favors. I would here say to anyone coming out, you cannot keep too respectable. It is impossible to describe the deceit and slander carried on amongst two hundred and eighty females. I am thankful that I chanced to get into such a respectable mess. The Doctor said we are a credit to this corner of the ship and anything we want we shall have by going quietly to him.

Tuesday, June 29:

Another very hot day, not a cloud to be seen. We always stay on deck till nine o'clock and it keeps us amused to watch the stars as we approach the tropics – they are much larger than in England.

Wednesday 30th

All up early this morning. We are to have our boxes up to take out another month's supply. Glad to find everything in good condition, except my nice Soda loaf, long gone mouldy. The rest of my things in good order. I find them a great treat, especially biscuits, gingerbread and marmalade. I regret that I did not bring some cheese, as it does not want cooking and being so many of us we cannot always get ham cooked. When we could eat it sometimes we take it and never get it back it all. At 12 o'clock we were on the Tropic of Cancer and making ten knots an hour.

Wednesday, June 30:

All in a bustle as all the boxes that are marked "wanted on the voyage" are brought out of the hold for us to put by our dirty clothes and get out clean ones for another month. We are not to have any dinner till we have finished and all the boxes put back in the hold. In the evening it blows a gale; I do not expect much sleep tonight – I can never sleep when the wind blows much. To add to our anxiety there is a large ship in sight coming towards us.

Thursday 1st July

We have made two hundred and ten miles in the last twenty-four hours and are now making from nine to ten knots. The sailors say there must be some good people on board as we are favored with such beautiful weather. It is very hot but they say not nearly as hot as they have had it. Got the trade winds, felt very languid and at night got very sick and ill again.

Thursday, July 1:

The winds still very high; I have not closed my eyes all night, the vessel rocked like a cradle. They say it is the Trade Wind. We are going nine miles an hour. The wind has been fair for us ever since young Conway was born. A boy locked up for carrying messages from the sailors to the single women.

Friday 2nd

Made one hundred and ten miles last night. Many of the young people very ill from the effects of the heat. Some of them are constantly fainting, others going into hysterics.

Friday, July 2:

A very high wind all night. We have gone two hundred and forty miles since twelve o'clock yesterday, but it was at the expense of my good night's rest. A boy had to stand sentry outside the Captain's door for four hours with a large piece of wood on his shoulders to imitate a musket for not keeping himself clean. The high wind has made many of the people seasick again, but I am thankful to be able to add that I was never better.

Saturday 3rd July

We are now on the Verde Islands. Still very hot, we saw a great many flying fish which in the darkness have the appearance of sparks in the water and look very beautiful. We knelt by the side of the ship and watched them for a long time. The evening is now the pleasantest part of the day altho quite dark at seven o'clock. We stay on deck till nine o'clock. It is very amusing to see how some of them enjoy it. I am reminded of a country village feast, all appear so happy and never think of any danger.

Saturday, July 3:

Spend the day on deck. Many of the people, having got quite over the seasickness begin to be industrious.

Sunday 4th

We have made three degrees the last twenty-four hours. Sighted a ship but at a great distance. I cannot help but remark how the glorious Sabbath reminds me of home, everything and every body looks clean and different. Then we have our Church service in the morning and then our good dinner of Plum pudding and boiled pork, which we look forward to as a great treat. We had a very heavy but refreshing shower of rain in the afternoon and were afterward becalmed for the rest of the day. We almost fancied ourselves at home to Tea as we had our own tea and currant loaf. We manage our cooking first rate. We have bread three times a week and the other days we contrive to make a loaf with a little butter and sugar and carbonate of soda for we really cannot eat the biscuits.

Sunday, July 4:

A full morning. At dinner-time we have a taste of tropical rain; it comes down in a stream and we despair of getting on deck any more today; however it clears up about four o'clock, and after tea we spend the evening on deck. A young woman fell down the hatchway and disfigured her face very much.

Monday 5th

It is still a dead calm. There is something very solemn in this. Not a single wave or the least breeze and our ship standing quite still. It is also intensely hot and it is with great difficulty we can keep ourselves clean as there are some filthy people on board and I am sorry to say the unwelcome travellers have found their way to our part of the ship and scenes at bed time are beyond description. I do not think I ever saw such a lovely sunset as we had tonight, it appears like a large ball of fire sinking into the water and left the clouds looking like beautiful landscapes tinted with gold.

Monday, July 5:

A dead calm and so hot we can scarcely bear any clothes on our backs and we are fast approaching the "line." After tea there is every appearance of a storm, the sky looks all in a blaze except where the black clouds intervene and though it is dead calm the vessel rolls from side to side like a cradle. The vessel does no rock near so much in rough weather as the waves keep it up. At seven it comes on to rain and we all go helter-skelter to get down out of it. They say water spouts are of frequent occurrence here, but we escape both that and the expected storm. But we have a complete deluge of rain and it is so hot downstairs that we are afraid to go to bed; however we do go about ten o'clock but we lay and toss about for hours with our clothes dripping wet with perspiration and of course cannot sleep. So at last I propose that we sit up in bed and have a gossip to tire us out. More than a dozen of us in adjoining berths sit up and each tell a story, and we find it a good plan for after that we all lay down and sleep soundly till about six o'clock. A great many of them do not sleep in their berths but lay out on the floor. Now it is so hot I cannot account for my feeling so well, as in England I am always ill in hot weather.

Tuesday 6th

Still becalmed and the heat all night, so very oppressive that sometimes I really thought we should have been suffocated being so many together. Oh how thankful we feel this evening for a light breeze in our favour. We are now making from five to six knots. We all feel very weak from the effects of heat.

Tuesday, July 6:

Sarah's birthday. A nice breeze sprung up after the rain and we are going on again with a fair wind. My arms are very much blistered with the sun, it is so powerful. We are all sitting on deck at work or reading all day according to our inclinations. All seem well and happy.

Wednesday 7th

We are still, not making much progress. It is close and sultry with drizzling rain, obliged to come down early on that account. Had a concert in our cabin. Some of the young ladies are very nice singers, which fact passes some of the tedious hours pleasantly away.

Wednesday, July 7:

A dead calm and very showery. A girl taken to the hospital with fever and another very dangerously ill.

Thursday 8th

Twisting about just to stay moving, but not making much progress. Still keeps very hot and the days are getting very short. Time hangs very heavy now. It is a dreary idle sort of life, but there is one little month gone. We signalled a ship tonight.

Thursday, July 8:

A strong wind but not a fair one. I have not slept a bit all night. The two invalids feel a little better. A large ship in sight but not spoken with.

Friday 9th

Very wet morning with a dead calm. It is impossible to describe the effect this has on all our minds and tempers, as also the confusion and disorder in the Cabin amongst so many cleaning, washing up and preparing our meat pies for dinner. Suffice it to say, it is anything but agreeable more especially to those who don't feel well. I have never felt myself since I came out to sea. I could not have believed it could have so entirely disarranged the system and now the intense heat makes me feel so languid and weak.

Friday, July 9:

A very calm day – too calm for our good. We shall never get to Melbourne till all our hair is grey if we go on at this rate. Great excitement in the evening, a ship in sight going the same way as us and our Captain sent up skyrockets to tell them not to run over us.

Saturday 10th July

Still becalmed with heavy showers of rain, felt very ill all day and I must confess to giving away to more low spiritedness than I have ever done since I came on board. Still I have much to be thankful for. We have some nice female friends ever ready to do all they can for us and I will here say that bad as I have been and the privations we have all had to undergo, still I have never regretted the step I have taken, although I must own to thinking more and more of the dear friends left far behind. Yet I have never had the desire to return but rather go forward and realize the object for which I set out.

Saturday, July 10:

Still a calm – we have only gone ninety miles since last Sunday.

Sunday 11th

Glorious Sabbath has brought us a good breeze after being becalmed a week. It is strange what an effect it had on all our spirits. We all joined heartily in the service on the Poop and not less heartily in the Plum-pudding and pork. Spent a quiet afternoon. Enjoyed myself in reading some of my dear friends old letters again. We had a jam tart for tea. What a treat! We passed a fine looking ship bound for France.

Sunday, July 11:

High wind, but not in our favour. A vessel passed very near us. Everybody crowded on deck to get a look at it. We hoisted our ensign and they hoisted a French flag. It was not such a large ship as ours. We are nearly to the "line" now and we have a great deal to be thankful for as everybody is now in good health and last time the ship went to Melbourne there were seventeen deaths on board and we have not had one except the poor sailor that was washed overboard in the storm.

Monday 12th

We have still a nice breeze making six knots. It is very much cooler for which we all feel thankful.

Monday, July 12;

A very high wind all night; another sleepless night for poor me; the wind is not at all in our favour.

Tuesday 13th

We are making nine knots and we hope soon to cross the line. Saw the Southern Cross very plainly tonight. The Stars form quite a cross. Had lime juice given out for the first time, which was a great treat to put in our water as it is very bad indeed. We could not drink our tea or coffee at all. The New Moon our second at sea was shining very brightly tonight. It had a most remarkable circle round it, very different to what I ever saw before.

Tuesday, July 13:

The wind still very high but a very fine day. The water is alive with flocks of flying fish. They are not much bigger than sprats and their wings quite transparent like gauze and the bodies of them shine in the sun like silver. I should like to catch one of them but they take good care to keep a respectful distance from the ship.

Wednesday 14th

It is a fine morning with a light but fair wind. Making very little progress. We had thick porridge for breakfast this morning which was a treat as the biscuits are so hard and the bread so sour. We had also a sheep killed today. It was very tantalizing to see fresh meat, being the first time since we left England and well we know we must not taste it.

Wednesday, July 14:

A very fine day with a cool breeze but still very hot in the sun. We still have an awning all over the deck so that the sun does not affect us much. Now in the evening we amuse ourselves watching the sky; there are so many fresh things to be seen as we are fast approaching the "line." The sky tonight is perfectly beautiful, it looks like a large flock of sheep lying down. They call it the shepherd and his flock. The moon shines brilliantly – how we do enjoy the evenings.

Thursday 15th

Fine morning with a good breeze, but the sun very hot. We are very near the line. It is ridiculous to hear the questions which are being continually asked by the passengers such as "Shall we see the line?" or "Will the ship give a jerk?" Many large flying fish were seen today and many large birds. There was a most magnificent sunset about 6 o'clock. It is then dark almost immediately. There is very little twilight. Then the moon shines in full splendour and the passengers enjoy dancing, singing and other amusements. I stole away to the side to enjoy a quiet sit and think of the dear ones far far away.

Thursday, July 15:

Still a nice fresh breeze and the sea has a different smell to what it has had before. We have seen two beautiful birds flying past today and some flying fish about a foot and a half long in shape and colour of salmon. The sunset this evening is the most brilliant we have ever seen. All came on deck to see it; after that we watch the moon rise and we see the Southern Cross; that a cross formed of large stars that is only to be seen at the "line." There are one or two on board who have been to Italy and they say the Italian sky is not so beautiful as we see it here. It is altogether different to an English sky.

Friday 16th

We are all satisfied and gratified to find that we really crossed the line between eleven and twelve last night. It is much cooler and we are making between five and six knots. We have had a regular scouring of our berths and now are going to have a good dinner of soup and biscuit pudding. We have four good dinners a week, the other three, namely Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays we call starvation days, as we have not yet learned to eat biscuits and hard salt junk, which when boiled has just the appearance of mahogany.

Friday, July 16:

It has blown hard all night but the wind is not at all fair for us and we are only going about five miles an hour. We crossed the "line" about twelve o'clock last night. That is exactly five weeks since we sailed. Some of them very sick this morning; some of them seem as if they will be sick every time it is the least rough. I am thankful I keep so well myself.

Saturday 17th

No little excitement was caused today by sighting land. It was a Portuguese settlement for convicts called Fernando Noronha 31° West longitude and 3° South latitude. It was at a great distance and looked like a large cloud. The day is fine and we are making eight knots. After dark a steamer passed us very close and the lights looked beautiful.

Saturday, July 17:

Great excitement! We get sight of an island about twenty miles distant. It is a Portuguese convict settlement called Fernando de Narnho. About dusk we see a large steamboat coming towards us showing three lights. It is soon passing us and we all think it is the best sight we have seen since we left Birkenhead. It is so long since we saw anything but sea and sky.

Tuesday 20th

Up early and on the Poop. Saw a splendid rainbow, signalled a fine American ship. We are tacking about, but not making much progress. Wind very changeable. We are not above seventy miles from Brazil where they tell us yesterday's mail would float with the tide.

Tuesday, July 20:

A fine day but not a fair wind. It is more than a week since we had a fair wind. Spoke an American ship. All the people busy washing; as there is a nice lot of rain water they are allowed to wash twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays.

Wednesday 21st

Had a very rough night. Captain afraid of land. Turned the ship four times so there was not much sleep for us. Commands were given above by the Captain and Mate and the Sailors singing and stamping over our heads, the young people talked so that we were thankful for the morning. Only tacking about all day. It came to rain in the afternoon. In the evening we had a performance in the Cabin. It was very amusing to see the different characters we had represented amongst the females. Some dressed as sailors, others as Indians, some Scotchmen and each took their part well and I think we all went to bed very much amused.

Wednesday, July 21: A very warm day; everybody getting ill-tempered because we are not going on – as if being cross could alter it. Quarrels are quite the fashion, there is not an hour in the day but the Doctor is fetched to quell some riot. A young woman sentenced to stay downstairs until the Doctor gives her permission to come up for being insolent to the Matron. It comes on squally in the evening and we have to stay down for the first time since we came on board. No one that has ever been in these regions ever saw such rain. It seems as we should all be drowned. They closed the hatches but we got a broomstick and hammered it till they came and opened it for it was so suffocating with the close air; we had it left open all night as it always is. I never such an advocate for fresh air as our Doctor is, and I do think that is the secret of all being in such good health. He will not let anybody stop down all day and woe to the unlucky one he catches in their berth in the daytime.

Thursday 22nd

Had a thunderstorm during the night. The wind more favourable. It was a splendid moonlit evening and we enjoyed ourselves with dancing with some merry Scotch girls, who afterward gave us a Highland fling in first rate style and asked us to join them again tomorrow evening.

Thursday, July 22: It has been a very squally night and there has been a great deal of confusion on deck with the men having to alter the sails so many times.

Friday 23rd

We are glad to find we have made a hundred and ten miles last night and we are not sailing a fair wind making ten knots an hour.

Friday, July 23:

A Beautiful day – a fair wind has come at last which has cheered us up a bit. A beautiful moonlight evening; it is now dark at six o'clock of an evening but as it is so moonlight we stay on deck until nine o'clock. I am afraid we shall no be up on deck so long of an evening when the moon is gone. It would amuse anyone to be suddenly introduced onto our poop on a moonlight night – in one of the corners will be about two dozen singing, in another a lot talking scandal about everybody – how the captain their mess makes one pot of tea stronger than the others for herself and “they won't put up with it, that they won't” and lots more complaints that would make a cat laugh. In another place will be a lot of Scotch girls dancing with one of them imitating the bagpipes and not one of them with either shoes or stocking on; then the Irish will be squatting down under the boats talking over everybody's business but their own and vowing eternal hatred to the English, and even the children must have game to themselves.

Saturday 24th

Wind still in our favor. We are making good progress. I begin to feel much better my appetite much sharper. It is a beautiful evening, the sun set in gorgeous splendour, but what a faint idea my writing will convey of this magnificent night. It did indeed make me think of the truth of that passage in the Psalm C1.23v.

Saturday, July 24:

Still a fair wind; it is getting much cooler. All the single men have had a hearing before the Doctor and Captain for fighting last night and creating a riot.

Sunday 25th

We have made four degrees since yesterday and are now sailing away at ten knots. The muster roll is always called over on Sundays. We are called by the number of our mess and pass before the Doctor and Captain who call each name. We then go on to the Poop to service, where prayers and a short sermon are read by the Schoolmaster, whilst hymns and chants are sung by the passengers who often practice them during the week. Spent the afternoon in reading aloud and the evening in walking the deck. We then go below and sing the evening hymn, have prayers and go to bed.

Sunday, July 26:

A nice day and a fair wind. All well.

Monday 26th

We have made three degrees and are now going on very well. Everything is assuming a different aspect. The weather is much cooler and the sunsets in the tropics are far beyond description, the colors varying from vermilion to the most beautiful clear blue and white, light green and drab. It is equally grand when rising at halfpast six and sets at quarter before six in the evening.

Tuesday 27th

Got up early and went on deck to see the sun rise and it was really lovely. We have had a very busy bustling day having our boxes up which caused no little confusion. Some of them were in deplorable condition having been broken and many things quite mouldy. Mine however were quite all right. I am very sorry to say we are nearly becalmed.

Tuesday, July 27:

A very fine day, nearly a calm. Had one box up to get out another month's clothes. Nobody can form any idea of the bustle and confusion there is on these days, especially today for all the people have something spoiled with the damp, but in many cases it is their own fault for in one box a bottle of jam burst and spoiled a new dress. In another it had spoiled two new bonnets, and can anyone pity them if people will be so careless as to pack jam and clothes together. And then several of the people changed their clothes at the Depot and put what they took off in their boxes all wet with perspiration. I am happy to say I had all my boxes up and none of my things were damp, perhaps that is owing to me not having any eatables of any sort. There are a great many wedding things on board which are anxiously thought of. I should tremble for a white bonnet here.

Wednesday 28th

There is quite a cold wind today. We are making from six to seven knots per hour.

Wednesday, July 28:

More wind today, everybody washing and scrubbing. A vessel in sight but not near enough to speak to it.

Thursday 29th

We were surprised this morning to hear there was a ship very near to us. We were all on deck at six o'clock in time to see a boat lowered and rowing towards us. Never shall I forget the sensation as they go near us waving their hats and our crew cheering so heartily. A rope ladder was thrown down and seven sailors and chief mate were soon on board. Our Captain gave them a hearty welcome and not less the jovial crew for we all go them round as if we had never seen a man before. It was the "Oliver Lang" from London to New Zealand. They were short of provisions and had not a light on board. We supplied them with all we could spare. They then returned to their ship which was tacking about at a little distance. Presently the Captain and two gentlemen passengers came on board and stayed about two hours. The ship passed close by us both of the crews cheering at the top of their voices. In the evening we had quite a display of fireworks. Our Captain sent up some splendid rockets and burnt a blue light and the "Oliver Lang" answered in the same manner. We then went to bed all delighted with had such a gala day.

Thursday, July 29:

A very fine day, a fresh breeze. Before we were up this morning there came down the news that the vessel we saw last night was close by and they had lowered a boat and were on their way to our ship. Up we all scampered on deck, some only half dressed, and hardly anybody got their hair done. The boat was soon alongside and the steps lowered and came up two young gentlemen and the mate of the other vessel which turns out to be the "Oliver Lang," the same ship that Sarah went to Melbourne in – it seems like a relation to me. The visitors went into the Captain's cabin and then in a little time back to the boat, when it seemed as if they came begging, for bucket after bucket was let down into the boat full of packets of candles and other stores. At last they went off and then the boat came back after a short time with the Captain of the "Oliver Lang" and two more passengers. He and our Captain shook hands as hearty as only sailors can and they all stopped for breakfast. At their going away all the people in our ship wanted to cheer them but our Doctor would not allow it, he said it was not respectable. (contd.)

Some of the girls had a good cry about it, it did seem hard that we should have been two months with nothing to look at but water and sky and then we could not have a shout.

The “Oliver Lang” had sailed eight days later than ours and had only one sick on board. It is bound to New Zealand with passengers. It gives us all a morning’s excitement if it does no other good.

Friday 30th

“The Oliver Lang” has got a long way ahead of us. We hoisted a flag to wish them “good morning” which they returned. We are now putting up stronger sails preparing for a gale of wind and colder weather. We are getting into the latitude of the Cape where we expect to meet winter, it is at present very pleasant autumn weather which we enjoy very much after having had it so hot.

Friday, July 30: Quite a calm but a very fine day. There was a lot of rockets let off about eight last night both on our ship and the “Oliver Lang.” It is still in sight and I think it will be for some time as it was agreed between the two Captains that they should not be far off one another.

Saturday 31st

Spent a very pleasant day on deck sewing and reading. We were nearly becalmed.

Saturday, July 31:

Rather more wind than yesterday and a very fine day but very cold as we are getting into the Cape winter. This morning there was a great deal of telegraphing between our ship and the "Oliver Lang" with flags and at the end of it all our Captain looked very pleased and told us that there had been a birth at four o'clock this morning on board the "Oliver Lang" and that now we should be sure to get a fair wind, and really I do not wonder at sailors being superstitious for I should be if I was at sea much longer for, sure enough, about eleven o'clock the sailors were called to alter the sails as a fair wind had sprung up and we flew over the water at a great rate.

Sunday August 1st

A breeze has sprung up. The sea looks very rough and angry. We had a service as usual on the Poop and in the evening we had some friends to tea which we all enjoyed very much.

Sunday, August 1:

It has been very cold all night but we have a first-rate wind and are going ten miles an hour. I am going to spend the afternoon at the side of the vessel watching the sea. I never enjoy myself more than when so employed. The sky today looks a clear blue and white such as we see on a very fine day when the earth is covered with snow in England. The cool breeze seems to have done everybody good and all are ready for their meals before the meals are ready for them. We have only two in hospital now and they are not very bad. Our Doctor keeps everyone well if he can, his whole study seems to be for our good; he goes and looks at our dinner to see that it is properly cooked, and tastes the soup. He has all his meals with the Captain and the two mates. We are much better off than we should be in a passenger ship for all is in such order. On Saturdays after we have done all our scrubbing the Captain and the Doctor come down to see who has done their part best. We hear today we are near the Cape but shall not see it. I wonder where our barrel of letters is by this time.

Monday August 2nd

We have made two hundred and sixty miles last night and are now flying away through the water at twelve knots. It is very rough and our things are sliding from one side of the table to the other. A whale was seen this morning, also a great quantity of Cape pigeons.

Monday, August 2:

A very high wind has sprung up and we are all in a fright as they tell us that it is likely to be rough all the rest of the way.

Tuesday 3rd

It has been a very rough night and the crazy old "Conway" has rolled and creaked most fearfully. The Sailors made plenty of noise. A sail was rent to pieces and broke the glass in one of the ventilators which fell down into our Cabin. The Jib-boom was broken in two but we are making good progress, eleven and half knots on hour all night and are still doing the same. We are now right opposite the Cape of Good Hope.

Tuesday, August 3:

The wind still very high but fair for us. It seems as if winter has come for it is freezing cold and dark at five o'clock only. Fancy it dark and having tea by lamplight. It is our greatest comfort that we have lamps alight all night for I used to have an idea that we should not be allowed any light.

Wednesday 4th

We have been rolling fearfully all night. It is amusing to see our things rolling from side to side. Indeed four or five have to sit down to hold the things on the table whilst the others fetch them in. Washing up one has to hold the pail so that we are all employed.

Wednesday, August 4:

The wind seemed to increase and we are so cold that we run about in our scarf shawls, it is such a change to a few weeks back when we could never keep cool. The ship rolls first on one side and then bounces back onto the other in a most frightful manner.

Thursday 5th

Still rolling and inspite of all our efforts to secure our things they keep falling down at our heads, sometimes we are covered with salt, again with pepper. When we have got clear of that the treacle comes spouting over us or sugar. Our cups and saucers one after another get broken and we are glad to take up with an old jam jar. Our knives and forks get lost and then we steal one from another. Sometimes we are not sharp enough to get any for everyone is on the look out. We have to content ourselves with one or two amongst eight and wait of one another. How uncertain is the sea this evening. We are nearly becalmed. We went on deck. The air is cool and refreshing. The nights are very long. We have tea by lamp light and are obliged to spend the evenings in amusements as we cannot see to work or to read.

Thursday, August 5: The wind and waves are rising higher every hour. My sides are so sore that I can hardly bear to move with slipping up and down in the bed as the ship rolls, and to mend the matter I have got a bad cold coming on.

Friday 6th

Passed a quiet night. It began to rain early this morning, the sea rose mountains high and the wind against us, took off all sail. It is the worst day we have had yet. Piercing cold. We are obliged to wear shawls and gloves in the Cabin. The sea is one mass of boiling foam. We cannot get on deck. The men have to bring our things to the stairs.

Friday, August 6:

Of all the days we have had for wind since we sailed this is decidedly the worst; it blow a perfect hurricane, we have only two sails up and the sea seems to move all in one huge mass. The Doctor told us we could crawl up and look if any of us felt inclined but to be sure and not stand up on deck, so two or three of the most courageous managed to crawl up with our clothes blowing over our heads, but we were soon satisfied to crawl back. The ship seems to lift right out of the water. It is not a very cheering thing to think of that we are seven hundred miles from land in a ship on such a day and everybody seems melancholy and mopeish. A great many are seasick again. The hospital is full of females. There has been one taken up from the next berth to us today and she was the only one the Doctor can find room for; she fell down with the rolling of the ship on Tuesday and knocked several of her front teeth in, besides that she has been very weak all the way. I went to bed early last night and slept soundly till near four this morning. I am afraid there will not be much sleep for anybody tonight if the hurricane keeps up. The Matron is the most cowardly on board, she has been so frightened that this is the first day this week that she has been out of bed; she told me today that if they would put her on shore and offer her two hundred pounds to go on board again she would refuse and as to having her two little boys come out to her she should not think of it as she would never wish anybody to go through the fright she has.

Saturday 7th

Cold frosty air. The wind still against us. We walked on deck and were amused watching the Cape hens and pigeons, such quantities of them. The former have the appearance of ducks swimming on the water. The Captain caught two with a hook baited with beef. He tied up their beaks and threw them amongst us to look at.

Saturday, August 7:

The wind fell a little about eight o'clock last night and changed for the better and the sailors began to sing merrily as they changed the sails. We all felt very thankful as many of the girls had almost lost heart and sat down and cried, for it was no use we had to bear it, not but what it was miserable for us all. The Captain has caught four large birds today, he calls them "Cape hens" they are all black with head and beak like a duck and black legs and webbed feet. They both fly and swim, they are about two feet from the beak to the tail and about three feet from the tip of one wing to the other when open; they are not fit to eat.

Sunday 8th

The wind is again in our favor and we are making eight knots an hour. It is intensely cold. We had prayers in the Cabin. One of the young women slipped down the stairs and broke her leg. I could not help thinking what a contrast from what is at home today, as we actually went to bed to keep warm.

Sunday, August 8:

A very cold morning but a good wind. We have Service downstairs today as it is too cold to have it on deck. A Scotch girl fell down the steps coming off the poop and broke her leg just below the knee. The weather puts us in mind of Christmas at home especially whilst eating our plum pudding today. Now is the time we begin to enjoy our bed as it is the only place where we can keep warm and though it has been worse weather the last week than any since we sailed I have slept as sound as possible every night, so that in time I might be a brave sailor. We had quite a Ball last night downstairs and a good many of the girls recited some pieces. We can spend our evenings very pleasantly if all make up their minds to agree as they generally do as we are all locked down. There is one thing I am very glad of; we see no more of the men that if there was none in the ship, for the highest crime a girl can commit is to be seen speaking to one of them, and I think it is best so.

Monday 9th

Very cold with sleet falling through the day. We are going along fairly well, about nine knots. We had a fancy dress ball in the evening. We might indeed have imagined ourselves in a ballroom as nearly all wore wreaths and leaves cut out of writing paper and mixed some with flowers and some with colored paper which had a very pretty effect and many had low dresses. Well we all danced until we were hungry and then had to go supperless to bed.

Monday, August 9: A very cold day – all nearly frozen. Had a grand dress ball in the evening. It get people warm if it does no other good, only some of them would come out in low necks and short sleeves. I have got a bad cold myself and have hardly crawled out of my berth today.

Tuesday 10th

We have made five degrees since yesterday and are now making nine to ten knots.

Tuesday, August 10: Still bitterly cold. A good many have got colds in our part of the ship. We are glad of being near the hatchway in the hot weather but it is not very pleasant now as the wind sets down very strong. We have got a beautiful wind and they foretell we shall be in Melbourne in three weeks – I wish we may. My cold still very bad today; one minute I am shivering and the next shaking with cold.

Wednesday 11th

Made seven degrees last night and are now sailing away at eleven.

Wednesday, August 11:

A very fine day but freezing cold, we cannot even keep warm in bed. No doubt we feel the cold more coming so suddenly in to it out of the very hot weather. They say we shall have it still colder. We have got stoves, a sort of fire basket hung from the beams by chains, put up this morning but they are no use to our part except to smoke us out, blacker than the sun has made us. We have another full dress ball this evening, all are making grand preparations to out-do each other in the way of head-dress. It looks first-rate; a stranger introduced below at seven in the evening would wonder where he was, he would never believe he was on board a ship; but it is an early ball as it has to be over always by eight o'clock. My cold is much better.

Thursday 12th

We have been making twelve knots an hour at night and are now making thirteen. Still very cold. Toothaches and bad colds are very prevalent amongst us.

Thursday, August 12:

We have had a very rough night, we have just finished passing the Cape. Every now and then a large wave alights on our deck and makes the poor old ship quiver all over and the ship lays all on one side; sometimes we catch hold of a post as if to keep the ship from tumbling over. It is not a very agreeable feeling but we are getting used to it now and don't think so much of it as we did at first.

Friday 13th

Very rainy all day. We had fires in cages hung in the Cabin, which were very great comfort to us. The "Albion" from Liverpool to Melbourne passed us very close. We all went on deck to look at her. She will no doubt beat us although she sailed five days after us.

Friday, August 13: We had a most fearful night, it has blown a perfect hurricane. Many of the people have not been in bed since twelve o'clock last night as it does not seem so bad when one is up. Nearly every minute a large wave broke on our deck and the wind sounded fearfully. All we could hear besides was the Captain and the mate shouting to the men all night. I wonder more and more every day how a man can be a sailor.

Saturday 14th

We have just cleared Cape Town having made good progress the last two days but the wind is now dying away. Two ships in sight, one the "Alfred" for Sydney with emigrants but we are leaving them behind.

Saturday, August 14: We have had a much more still night and it seems a little milder this morning. The Captain has caught another large cape hen. It was not like the last, they were all black, but this one had a dove-coloured back with white breast – it is much prettier than the black ones. The Captain wrote a label and fixed round its neck with a wire and set it swimming again. The Doctor in a great rage that there were so many girls shamming illness and threatens to stop their rations – if anything will rouse them, that will.

Sunday 15th

Still very cold with a head wind fau..¹ against us. We had prayers in the Cabin and afterward a walk on deck. There are still quantities of Cape Pigeons and young albatross flying about. The Captain caught one of the latter. He wrote a note tied around its neck with red ribbon and let it go again. They are immense large birds.

Sunday, August 15:

It is a very dull day with a Scotch mist. There is one invalid today where there was nine yesterday – the Doctor's threat had the desired effect.

Monday 16th

Cold wet miserable day with strong winds against us.

Monday, August 16:

A more miserable day cannot be well imagined, we have been in bed all day to keep ourselves warm, only crawling out at meal times. The wind is right against us and the vessel rocks and creaks like an old wicker cradle. A boy came running calling for the Doctor saying that Mike had been getting into his hammock and it had given way and pitched him out head-first. "And is he hurt much?" said the purser. "Sure and he is" said the boy. "Is he dead?" "Ah, no, but he is kilt entirely." We all had a good laugh at poor Mike's misfortune.

Tuesday 17th

Wind still contrary. I was on the sick list again.

Tuesday, August 17:

Another very cold day, the wind cuts down our hatchway and nearly blows the hair off our heads and we are obliged to sit with a thick shawl on and even then we cannot keep a spark of warmth in us. My cold has left a sad weakness on my chest.

Wednesday 18th

We are becalmed. It is much warmer but very wet. We have not been able to get on deck since Sunday. We do indeed find it a tedious journey. No one could form any idea of it.

Wednesday, August 18:

We had a most miserable night. The wind was so high and right against us, there are not many can say they had a good night's rest.

Thursday 19th

We were mustered and all went on deck very cold. We have one point of wind in our favor and are making from four to five knots.

Thursday, August 19:

A nice fine morning but it is not quite so cold as it has been. We were all up on the poop nearly all day.

Friday 20th

Fine but cold wind very changeable which has a great effect on all our spirits. At least if we may judge from appearances, we are getting very tired of each other.

Friday, August 20:

The wind has changed and it is now fair for us for the first time this week, but we are not satisfied now for there is not enough of it. It would be very long days now if we did not find some way of amusing ourselves such as telling fortunes in our teacups, grand dress balls every night, and lots more amusements too numerous to mention.

Saturday 21st

A fair wind all night which always makes us feel cheerful, more especially when we hear 'tis likely to be permanent.' We are making nine knots, there are still great quantities of birds which look very pretty flying about the ship. They look like geese when swimming on water. The Captain caught two with a hook. It took two men to pull them in. They have much the appearance of swans and they are from nine to ten feet across from the tip of the wings.

Saturday, August 21: A very fine morning and while the sun is out it is nice and warm. We have all been on the poop this morning watching the Captain. He has caught two immense albatrosses, one of them measuring nine feet four inches from tip of one wing to the tip of the other – and the other one nine feet nine inches. He catches them with a hook and line as he would catch a fish. The single men have undertaken to stuff the largest. They drowned that one so that the outside should not be disfigured by it being killed any other way. The other was let to run about on the deck for us all to see it and then put back into the sea and he soon swam merrily away. There are hundreds of cape pigeons hovering around the ship; they say they will follow us all the way to Melbourne.

Sunday 22nd

We have been making ten knots all night and are now making eight. It is what we should call a fine December day at home. The sun shines although 'tis' very cold and damp. I have chilblains very bad on my fingers and toes, but I am not alone, nearly all have them.

Sunday, August 22:

A very raw cold day and foggy; they tell us we shall only be two more Sundays on board. I hope it may be correct for they must be getting anxious to hear of our safe arrival at Melbourne.

Monday 23rd

We passed Prince Edward's island this morning. There is a thick fog all around. We have made ten knots an hour all night and are now making eleven and a half.

Monday, August 23:

A very high wind but a fair one. We are going first-rate if it does but continue. We are all in hopes.

Tuesday 24th

We have been making twelve knots an hour all night and are now making thirteen. We walked on deck and the clear pure air gave us a sharp appetite for our salt beef and rice. Indeed we have no need to quicken our appetites now as nothing comes amiss. We can devour the preserved potatoes and cabbage now and like it. Although in the commencement of our voyage we thought it utterly impossible ever to eat it.

Tuesday, August 24:

We are flying along but the high wind has kept a good many awake all night. It is very stormy today and every now and then a large wave comes over onto the deck and sets our hearts beating. A poor girl was taken in a fit last night and scarcely been out of them since. The Doctor gives but little hopes of her life. I crept up on the poop this morning but could not stay, the ship rocked so on one side.

Wednesday 25th

The sea mountains high and washing over the decks which continued all day. We are making twelve knots.

Wednesday, August 25:

The wind has been very high all night and we have not been able to go up on deck and there is every appearance of it being higher still.

Thursday 26th

We have had a fearful night, rolling tremendously. Sometimes she appeared to lay quite on her side, the sea still washing over the decks with great violence and pouring down the hatchways so that the Cabin floor was swimming with water. There was no sleep for any of us. Commands were given by the Captain and echoed again by the Mate. Sailors were running about and singing over our heads, nor was the scene more tranquil below. Some of the girls were fainting, others crying and calling out the names of friends left behind. Others on their knees calling on the saints and Blessed Virgin to save them. We had a premature birth in the hospital. It only survived a few hours. The Doctor came down about four o'clock and administered Brandy to those who were ill and made those go to bed who were running about in the wet. He then brought six sailors and stayed with them whilst they mopped up the Cabin before we could get up. Well, so it continued all day. No sooner had we dried one lot up but another came down pouring, which to say the least of it was anything but comfortable. Such is life on the sea. Towards evening it got a little better and we had a snowstorm. I felt in first rate spirits because we averaged nine knots an hour all the time.

Thursday, August 26:

It has been a most terrific night, such a one as makes young people old in one night for it was a regular night of horrors, the wind blew a perfect hurricane and every now and then the ship seemed perfectly under water and it poured down the hatchway in a perfect deluge. It is at such times as that we feel the comfort of having a top berth for the people in the bottom ones get washed out of their beds. The screams of the people as each wave comes down the hatchway was enough to make the stoutest heart to tremble. Many were fainting away and the Matron was running about crying and, instead of comforting people, making them more frightened. No one can form any idea of the scene that have never been in like predicament. I got up to try if I could get our to help anybody or bail up the water, but my bed-fellow pulled me down again by main force saying that she was sure that it would be nearly the death of me if I got out in the wet as I have not got my chest strong after my late severe cold. What will people in England think when I tell them that in the month of August we have all our feet covered with chilblains and many of them have broken ones on their hands.

Contd

Contd.

The wind has kept up all day and we have been obliged to have all our meals in our berths and cannot leave anything standing by itself a minute for if we do and we look round after, it has taken a spring to the other side of the ship and we have hard work to keep from following it ourselves and to hold on to the posts. The girls were giving cans of water and dry oatmeal up the hatchway to have gruel made when the ship gave a sudden lurch and down some of them rolled from side to side of the ship and could not stop themselves. A poor woman who has laid in the hospital ever since we came on board was confined this morning but the baby died as soon as born; the mother is better than could be expected.

Friday 27th

We have still a very heavy sea and roll a good deal more than we would like. We are making eight knots. We walked on deck and had a game of snow ball. It is clear and cold and now and then we have a snow or rather hail storm.

Friday, August 27:

The wind has abated a great deal and we have been able to take a little blowing on deck. It snowed very hard last night and I saw a large snowball brought down this morning.

Saturday 28th

We passed Kerguelen Island this morning. It is a clear frosty day. We are making eight knots an hour.

Saturday, August 28:

A very dry frosty day such as we should have at Christmas at home and we have been able to take a few hours exercise on deck.

Sunday 29th

Very cold with occasional snowstorms. We had prayers in the Cabin as usual. Oh how anxiously we are looking forward to the end of our voyage. It does indeed appear as though it would never end, and we are getting so impatient.

Sunday, August 29:

It has been snowing all the morning, the snow is very deep on deck and it seems to get colder. Poor Mrs Wilson who was confined on Thursday is not expected to live. They say we shall be in Melbourne in ten days.

Monday 30th

We passed St Paul's Bay at 12 o'clock today. We are averaging eleven knots and it is still very cold. The thermometer is down at 10°.

Monday, August 30:

A very dull day, snowing at intervals. Poor Mrs. Wilson not expected to live the day out. One mess to have their rations stopped for not getting up in time.

Tuesday 31st

A fine day and two degrees warmer. Every one appears to be making preparations for landing and the conversation is all about what they will wear and wondering who will meet us.

Tuesday, August 31:

A very squally day, repeated storms of wind, hail and snow. Mrs Wilson has had a change for the better.

Wednesday September 1st

Averaging nine knots an hour all day. Still very cold with snow.

Wednesday, September 1: Still very squally, lots of snow. We cannot keep warm only in bed and not there always. We have very bad nights; it is like being in a great cradle only that instead of rocking us to sleep it rocks us more wide awake for every now and then it seems as if we were going to turn bottom upwards and everything moveable pitches over with the most horrid noise.

Thursday 2nd

We are making ten knots, very miserable and cold with occasional hail storms.

Thursday, September 2:

Going a little steadier today but very fast. The Captain has been to the masthead twice today to catch the first sight of Western Australia but I do not think he has seen it and hope it will get warmer before we land as both our hands and feet are covered with chilblains and are very painful.

Friday 3rd

We are now making twelve knots. It is very fine and clear but cold. The glorious sun is shining beautifully, which together with going so quick makes us feel in first rate spirits.

Friday, September 3:

A very fine morning; we are flying fast towards Melbourne. They say we shall be anchored next Thursday.

Saturday 4th

A fine morning and were just in the midst of cleaning our Cabin when we shipped a sea and water came pouring down our hatchway and nearly drowned us. The hatch was immediately put down and we were in darkness all the rest of the day, the wind blowing a perfect hurricane. It was fearful.

Saturday, September 4:

It blows a gale today but it is much warmer. Whilst they were busy scrubbing down in our place today a large wave came down the hatchway onto them and there was a pretty scene all at once for it fairly set the place in a float – the beds in the bottom were soaked out and Mrs. Usher was standing on a water keg balancing herself with the mop. I got upstairs as quick as possible for fear I should be drowned and there it was little better for the waves washed over the deck and soaked us. I have got another bad cold for the other night I got out of bed with no shoes and came down with my bare feet in a pond of water. My shoes had disappeared under one of the bottom berths and it was not until it got quite daylight that they could be found.

Sunday 5th September

Rather quieter this morning but miserably cold, wet and uncomfortable and every body disagreeable and impatient as ever they can be.

Monday 6th

We have had a fearful night. No one could sleep. The wind is still very high and the sea is washing over the decks. They tell us we are rounding Cape Lewin and making first rate progress.

Tuesday 7th

Another wretched night, the worst we have ever had. It is useless to attempt to describe it. The wind howled and the sea did roar and make a noise, and we rolled from side to side most fearfully. Sometimes she went completely on her beam ends and then she jerked and appeared as though she would divide. The Doctor came down twice during the night and spoke very encouragingly to us. He also sent us some Brandy as many were very ill, some from fright and other from the continual rocking. The hatches were kept down and the lamps lighted all day and we all kept in out Berths as the water kept pouring down, one getting out at meal times to receive our rations which were handed downstairs.

Wednesday 8th

We have had a much quieter night but the wind is getting up again and they have taken in all the sails. The Doctor tells us it is astonishing the progress we have made the last three days and that we must prepare to land next Tuesday. I can give no idea of the sensations these words produced. Some jumped and clapped their hands, others screamed, others cried, all were excited, all were affected.

Thursday 9th

We are now all preparing for the end drawing out nails and packing our things together, but we are only making four knots an hour.

Thursday, September 9:

I have not been able to write any of my diary since last Saturday for it has been one continued hurricane. The Doctor and all who have been in the "Conway" seven years say that they never had such a bad passage. It has been a fearful – we are all totally worn out in mind and body and want sleep. We have the gales higher of a night than in the day. We have had one of the boats washed to pieces that hung on the side of the ship and we are not able to have any sails up. Some of the ropes are like ragged lint where they have beaten against the masts. It is almost a miracle that we have not. I had quite made up my mind when we went to bed last night that we should never behold the light of another day; it seemed to me impossible but still we are spared. I have not been well this week or more. I have got a severe cold again and no wonder, for we got to bed with the beds wet through and it still keeps very cold.

Friday 10th

We have a south wind this morning which is blowing us along at the rate of ten knots. We are having our cabin white washed today and tomorrow. We shall have a thorough cleaning. It is still intensely cold, but we had tea by daylight for the first time.

Friday, September 10:

It is such a fine day that it has put fresh spirits in us. We are getting near the end of our voyage and all the sailors are very busy getting the ship ready.

Saturday 11th

It is amusing how busy we all were for we all helped to clean and worked with spirit too. We did not leave a joist or beam unscoured.

Copy of a typescript copy from the original prepared by H.V. Wilton, South Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S.A. 18th November 1935.

Sunday 12th

We were mustered on deck today and ever shall I forget what poor sickly looking creatures all looked when out in good daylight. I had no idea the cold weather and close confinement could have such an effect. We had prayers on deck being such a very fine day with such a clear sky but a sharp wind which if it continues will we hope bring us to our destined port. They tell us we shall sight Cape Otway during the night.

Monday 13th

We were all disappointed this morning instead of seeing land as we expected we hear we have been becalmed since midnight. This has been a very busy day, as we have had our boxes up to put all our things away and get out others to land in. The wind is dead against us so that we are going back.

Tuesday 14th

Still not land in sight. All is anxiety and preparation. Wind rather more favorable. Going about six knots. Sighted Cape Otway at 12 o'clock. It looked like a cloud. We were becalmed until midnight.

Wednesday 15th

We had not much sleep all night. We heard the Pilot come on board and also the anchor dropped at Port Philip Heads and how anxiously we longed for the morning. We were up early and ready to go on deck as soon as the doors were unlocked and never shall I forget the lovely sight of the pleasure. Beaming faces together with the beautiful bay. The Medical Officer came on board early and soon after eight we weighed anchor and off we go to Hobsons Bay where we cast anchor at one o'clock. We were glad to find we were just in time for the mail and most of us had letters ready and despatched them to our dear friends at home. I then for the first time felt the importance of leaving home in pursuit of the object of my affections. I know not what change six months might have made and I might be landed a stranger in a strange land. But thank God these melancholy feelings were soon dispersed by one of my ship mates bringing down to me a basket containing pears, apples, oranges, biscuits and the bearer wanted to see me. I rushed on deck and was surprised when the mate told me to go down and speak to him. Need I say it was my intended husband and in another moment I was in his arms in the presence of all the passengers and ships crew. Words would be insufficient to give any description of the excitement of that moment, but if ever I did feel proud in my life it was when I came on deck again. All the passengers rushed round me and congratulated me on our happy meeting, and all said he is a noble fellow.

Thursday 16th

The Government Inspectors are on board and we each had to pass separately and answer the questions as to who we were going to and those who were going as servants, what situations they would like, which was all noted down and occupied considerable time. It was very exciting all day. So many friends coming and going in little boats, we had also fresh bread and beef for dinner.

Friday 17th

The Inspectors were on board at ten o'clock. We had to pass before them. They asked each one if they were in good health, and also if we had any complaints to make. I did not hear of a single complaint. I think all were not only satisfied but highly delighted with the arrangements throughout. We had bread, beef and potatoes from the shore which were a great treat.. It was a beautiful clear day and Mr and Mrs Hy Wilson came out to see me. I sat a long time in the little boat with them and Mrs Dwyer also. This was the most exciting night we ever had. We presented the Captain and doctor with an address and all were very much affected. We shook hands and said good bye to many friends whom we shall probably never see again. And then for fear we should not be ready we packed up our beds and cooking things and tried to sleep on boards in our berths. But it was useless to attempt, so we passed a sleepless night and were not a little pleased when the morning broke and we were to go ashore.

Saturday 18th

All is bustle and confusion. Breakfast over all packed up and all up on deck waiting for the steamers which are to be alongside at 10 o'clock. At last the time has come and all the luggage on. Married people first, then the Captain hands us down from the ship and the first mate receives us on the steamer wishing all good-bye. When we began to move we gave three cheers for the Captain and three for the "Conway" and her crew, the sailors responding heartily. It was very pleasant down the river and many of us enjoyed it very much. We were not a little delighted on arriving to see our dear friends waiting for us on the wharf. They accompany us to the depot where we had all to pass through and leave them to wait two hours whilst the luggage all arrived. This appeared a long suspense but at length they were admitted to help us to seek our luggage. This done our friends had to get a pass and tell the Inspectors where they were taking us to. And now we are free, take a car and drive to No 7 Lygon Street where everything that heart could wish awaited me. But I was so overcome with excitement that I was obliged to go straight to bed. Now dear friends, I must conclude this imperfect sketch of my voyage to Australia, hoping that all into whose hands it may fall will be most charitable towards it, bearing in mind that I am not learned, but merely writing at the request of my nearest and dearest friends. Should I afford them the least pleasure to peruse it my object is gained, although I must confess it has afforded me many half hours pleasure as well as employment to note each little incident for their future perusal and now

I remain

Yours very sincerely

Anne Gratton

September 18th 1858

Copied by Charles Hy Wilson
eldest surviving son of the above
at Roebourne North, West Australia
17 and 18th January 1898.