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THE JOURNAL OF  
GEORGE HEPBURN









GEORGE HEPBURN IN 1866

THE JOURNAL  
of  
GEORGE HEPBURN

On His Voyage from Scotland to  
Otago in 1850 . . . with extracts  
from his letters written from Otago

....

*Edited by His Grandson*  
WILLIAM DOWNIE STEWART

COULLS SOMERVILLE WILKIE, LTD.,  
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PRINTED IN NEW ZEALAND

THE JOURNAL  
of  
GEORGE HERBERT

The first volume of the  
Journal of George Herbert  
was published in 1833

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IN MEMORY OF

My only Brother

GEORGE HEPBURN STEWART

Who died on 20th November, 1915,  
while on Active Service with the  
New Zealand Forces, and lies buried  
on the Island of Lemnos.



## Preface

---

THE first part of this small volume contains the journal of my grandfather, George Hepburn, who came from Fifeshire, Scotland, to Otago in the year 1850 in the sailing ship *Poictiers*.

The second part consists of extracts from letters written after his arrival in Otago and up to the time of his death, at the age of 81, on December 9th, 1883.

The chief interest of the journal consists in the vivid picture it contains of the hardships and discomforts of a seven months' voyage in a ship of 756 tons.

It is true that the *Poictiers* was not one of the pioneer ships, for between 1848 and 1850 twelve previous emigrant vessels arrived at Otago; all being of smaller tonnage than the *Poictiers*. No doubt there are in existence accounts of these earlier voyages, but I do not know of any narrative which records the day-by-day events of life on a sailing ship of that period so faithfully and vividly as does this journal.

From time to time there crop up throughout the journal the strong national antipathies and prejudices of a Scotchman of those

days against the English on his first contact with them after leaving his native country. This national hostility may amuse—but will not surprise—those readers who are familiar with the novels of Sir Walter Scott.

The Otago settlement was founded by the Free Church of Scotland. It is not surprising, therefore, that its first settlers were for the most part men of deep religious conviction and of a stern Calvinistic type. To some extent these characteristics reveal themselves in this journal. My grandfather's passion for the strict observance of the Sabbath prompted him on the long voyage to act as a censor of the morals and behaviour of his fellow passengers. Nothing induced him to relax the rigidity of his strict code, whether the ship was running before a fierce gale or its passengers and crew were sweltering in the heat of the tropics. But the reader must not infer from these evidences of the stricter standards of by-gone days that my grandfather was a dour and sour-visaged bigot. He was a man of kindly and genial disposition, who loved hospitality, and welcomed festive gatherings in his home at Halfway Bush, near Dunedin.

The journal is also of permanent interest because of the early glimpses it gives of various New Zealand settlements—New Plymouth, Nelson, and Wellington—which were ports of call *en route* to Otago.

George Hepburn was born in 1803 in the Scotch town of Kirkcaldy, the birthplace of the famous economist Adam Smith.\*

At the time when with his wife and eight children he reached Dunedin, after a voyage of seven months, the settlement had already been in existence for two years. His letters give many interesting glimpses of the business, social, and religious life of the small community and of its steady growth and development up till the time of his death.

My grandfather was a member of the Provincial Council of Otago from 1855 to 1865, and for some time he served as Chairman of Committees in the Council. He also represented the electoral district of Roslyn in the fourth New Zealand Parliament from 1866 to 1868 as a supporter of the Stafford Ministry, but retired on the ground of ill-health.

The following extract from the *Otago Witness* of 15th December, 1883, gives some further particulars of his life which may be of interest to the reader:—

The place of another of the old worthies of Otago has become vacant, thus still further narrowing the circle of the devoted band of early settlers who struggled

\* In his *Life of Adam Smith* Lord Haldane says: "Kirkcaldy, or, as the name was spelt in the days of Adam Smith, Kirkaldy, is a manufacturing town on the north side of the Firth of Forth. From its peculiar characteristic of possessing great length without breadth it has for generations enjoyed the appellation of 'the lang toon.' The inhabitants are of that shrewd hard-headed nature for which Fife is famous. Manufacture overshadows agriculture, and the general aspect of the place is that of industry."



hard against difficulties, which can neither be known nor appreciated by the present generation. On September 1st, 1850, Mr. Hepburn arrived at the Port of Otago in the ship *Poictiers* (Captain Beal) after a seven months' voyage from London, being accompanied by his wife and a large family. Accustomed in his native land to indoor occupation, the prospects of making a living for his family and himself in the midst of his strange surroundings was not inviting. In Dunedin he saw no opening in the trade which he had at his finger-ends—there were already too many pursuing it for the small population. However, he did not give way to despondency and, although of not a robust constitution, he bravely faced the difficulty, and having secured a section of land at Halfway Bush he, with a will and with the help his young family could afford, tackled the arduous task of clearing the bush and making his ground yield out of its richness sustenance for his household.

Aboyt six months afterwards Mr. Macandrew arrived (1851) and, the services of a competent and trustworthy general manager and salesman being required, the position was offered to and accepted by Mr. Hepburn, and in this employ he remained until 1855 when, in conjunction with Mr. James Paterson, he purchased the business from Messrs. Macandrew and Co. and carried it on under the firm or style of Jas. Paterson and Co. for several years very successfully, until he retired to more private life. Even with all the comfort of metalled roads and different conveyances, the daily journey to and from Dunedin to Halfway Bush, especially in wintry weather, does not possess many attractions, so some idea may be formed of the pluck needed to perform the journey, seven days in the week, in all weathers, through bush, scrub, and swamp, with scarcely a track to guide his footsteps.

Keenly alive to his responsibility for the exercise of his religious duties, which were ingrained in him in youth and practised in manhood's prime, he at once attached himself to First Church under the ministry

of Dr. Burns, and on Sabbath, 16th March, 1851 having previously been elected thereto by the members of the Church, he was inducted as an Elder for the Halfway Bush district, and for several years he was also Session Clerk in the First Church congregation. (He had formerly been an Elder in the Free Church, Kirkcaldy.) He had for his colleague in the Deaconship the late James Marshall, who had in the Home Country been a Deacon of the Free Church of Falkirk, continuing in connection with First Church until the opening of Knox Church in 1860, when he was appointed as one of the *interim* Session in its formation. He remained in that position, and was the last survivor of its first Session. In both churches he zealously devoted himself to those labours in which his heart delighted.

The subsequent erection of Wakari into a separate charge, being in Mr. Hepburn's own neighbourhood, received his warm support and active assistance.

The politics of the Province received from Mr. Hepburn a considerable amount of attention and, although not a "heaven-born orator," he possessed the rarer attribute of commonsense, and showed it as occasion required. In 1855 he was returned at the top of the poll as one of the representatives of Wakari District in the second Provincial Council, and continued a member for Wakari for several Councils, and for a considerable period occupied the difficult position of Chairman of Committees. The still higher position of a member of the Assembly was conferred on him in 1866, the constituency of Roslyn returning him as their member against two other candidates. At the close of the Parliament of 1871\* he did not again offer himself for a seat in the House.

Warmly alive to the advantages of education, he gave his assiduous attention to the school requirements of his district, occupying the position of Chairman of the School Committee.

\* He resigned in 1868

## THE JOURNAL OF GEORGE HEPBURN

In editing these papers I have purposely refrained from any attempt to condense the narrative. It is no doubt true that on a prolonged sea voyage there is much that must appear trivial and monotonous, but after several perusals of the journal I reached the conclusion that only by reading the detailed day-by-day record can the reader appreciate the arduous and exacting nature of such a voyage. Moreover, the real charm of both journal and letters lies in the quaint and homely language and the artless simplicity of the style.

The papers were written by my grandfather without any idea that one day they would be published. Indeed they were found some years ago almost by accident buried away in a box in an old house in Scotland.

Hence my first plan was merely to render them available to the third and fourth generations of his descendants; but owing to their intrinsic historical interest I have ventured to think that they may appeal to a wider circle of readers.

I am indebted to Dr. Scholefield, Parliamentary Librarian, and to Mr. Alfred Eccles for references to various people and places; and to the Librarians of the Free Public and Hocken Libraries and the Secretary of the Early Settlers' Association, Dunedin, for assistance in the selection of illustrations.

WM. DOWNIE STEWART.

DUNEDIN, 28th November, 1934

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PART I

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**The Journal of George Hepburn**



## CHAPTER I

### The Journal of George Hepburn, 1850

[NOTE.—*The first few pages describing the voyage from Leith to Gravesend are missing. Hence the Journal opens abruptly on 10th February, the day after the ship left Gravesend.*]

*The author describes his visit to the Isle of Wight—His first impressions of his fellow travellers—The daily routine on the ship—He records his fears that “our Scottish Sabbaths have passed away.*

February 10th, 1850.—In the evening, after tea and our family worship which we have managed every night in our cabin since we came on board, at 8 p.m. we were in bed and slept sounder than ever we did in our own house in Kirkaldy, never hearing a single sound until six next morning. The wind still blew fresh, but not so high as the preceding evening. We all got out of bed and took a good breakfast; had worship, cleaned and dressed for the muster on deck at 10 o'clock as we expected according to the printed regulations. By that time, however, the skipper thought fit to order the anchor up, unfurl the sails, and off we set again in gallant style. This again caused such a bustle on deck, and most passengers looking on, that little else was done all forenoon, with the exception of one here and there reading



their Bible in a quiet corner. By 1 o'clock we came again to anchor in the Downs, off Deal, where we now lay rocking. Deal seems a town of considerable importance, stretching along a fine beach, something like the Lang Toon, and in contrast with the bold rocky coast for many miles, perpendicular as a wall, and as pure white as if done yesterday by George Bird and his men. The Downs seem a very important roadstead. At present there are some hundreds of vessels of all sizes laying at anchor waiting a fair wind to take them through the Channel. Yesterday afternoon the wind moderated a good deal, and several boats came off from the town enquiring if any wanted ashore or anything from shore. . . . Our berths are about midship, and several around us are Scotch people and seemingly willing to engage in what is good. The others are mostly English, and perhaps care little for these things. I have been more particular with my account of the first Sabbath, as the rest may be similar.

Monday, 11th February.—The wind is increasing again, and they are putting out a second anchor in case of a storm; but all the children are playing about as happy as at home, quite insensible to any danger.

Tuesday, 12th February.—Still in the Downs, but since writing yesterday we have had a very stormy night. The wind rose last night almost to a strong gale, making our good ship heave and roll like a nutshell, so

much so that it was difficult to walk between decks last night, and stopped our meeting. I remembered the words of my worthy friend, Mr. Swan, that it was no joke to ride in the Downs in a storm. However, we were all calm and undisturbed as to the storm; put the children early to bed, and they all slept soundly; but a few noisy passengers in the forecabin, separated from us only by a sparred partition, seemed to brave the storm with mirth and laughter, played the flute, and sang Irish songs at the top of their lungs. At last they said they would go on deck and see the fun, but they soon returned, saying it was too rich to enjoy it. Such revelry produced an unpleasant feeling under the circumstances. After reading the 46th Psalm, we committed ourselves to the Good Shepherd Who neither slumbers nor sleeps and Who rides upon the wind holding the waters of the sea in His fist.

February 16th.—It is an old saying and true there are many changes on a winter night. So we have experienced since writing last Wednesday, when I sent a note ashore by the pilot, who was to leave us during the night for Portsmouth (addressed to Mr. Martin) which I trust reached him as well as the former one from the Downs. Taking a smart walk on deck that evening at 8 p.m., before going to bed, it was as beautiful and starry a night as you could see, with a calm sea, and sailing so pleasant that you scarcely knew it. The mate said we might go to bed and sleep

soundly to-night, which we always do as soundly as at home. I observed to the pilot, "You come a long way with us." "Yes," he said, "but large ships like ours require to be taken care of." That he knew all the coast and the headlands so well that the Company wished it. He said it was only 80 miles from Portsmouth to London by rail, which he would do in two and a half hours, but that we had now sailed 200 miles. He said another day or two would clear us of the Land's End, and then he considered the worst of our passage over.

I then expected that we would have no further opportunity of sending notes home by the penny post, but since then I have been ashore myself on British ground for five hours and might have been now three times as long. Well, then, ere the morning of Thursday last, the wind changed again to due west, and when we looked on deck early (for we all get up at daybreak) the wind blew fresh and it rained heavily, and the ship hove in between the Isle of Wight and the mainland where we soon cast anchor, and where we are still, waiting another change of wind. But happily it is said to be one of the finest roadsteads in the world. The sailors on shore say they have seen 400 sail at anchor there waiting a fair wind and as safe as in any harbour. By looking at the map of the English Channel, you will see the spot between Portsmouth on the one side and the

town of Ryde on the Isle of Wight. To the latter we are very near, so that the town boats are constantly visiting us. The first day (Thursday) several young gents went ashore, although it was very wet and stormy, at 1s. each each way. But yesterday (Friday) being a much better day, though thick and hazy, I also went ashore, there being two boats waiting, the one at 6d. each, each way.

I was desirous of seeing the beautiful Isle and town, as also to get my watch set agoing, which had stood by the way, and which a tradesman took 2s. for looking at—nothing for nothing in England—but I did not grudge my visit, besides the pleasure of getting our legs stretched a few miles round the town, I saw the beautiful parks and scenery around which exceeds any spot I ever saw. It is called The Garden of England. The town and shops in Ryde are very beautiful and gay, and remarkable for cleanness. The whole island is the resort of the English all seasons, and the Queen among the rest at Osborne House, which we have not yet seen. It is at Cowes, a few miles further on. Going a little way out of the town, we found the climate so very mild that the milk cows and young cattle were grazing in fields and the grass as green and rich looking as in autumn at home ; and there is little if any of snow ever lying. We fancied our new home in New Zealand would be something similar, but it would be a few years ere we could see such fine crops

of rich pasture and fine villas to live in, but we hope the best if we could get away from these shores. To-day is Saturday again, 4 p.m., eight days past since we left Gravesend, and still fast at anchor, but the wind is again veering round to the north, and we may be off to-night yet, but we are in no hurry so long as we are so snug and plenty to eat.

Having now nothing else of importance to say, and in order to fill up, I shall give you some account of the passengers. First, the captain seems quite a gentleman, walks with his gloves, very haughty, and never speaks to us. The other officers seem very agreeable, but distant. The cabin or poop passengers are gentry, and have no intercourse with any other. The second cabin passengers are also would-be gentlemen, and wish no communication with us steerage passengers, though only separated by a sparred partition. We see all they do and hear what they say, much to our annoyance, for there are a few young scamps among them who act tomfoolery every night, playing on a clarionet and singing so loud that we have little peace or comfort either to read or talk. They laugh our meetings to scorn, so have held it twice. Amongst them are the two Messrs. Wallace, our chief companions. They say that we are well off being out of such company; indeed we would not change berths for any second class.

Our next-door neighbours are very agreeable. There are also two sons of Mr. Archibald's, late merchant of Burnt Island, but whom we have not met yet. Also a Mr. Bowler, his wife and two children, and their old father, about 60, going to Nelson. They have land there already, and also at Wellington occupied by another son who is doing well, and sent for them. They have on the deck a fine young bull, scarce one year old yet but very large; he stands in a box or crib, and well attended to. Mr. B. said if he goes well to New Zealand he would not take £150 for him. They also have three young pigs and a fine dog.

In the far end of the steerage are some young men who play the villain every night and dance so loud that we are as it were really in the midst of Vanity Fair, but we hope the fine weather will soon take the most of them on deck, and so give us a little more quietness. There is a man amongst them who has been already seven years in New Zealand, but who came home to settle some family matters and who let 100 acres of his land for £70 per annum in his absence, and he says he has twelve acres all planted as an orchard with apple trees which thrive uncommonly well there. He says we'll do well there if we submit to the first roughness. He says the young Messrs. Wallace will be independent in ten years. They seem very careful. Amongst them also there are two

very fine young labourers from near Banff—our Free-church lads. One offered to take a part in our meetings. One of them has a brother in Otago who sent for him. He got 24s. a week at landing, but is now engaged to a gentleman for £50 per annum and his keep with pasturage for two cattle free. There has been a school commenced only two days ago of about 20 boys and girls, all steerage, taught by the Assistant Surgeon and an elderly lady—our next neighbour—but I doubt of much good. I offered my assistance if necessary, but the English seem to wish no dealings with the Scotch, and really there is no love lost. Their belly and the world seem their God, but I trust I have only seen the residuary part of them.\*

The next I shall mention is our provisions. The whole passengers between decks are divided into messes of six adults. Our family makes one mess of six and five-eighths, so all we get served out is our own, and we do with it as we like. Each mess is furnished with a printed card stating the kinds and quantity for each, which card we produce on being served from the storeroom by our steward. We also get two tin tickets with our number, which we tie around our own piece of beef and

\* In *Rob Roy*, Chap. IV, Sir Walter Scott describes the English prejudice against the Scotch, but adds—"the Scotch of the period were guilty of similar injustice to the English, whom they branded universally as a race of purse-proud arrogant epicures," which idea my grandfather repeats in the phrase "their belly and the world seem their God."

to our own allowance of potatoes, which are put into a small net holding about a lippie,\* and then they are taken to the passengers' cook who puts the whole into one common boiler for beef, and one for potatoes. Then, when ready, each gets out his own number. These with the biscuits are served out every morning, and the tea, coffee, sugar, butter, etc., are served out weekly. Of each we have more than a sufficiency, and never want cold beef either to breakfast or supper if we choose. The second cabin folks differ a little from us in getting a larger quantity served out, but when dinner is over it is all lifted off and they have nothing after but hard biscuits and tea. Each meal time is like a great public feast, only everyone serving themselves; and so there is not much spare time as you would suppose, having to lend a hand to all work. There is a table running the whole length of between decks, with a form on each side, and each mess sits opposite their own berths.

There has been a shine with the surgeon and steerage passengers, including ourselves. He demands the men by turns, two and two, to clean the whole length of the steerage—that is scrub the floor with sand and holy stone—which we and our neighbours who have paid full price have refused positively to do; said we would do our own cabin and opposite it, but no more. He said he would stop half

\* Lippy, or lippie, a quarter of a peck, or  $1\frac{3}{4}$  lbs. by weight.



of our or their rations who refused, and even threatened confinement. We told him plainly that if either he or the captain were gentlemen they would never have asked respectable people to do it, and we told him it would be published and here it rests in the meantime. If any more of it after out at sea will write afterwards. The deck is occupied with live stock, the bull and cow stand on separate sides in a large box, also several dogs in several couches. The pigs are about 20, underneath a large boat sparred in on the centre of the deck, and make a sad squealing at meal times. The sheep are in the boat above them, but are as quiet as lambs. There is a butcher on board who attends to all these animals. The fowls and "puggy"\* are not worth noticing, only the latter plays tricks with the captain at times.

February 17th, Sabbath.—The first news was that a child died during the night. The same man lost one fourteen days ago—just before coming on board—and this one looked ill and cried much when he came on. He has another ill and it is expected to go also. They had all been ill before. Don't know what the complaint, but hope the disease will spread no further. The carpenter made a coffin and it was sent ashore in the afternoon and buried in Ryde. There was no service of any kind all day, but the surgeon passed through our berths about 12 o'clock

\* Monkey.

and asked us if we had any Bibles or Prayer Books (we happened all to be sitting round reading a Bible lesson). I said we had plenty of Bibles but that we never used Prayer Books. He said we would require them for the service, and so gave us two new copies to ourselves. I asked if there was to be any to-day, but he said no. He said that the Captain did not like to read the service while in sight of land (another evidence of his dislike to such service at any time). I doubt we will be poorly off during the voyage. There seems no priest on board; neither any Sabbath school, but what we give our own. But again in the evening we read two discourses and two chapters in John aloud to all who were willing to hear, and the labouring man from near Banff prayed and sang sixteen lines of the 40th Psalm. Thus two Sabbaths have passed away without much outward appearance of its being such a day, with the exception of the sailors all being better dressed. I fear much that our Scottish Sabbaths have passed away, but rejoice that our God is still and ever near at hand.

Monday, 18th February.—Still at anchor and no appearance of a change. I again went ashore to purchase some small necessaries, when we learned from the boatman we were well off coming into this place, that several ships which left the Downs along with us had put back here after beating about all this time in the Channel; that the weather

outside had been very thick and stormy; one had run foul of another and several men were lost; that an East Indiaman had been driven from her moorings on the Downs and was totally lost and all hands about the Goodwin Sands.

They said that we might be detained here another week or even two, so if the wind does not change with you to the north or north-east you may write us addressed passengers aboard the *Poictiers* lying at Ryde, Isle of Wight. If we are off it will come back to you. Try it; also a newspaper. We should all view this as a singular providence; had we not left the Downs that morning, or even run in here, we might have been, as many others, tossed about on the waters, or tossed ashore; but in this we have already experienced the goodness of the Lord in His adorable providence, holding us and our company as it were in the hollow of His hand, knowing no more of the storm or even feeling the ship moving any more than if in London docks. In case you should have seen account of any of these losses, be so good as inform all friends speedily of our perfect safety and welfare. Hoping that this will also find all friends at home the same.

Tuesday, 19th February.—Still at anchor, and no appearance of change. I send this ashore to-night, which I hope will reach home safely, only I have no Queen's heads. No more at present.

## CHAPTER II

*After leaving the Isle of Wight they see Nelson's ship "Victory" and so pass Plymouth, and clear the shores of England—In the Bay of Biscay they encounter a storm in which the ship "tosses like a piece of cork"—Their quarters are swamped with water pouring down the hatches, and they are thrown out of their bunks, but the ship's carpenter astonishes them by saying "the weather could not be better!"—The sailors make passengers pay their first footing on visiting the foc's'le—He describes the view of Madeira, which they reach twelve days after leaving the Isle of Wight.*

Monday, February 25th, 1850.—Yesterday afternoon we weighed anchor and set sail from the Isle of Wight (after laying there for eleven days). It was a beautiful day and so calm that we scarcely felt moving. The vessel had to take two or three tacks to clear the Island, in one of which we sailed very close past the mouth of Portsmouth Harbour, where we had a view of the great ship *Victory* of famous memory, in which the venerable Nelson fought and died. We also sailed close past the ship *Lady Bruce*, which lay alongside of us in the London Docks, but which did not leave for eight days after. She is bound for Port Natal with emigrants, and is said to have upwards of 300 on board, the most of which appeared to be on deck at the time looking over the poop and sides at us.

It was like a beehive which must be very uncomfortable, for we do feel noise and confusion enough with 100. What must she not be and a far less ship. The most of the passengers appeared to be the working classes.

Towards evening we got clear of the Island and into the fairway of the Channel, carrying all sail, at which we were glad. At 8 o'clock about fifteen of us Scotch folk met between decks, where we engaged in family worship, singing the 121st Psalm. After which we took our usual walk on deck in order to warm our feet before going to bed. I must here remark that we have all suffered a great deal from the cold weather, almost everyone complaining of chilblains in the feet and hands. I believe it must have been very frosty weather on shore. It is a wonder how the children have stood it, never complaining, neither having been the least coddled. But we have now the prospect of being soon clear of such weather, for to-day we are sailing right before the wind in a calm sea with our main topgallant sail and stenchals\* set, and are now far down the Channel but without land in sight on either side.

Tuesday, February 26th, 1850.—Still calm weather. During all last night it was so much so that we were almost becalmed, rather a rare occurrence I believe in the Channel at this season. Four o'clock p.m.—The breeze has freshened a good deal that we are now

\* Stunsails.

going at about six knots an hour. In the forenoon we saw land in the distance on the English coast, "Start-point" I believe, so we must now be past Plymouth, and it is just a chance if we see land again. Hope by to-morrow at this time we will have cleared Land's End. In the forenoon also two small boats came alongside selling fresh fish of which a few were bought for the "cuddy"\* passengers. The duty of watching the ship between decks has lately been imposed on us steerage passengers at which we are dissatisfied, because they exclude the forecabin passengers. Besides it is only the married men who are eligible. So there being only eight of us, and three required every night, that is one for each watch. It follows that we have a watch every third night, it being my turn last night from 12 till 4. I saw the beautiful moon and the calm sea to advantage. Still I prefer the bed in the night watches.

Wednesday, February 27th, 1850.—Last night about 9 o'clock we were opposite Lizard Point and saw the light in the distance, at which hour they put the ship right about and steered south-west with the full moon right ahead, and a fine breeze with rather a heavy sea. It is a rather nice affair shifting "stays." The vessel pitched a good deal through the night which made our sleep rather broken. To-day the ship's course is again westward,

\* Cabin.

and we must now be a good way on the Atlantic Ocean, with still a heavy sea and the vessel pitching more. The wind is, however, steady, but there has been a good deal of sickness to-day among the passengers.

Thursday, 28th, 5 o'clock p.m.—Since writing last night we have made very little progress. About midnight the wind fell clear off and left us literally in a dead calm. The sea to-day is like glass, but constantly coming in so large swells as to make our ship roll from side to side, making it rather uncomfortable walking the deck. By this hour, however, it is rather better and a slight breeze coming on. Just now I have been called on deck to see a French schooner pass close by our stern whose captain bespoke ours. She is bound for London, and will likely report ours all well and somewhere near the Bay of Biscay.

Friday, March 1st, 5 o'clock p.m.—Sailing to-day has been quite like a pleasure trip, a bright sun, gentle breeze and calm sea, the swell much fallen ; course, almost due south, sun right ahead at 12 o'clock. Have been in company all day with other two large ships. We have gained a little on each. Passengers most on deck and more quietness below. Should this be the dreaded Bay of Biscay we have not "seen it to advantage," the sunny 1st March being too fine for it.

Monday, March 4th.—Just four weeks to-day since we came on board, out of which

we have not had more than twelve days' sailing, although the fourth part of our journey ought to have been over. In looking at the short sentence which I wrote on Friday last I find the old problem verified, that a person should not cry "Haloo! until fairly out of the wood." My calculations as to distance or progress made on the voyage is chiefly a guess or from others as ignorant as myself, because we steerage passengers have no dealings with the "Cuddy" folks and cannot be always asking questions. Well, it was quite true that Friday last was a beautiful day, and so was Saturday for sailing's part. We got on well, but as the day advanced so did the breeze, and as the breeze brightened so did the sea, and towards evening the sailors gave token of more to come by taking in the "top royal" and making all fast. (About this time we bespoke another large ship bound for Demarara.) So, long ere the morning dawned and all Sabbath and all last night was what we called such a storm that we never saw the like before and hope we shall never see the like again. It seems that yesterday we were only in or close upon the Bay of Biscay. For twenty-four hours our big ship was tossed upon the billows like a piece of cork. She pitched and rolled and lurched at such a rate as made us poor inmates think we would never see the morn, and every movable article in and out of our cabins was tossed from side to side and we



along with them, when we attempted to hold them together. What with the falling of the main hatch gunways and forms, etc., in one general melee. The water also came pouring down the hatches in bucketfuls, setting the whole in a swim, and to add to our comfort the bottom fell through three of our sleeping berths, landing the one half on the top of the other. But the carpenter soon put that to rights. He said he never saw such another mess between decks, but as to the weather he said it could not be better. We were running right before the wind in full sail and no danger. Our opinion of the weather, however, differed from his. What could we do but keep our minds in perfect peace, which we were enabled to do, knowing our Heavenly Father was at the helm. The whole family stood it out well by keeping bed, the writer only keeping watch and handing a drink of water. Food was little wanted. Between 4 and 5 o'clock this morning I lay down with my clothes on for a little, being fatigued enough. To-day, however (Monday), things are changed for the better for us. We are all again on deck occasionally to look on the sea in its majestic grandeur and the vessel mounting over the great billows right before the wind at a rapid rate. It is said if we hold on all right we will be at Madeira on Thursday and have fine weather. But when I now write it is difficult to keep my seat. I must also remark the conduct of some of the young

men in the forecabin yesterday, setting up roars of laughter at every new downfall, whistling and singing, and one tried to play the fool. Such conduct only added to the misery that day. It is a Sabbath long to be remembered by us.

Tuesday, March 5th.—The sea is higher than yesterday, nearly as much so as Sabbath last, but no cross seas as then, but still running right before the wind in full sail at from 10 to 11 knots an hour, just as much as the ship could do through a sea the most mountainous I ever saw. Indeed we may say that we never *saw the sea*, neither sailing on, till these last three days; in the afternoon I ventured on deck and even up to the poop, holding on. There the scene was truly grand. The sea rises in a round conical shape like a great hill foaming at the top, over which you would think it impossible to pass, but which changes its position so quickly that we pass through amazingly. At times the ship when passing these mountain waves would lay over nearly perpendicular on deck for a minute or two. Then the water would rush right across the quarterdeck, giving someone not looking out an unexpected cold bath; but to those who could stand it, and knowing there was no danger, it was majestic. Our three oldest boys enjoyed it to the full, fearing nothing, and the younger children played below as much at home as on dry land.

Something rather novel occurred on deck this afternoon which produced some merriment. From the bow of the vessel great numbers of porpoises were seen leaping out of the face of the waves as the ship passed on, which excited some curiosity, but it was no joke to us landsmen to go forward to see them. However, some of the "Cuddy" gentlemen were induced to venture in the fo'c'sle to see what others were seeing, but no sooner did they reach the bow than the sailors made a cross with chalk on the front of their boot, at which they looked rather queer. But they were soon made to understand that they expected them to pay off their first footing on the forecastle, which the gentlemen readily did, giving about 1s. each. But as no class of men like to be taxed above their neighbours, they soon contrived to send up their companions, one by one, to see the great sights. But just as they came (timid enough some of them) they received the chalked foot, then down with their shilling, which caused a fine laugh. So the sailors got a good few bottles of porter to drink their health with. I understand that on Sabbath we split the main topsail and to-day two stenchal yards were broke and sail split. But it's good we don't know of these things until after. It seems the vessel has been averaging ten knots an hour these last three days and nights in the right direction, which will help to make up lost time. I must here do

justice to Captain Beal. On the evening of Sabbath and again on Monday he came into the steerage to see how we were living after the storm, ordered two hands with water pails to clear off our water from the decks, and also gave a fire on Monday to dry up the place.

Wednesday, March 6th.—We have again got all things pretty comfortable, almost as dry as before. The sea is much fallen down and sailing is again very agreeable, but only about five knots an hour. The evening was beautiful and starry. Thursday, one of the finest of days, the sun bright and almost everyone on deck, enjoying themselves, and entirely forgetting the late rocking. The air is mild and balmy and the sea calm, but a gentle breeze and sailing beautifully. Expecting now every hour to come in sight of Madeira.

Friday, March 8th.—This has been another of the finest days you could have in Scotland, even in July. The heat was 88 deg. this morning at 9 in our berths. The Island of Madeira was the first object of excitement this morning. Seen only in the distance like a cloud, and sailing has been so slow that we are little more than past it yet. Five o'clock, and our distance from it supposed about eight or ten miles, so that our view of it has been very indistinct. A thick haze seems hanging over it until lately that the sun is off. We see it more distinct. It appears very

high land, rising nearly perpendicular out of the sea, very rocky, and soars up in the middle like a great mountain top clad with the clouds—very bare, not a bush to be seen, some white specks to be seen, supposed to be houses, very high up, but we were on the west side of it, not the best to see the towns.

### CHAPTER III

*He describes some incidents of life on board and the ships they hail in the tropics—He gives a vivid account of the visit of Neptune as they cross the line : “ upon the whole it was the relic of a barbarous age.”*

Monday, March 25th, 1850.—There is an old saying in Scotland that there are many changes in a winter night, but the same saying might also be well applied here, viz., that there are many changes in a mid-summer day at the line. Saturday last was wet and squally ; yesterday (Sabbath morning) the sun shone in full splendour with scarcely a breath of wind and the heat very oppressive ; but about 1 o'clock a fresh breeze sprang up, and in a few minutes our good ship was laid over and scudding away at eight knots an hour, but it did not last many hours for before the evening we were again laying on our oars. During the night we made a little progress, but to-day again almost becalmed under a perpendicular burning sun. Heat 85 between decks, but once you get a comfortable seat on deck in the shade and a book in your hand you could not desire a lovelier day and sea than before you. But even there the continued noise of children, sailors, and pigs prevents one reading to any advantage.

While speaking of reading I was rather pleased at one of the sailors asking me a few

days ago for a read of the life of the Rev. Mr. McCheyne (on the Sabbath) which was readily granted. He said he was from Shetland and adhered to the Free Church. He seemed a sober looking young man. Our progress has been so small these last few days that we are still two degrees from the line, which is quite customary I understand at this stage of our voyage. What we would call a half-way house for eight, ten, or even fourteen days, caused by the falling off of the north-east trade winds, and it being some distance south of the line ere we fall in with . . .

The home-bound ship did not speak us on Saturday as we expected, although she sailed close past, and it was dark at 8 o'clock. We spoke another brig outward bound yesterday, the *Reliance*, Arbroath, 30 days from Liverpool. She crossed our bows so close that the captain spoke without the trumpet. At other times they speak merely by hoisting colours, which is explained in a book belonging to the captain. Both Saturday and yesterday there were five vessels constantly in sight. To-day only three. Both yesterday and this morning a shark was seen playing about the ship; nevertheless the captain and a few gents. have gone out a bit from the ship in the gig boat and indulged in a bathe. Perhaps they calculate that the shark will be fully satisfied to-day without them from the feast it would get from the carcass of our milk cow which died here this morning, and

its body was committed to the deep. The cow did not seem one suitable for a sea life, being of a heavy make, with little room to lie down, instead of a small light breed. The extreme heat with dry feeding and standing on deck brought on inflammation, and so she died. However Mr. Bowler's bull still thrives well, but he unfortunately gives no milk. Yesterday we had the usual morning service on deck by the captain, but there being rather fewer in attendance than usual the captain immediately after service ran down the steerage and asked the loungers there why they were not at prayers. We all (our family) make a point of being present and dressed.

Tuesday, March 26th.—We were delighted last night in looking at the brilliancy of the setting sun. He goes down into the sea as it were in the fullness of his strength, and this so rapidly that there is very little twilight. The beauty of the scenery on the sky after he has set is beyond description and far beyond what any painter's pencil could touch. You can fancy seeing all manner of scenery in such glowing colours, and apparently so much nearer at hand than ever we saw at home, that you are delighted with gazing on it.

But this was certainly not the only enjoyment of last night. For about 8 o'clock we were all taken by surprise when on deck by a visit from the servant of Neptune, who all of a sudden came on board our ship out



of a chariot of fire which he left behind him floating on the sea. He had on a long coat and black hat and "wallet" before him, spoke in a strange hard voice, and wished to see the captain, saying he had a letter for him from his master (Neptune) from the line who expected to be with him to-morrow evening. At time he shook hands with many of the "cuddy" passengers on the poop, who flocked around him. He asked where we had come from and how long at sea. Seemed to recognise some old friends, which he had often seen there before, being so very glad to see them. He had a long Jew beard and blackened face. Before leaving us he seized hold on the youngest Mr. Archibald and blackened his face with his beard. All this produced great excitement and merriment. The whole farce was the first trick of the sailors on drawing near the line. They had secretly prepared a large tub with old ropes and tar, which was lowered over the bows of the ship, and as it came along the side one of the sailors dressed up for the occasion came over by the stays unseen, leaving the old tub to burn away out to sea, which it did for a long time. The moon was shining so bright that I saw one lady working fine network on the poop.

It happened that the ship *Lady Bruce* was so near over our stern that they put out their Neptune Car, and each ship's company cheered one another. At length they drew

so near that the captains hailed each other. Our captain cried: "*Lady Bruce* ahoy!" Answer: "Yes." "You're bound for Port Natal?" "Yes." "I wish you good passage, and you can report our ship on arrival." They asked: "Are you the *Poictiers*?" "Yes." "How many passengers have you?" Answer: "100." "But I have 300," said *Lady Bruce*. Answer: "I wish you much luck with them, hurrah! Are they all well?" "Yes." "How is your doctor? Better?" "How did you know that he was sick?" But we lost the answer from the noise, and we were all surprised at the question. After this each ship's company commenced singing songs, viz., "God Save the Queen," "Rule, Britannia," etc., etc., to which each ship replied by clapping of hands and hurrahs. This lasted for about two hours. I really did not expect to see such a scene on the midst of the ocean.

Wednesday, March 27th.—Our progress has been so very small that we are not yet at the line, but were within 30 miles at 12 o'clock, and sailing nicely since. We must now be very near it, so the sailors are busy engaged for some fun to-night.

Thursday, March 28th.—I must now endeavour to give some account of the somewhat barbarous practice still observed by some crews on the passing the line, which I would set down as an excuse for a ball more than anything else. Captain Beal, on this

occasion, allowed the seamen to have a little fun, provided they kept moderate and did not interfere with the passengers. Accordingly they had all prepared, and about 5 o'clock Neptune made his appearance in full style, most grotesquely dressed up, cocked hat and a . . . with his wife (a sailor dressed up in women's clothes), and straw hat and clean shaved. They were seated together on a car drawn by a number of youths, and followed by a number of attendants dressed in character as policemen, barber, etc., and last by two black bears (two sailors with blackened faces and legs, jet black on hands and feet, roaring aloud to the dismay of the children). The procession came out from the fo'c'sle on toward the cuddy door, where it made a halt, and Neptune addressed the captain, said he was so happy to see him in his dominions, etc., etc. The wife said she had a very numerous family, and she understood some of her children were on board, which they wished to have baptised. Then Captain Beal treated the party engaged to a glass of rum. The procession then moved forward to the opposite side of the deck where they had a barber's shop erected, viz., the joiner's bench drawn across the deck with steps up to it, where stood a small tub of tar and grease with a brush in it. Also the barber and doctor with white aprons on. Above the bench . . . was laid across reaching from the . . . to the

long boat, on which was seated Neptune and his retinue. Behind the bench and spar was a large tarpaulin hung by the corners and well filled with water. All being seated, and quietness restored by the police, one son after another was taken up on the bench and formally introduced to their father and mother (Neptune), who asked them a few questions, and made them promise to be obedient children when in his dominion, etc., etc. His doctor pronounced them in good health, but recommended them to the barber to have their hair cropped and shaved. After blindfolding his eyes, he is seated on the spar with his back to the sail of water, his chin and mouth then rubbed over with a brush of tar, when the barber with a large knife made of an old iron hoop makes him . . . and he gives him . . . and scrapes then a little more harder, then another touch-up. Then all on a sudden he is pitched over the spar backward into the sail full of water, making a splash, and where the two black bears are standing in the water to the purpose of washing him well in the water, growling all the time. One after another was done in this way to five or six. All being finished here, the procession returned in the same order. On passing the cuddy the captain said to Neptune he would be glad to see him on another occasion when passing this way. In a few minutes the scene was closed by the farce of throwing the sail full of water

at each other in pailfuls in a very rude manner, but all passed over in good humour. Afterwards a collection was made through the ship for Neptune and his children, and a jolly night they seemed to have, for we heard them roaring and singing when we went to sleep. Upon the whole it was the relic of a barbarous age.

The follies of Neptune's visit are all passed away in quietness. . . . and we are sailing on to-day before a better breeze than we have had for some days past, so we are now fairly passed from one hemisphere to another in west longitude about  $22\frac{1}{2}$  deg., but still we have upwards of 12,000 miles of sea before us. Thus far, however, we have had little else than pleasant weather with the exception of rocking in or about the Bay of Biscay for one day, so we hope the remainder will be no worse than the past. This is one point passed in our journey, and some day sooner or later we must all pass a still more important stage in our history, not only from one hemisphere into another but out of this world into eternity ; but alas, although our present . . . be supposed double hazardous, it seems the least calculated to awaken sinners to a sense of their danger.

## CHAPTER IV

*Hard tasks imposed on steerage passengers under a tropical sun—The death of a passenger—Complaints against the surgeon—His indignation at the sailors fencing on the Sabbath—The captain tells him that Scotch sailors “are the best servants, although the most drunken when they went ashore”—He remonstrates with the chief steward for killing a pig on Sunday as “an outrage on the Christian Sabbath.”*

Saturday, March 30th, 1850.—Since writing last we have continued to sail on at a fine rate and so steady that we never need to alter a sail, running at six to seven knots. We are already five degrees south of the line on a south south-west course, so that we are now much nearer the South American coast than any other land, and will likely continue in the same course for two or three weeks to come. There has been no vessel in sight save one these two or three days past, so all hope of sending home our line correspondence is lost, and will not likely occur now until we reach the end of our voyage. But for the sake of friends at home we would have much desired to have sent from about this place just to have assured them of our progress in safety, and our continuance in good health and spirits. . . . About three days ago the sailors caught a shark with a hook and line. It was about four feet long, but vicious and very tenacious of life. It was cut up on

deck and several had it fried to breakfast that morning, which I also tasted, but it was too strong meat for me. William has the fins keeping. We also see plenty of flying fish daily but they are so small that no one thinks of catching them.

There is a circumstance regarding the passengers in the steerage which I think ought to be made known in Scotland at least, and what we all think a piece of gross imposition on the part of the N.Z. Company, at least they keep us in the dark until they get us out to sea. The steerage passengers only have not only to keep watch through the night in turn and clean the floor between decks, but also a few of them are fixed on to draw water from the hold . . . about 50 buckets each daily ; but it is so disagreeable a job, wetting all your clothes and getting them iron rusted. Besides it is made compulsory, otherwise your provisions are partly stopped, which has been done twice already, and to-day is the third day of two men having been sent up on the poop from 6 morning till 8 evening with only twice biscuit and water a day, under a tropical sun at the line, and are not allowed even to walk about, neither durst anyone speak to them, neither send them anything else to eat, otherwise they will have their own provisions stopped. William Bethune, who comes to our meeting, a very sober decent fellow, and who has already drawn the water four weeks, and who



GEORGE HEPBURN IN 1878



MRS. GEORGE HEPBURN





was still willing to do his share but not for the whole passage, the captain put this punishment in force; but he said he had nothing to do with it, that it was the doctor's orders on behalf of the N.Z. Company. The doctor says he will be responsible for the consequences, which I fear will make a noise . . . and will do the Company no good. It is quite the same . . . whether we have paid the full passage money or not . . . and at £18 18s. all are alike in these jobs, and . . . can get out at any of these prices if they say they cannot give any more. The ship is a sad place for clothes of all kinds, and, having these things to do, the oldest and worst you can get the better. At present we are almost naked night and day owing to the heat. Still it is not disagreeable on deck, but below and during night it is very oppressive. A shoemaker on board is getting constant employment in making and mending, and one woman is constantly employed in sewing for others on board.

Monday, April 1st.—To-day completes the eighth week since we came on board at London, but properly speaking only the fifth sailing week from the Channel. However, we are now ten degrees south of the line and about 27 west longitude. Hence we must now be nearer the South American coast than any other land. Ever since crossing the line we have averaged about seven knots, beautiful sailing, never needing to alter a

rope night or day. Yesterday (Sabbath) had the usual service on deck. To-day some gouk's errants (April 1st) were passed off in the morning, and to-day I believe another vessel, the *Mariner* I understand, should be leaving London for Otago direct. From a conversation I had with the captain to-day, he said that the *Mariner* would very likely be at Otago as soon as we, as it would take five or six weeks to call at all the other stations. In that case it will be the beginning of July ere we reach our destination.

Wednesday, April 3rd.—Still sailing in the same south south-west course; now 16 deg. south in a good breeze. Have seen no ships these few days past. The two men I spoke of as being confined on the poop for refusing to draw water have given in yesterday and resumed their labour at the water again, but not without a grudge. One of the Aberdonians (Donald) has been ill with a sore throat these three days past. This has been a very prevalent complaint on board, but Donald blamed sleeping on deck, which I disapprove of by a person unaccustomed to it. I had some difficulty in getting my boys persuaded against it, although it was certainly very inviting for a time, but already we feel a marked change for the better, it being much cooler.

Thursday, April 4th.—It is my painful duty to record the death of poor Donald, *alias* Alexander Donald, of whom I wrote

yesterday. It seems that the doctor had ordered him on deck yesterday for the most part to get the fresh air, his berth being so very close and heated, but I fear this was too much for him, having been in a strong fever for two days previous and getting no support. Very soon after coming from on deck he became insensible and remained so all night. When I saw him this morning at 9 he moaned heavily, and by 10 o'clock saw him expire without a struggle. He was a stout, healthy young man aged only 26; was a very quiet, sober, and I think religious man; attended our prayer meeting. His neighbour from the same place feels his loss very much.

We can't help on this occasion expressing our opinion of the surgeon on board. Whether he is a person of skill is not for us to judge; but really his attention to the sick is not what it should be. Only once a day he made a hurried visit, and although he was sent for last night to see Donald he only sent some trifle of sago for him by another, and he came this morning at 10, just in time to see him at his last. As far as we can judge the same powder is given to all and sundry, male and female. May the Lord preserve us all in health while on board this ship. At 4 o'clock his body was committed to the deep, sewed in canvas. The captain read the funeral service over him; he and some others put on their black coats, and the service was very solemnly gone about. The captain seemed rather affected.

Saturday, April 6th.—In south latitude 21 degrees, course now south south-west by east, but making very little progress these two days, the trades having fallen off much, and it is said that our winds will now be varied until we fall in with the next south south-west winds. The weather, however, is most delightful, like the best midsummer days at home, and so balmy, just like what we had about Madeira. If you have a share of such weather in Scotland and England the farmer must be getting well on with the seed.

I believe last night about 6 o'clock we saw the sun go down again with as great brilliancy as man could behold, and the radiance left behind was altogether beyond my description, or even the painter's pencil. Suffice to say that the sky above was as if on fire, or as if highly illuminated by the glare of an unseen volcano. Every cloud above seemed tinted with colours of every hue and colour from the deepest crimson to the most delicate azure, and all constantly changing into some different figure representing the most splendid panoramic views. But it is of short duration, for in about twenty minutes or so all is over and dark gray clouds occupy the place, relieved at first only by a few twinkling stars; but ere another half-hour is passed the whole canopy is studded with thousands and tens of thousands of other worlds, all shining brighter, it may be, than our dark world unknown. Above all other

hours of the twenty-four the evening of fine weather is the most delightful on deck ; then you are as it were compelled to look upward to the moon and to the stars, ever delightful to contemplate, knowing that they were all framed by the fingers of our Heavenly Father, and that in wisdom He made them all. To look downwards and onwards from the ship's sides you see nothing but an immeasurable waste of unfathomable waters, dark and gloomy, relieved only by the dashing waves at the bows or the ripple around the ship, often sparkling as if with limpid fire. At this hour, too, the sailors are generally at rest, grouped in some corner on deck singing some sea song, or sweet home, as happy as the day is long, and then you can get as many wonderful stories from them as you wish, or is even good for you. I have bathed every morning at six over the ship's bows for the last two weeks ; the water is pumped over on you, and is very pleasant indeed.

Sabbath, April 7th.—This is the first time I have taken out my desk on Sabbath, but being somewhat wearied with reading I feel desirous of recording a few passing occurrences of this holy Sabbath. At an early hour this morning I heard the butcher employed killing a pig for dinner. About 9 o'clock a large vessel sailed close past our stern, and came alongside so near that the two captains spoke often to each other audibly, and you must believe it a very interesting thing to

see and hear conversations with a company of fellow creatures in the midst of the wide ocean and so far removed from human habitation. The vessel was the *Santa Pore* from London bound for Adelaide, Port Phillip, and Sydney, with 180 passengers, all well.

At 10.30 o'clock had our usual church service, read by the captain, which occupies about 30 to 35 minutes ; then it may be said that the Sabbath is over. About 2 o'clock I observed from 'tween decks two seamen on the main deck fencing with long white sticks to the amusement of the company, chiefly the gentlemen standing on the poop. My indignation felt speedily aroused. I seized a few tracts entitled *Prize the Bible*, ran upstairs, and stood immediately betwixt them, and asked if they knew this was the Sabbath day. They were speechless. I presented a tract to each, but they felt so ashamed that they ran off saying that they could not read. I followed them into their berths, asking if they were not ashamed to make such an exhibition on the Sabbath. They tried to hide themselves, still refusing the tracts. I left them, and returned along the deck handing several tracts and sitting down at the cuddy door—my usual seat. What the gentlemen thought I know not, but silence was the effect. Shortly after the same two men came slyly out again, but found their way to the forecabin, and there continued their practising a little longer. However, having few if

any onlookers, they soon gave it up. While reading my book, which was, by the way, the *Life of the Rev. John McDonald*, and that part of it, too, which gave an account of his voyage from London to India, which present circumstance made me feel both interesting and profitable, a message boy came to me for another and another tract, at which I was pleased. Our George, being a bit of a favourite with the sailors, being a good deal among them, ever ready to do them a little turn, he offered to go amongst them with a number, which he did, and succeeded in disposing of the most of them. Some were returned, and some asked if I was going out to New Zealand to be a missionary. What these silent messengers may do I know not, but I know they contain the indestructible seed of the Word which abideth for ever, and I have prayed for a blessing upon it. I find them all very civil to speak to, but they are a set of poor neglected men, having no fear of God before their eyes. One of them only have I found decent, who comes from Shetland, and have twice got McCheyne from me to read. I observed to the captain one day that several of his men were from Scotland. He said he wished he had more of them. He generally found them the best servants, although the most drunken when they went on shore.

My zeal being a little tired by the late occurrence, and partly by reading what McDonald had done amongst the crew when



on board, I shortly made up to the chief steward as he came out of the cabin, touched him gently on the arm, asked him who gave orders for the killing of the pig this morning. He seemed amazed. I asked again whether the captain or he had the charge of the business. He said at once he had with the captain's consent, but I said this was Sabbath—why not on Saturday night or morning? Answer: It was hot weather, and they had no other fresh dinner for to-day, and one could not be so particular at sea. But he knew it was not altogether right, etc., etc. I said he was an intelligent man, and knew we were all accountable beings, and asked if he thought such answers would do to offer at the last day? I said I hoped he would excuse my liberty and freeness, but being the father of a family and having lately left Scotland where such a thing would be considered an outrage on the Christian Sabbath and an open breach of the Commandment, which said "six days," etc. He said he took it all in good part, but having been so long at sea he had become so careless, but thanked me and left. I understand he has been very wicked, but I fear were we to continue long at sea we too would become careless, and soon even forget the Sabbath altogether but from the name. What we may do in a strange land I know not, but we have need of much watchfulness both for ourselves and the young.

## CHAPTER V

*They meet with variable weather, sometimes foul and sometimes fair—Further details of life on the ship—Slow progress—They pass the Cape six weeks after crossing the line and three months at sea.*

Monday, April 8th, 1850.—Our meeting was better attended last night than usual, and we had two services instead of one, and three times psalm singing. I looked forward also to an improvement in our meetings, and we get quietness now in a great measure. We are sailing to-day in a most beautiful style, almost right before the wind, in the proper course for the Cape direct (south by east) with stiff breeze running about eight knots an hour in latitude about 25 degrees south. Should the breeze continue, we expect to be near the Cape by this day week. There is another ship near at hand, supposed to be the *Lady Bruce* again.

Wednesday, April 10th.—Since writing the above on Monday I have now to record an account of a heavy gale of wind which we have encountered. On Monday night the wind veered round stern on, which always makes a vessel roll heavily, which she did all that night and was very uncomfortable. Yesterday forenoon the wind got round to the south-west and by midday it blew rather fresh, so that one sail after another had to be reefed. By 4 o'clock it was quite a gale with

showers of rain. About this time the mainsail split right up the middle—one half was blown to the wind in shreds. I never saw such a wreck of old rags flying in the wind. The other half was taken in, and the poor fellows who were stretched along the bare yard reefing had no joke of it, and so we had no mainsail that night to steady the ship. So we had another disagreeable night of rolling and pitching over the mighty waves. Everything loose, either on deck or 'tween, was rolled from side to side with great violence. Amongst other things the oil bottle was upset, so but for a small drop I had for a small collier lamp, which I lighted, we would have been in darkness 'tween decks that night. We put the children early to bed, and sleep soon prevented them knowing more of it. Frequently the waves broke on her broad side with such violence that to us on the weather side it sounded rather harshly. However, morning came and we are in safety. The wind to-day a little more moderate, but still a heavy sea running. However, we have got up another mainsail and driving away over mountainous waves. Our ship sails well in a heavy breeze. The *Lady Bruce* still kept company with us all yesterday, but is not in sight to-day. The above account of the gale is my own. On speaking to the captain next day of it, he said it was only a bit of diversion, and the first mate said it was not half a storm, that he had seen one five

times as much, so custom is everything. Even with ourselves, already what we counted dangers at the Bay of Biscay, we can now look on with composure. Indeed it is no use being dispirited, for the captain says we have not seen the sea yet.

Saturday, April 13th.—Since writing last we have again enjoyed three days of fine weather but contrary winds. It is still blowing fresh from the south-east, just the way we want to go, and hence we have been tacking backward and forward, sometimes south-west and sometimes due east, and the captain says we might have done as much in three hours in a fair wind as we have these three days, but this was the thirteenth time he had come down this way, and he never was so detained before. Our position is about 27 degrees south latitude and 18 longitude west from the Cape. Were we round this great headland we expect to get on rapidly, but all are in good health and spirits.

Yesterday, Sabbath, 14th.—Still a calm sea and making little way. The usual morning service, and during the whole day rather more than the usual quietness, and in the evening our usual meeting with much quietness through the ship.

To-day, Monday, 15th.—Quiet and calm morning. The captain gave orders that the hatches would be opened for getting up the passengers' boxes. Commenced at 8 o'clock, and the hurry and confusion was considerable

up to 12 o'clock, there being so many things to remove before getting at everyone's box wanted. Unfortunately the two we wanted were put so far forward and down when at London that we got no clothes up at all, although I wrought very hard in the hold all forenoon. Was promised them after dinner, but by 1 o'clock a fresh breeze sprang up, and orders were given to replace all the boxes, etc., with all possible speed and make all fast for the stiff breeze. It is wonderful how sudden it comes on in these latitudes, and how well the seamen know it. Before everything was replaced the ship was scudding away at the rate of eight knots an hour, at which we were all right glad for it was in the right direction for the Cape. I must not omit to mention that I got up the old box containing the seed wheat I got from Mr. Ireland, which I was glad to find in good condition, as fresh and sound as when shipped. I just replaced it and put it back in the hold. I also got up four kits of Mr. Ireland's red herring. They were also perfectly sound. I have sold one kit at 1s. per doz., being rather small sized. Sold also my fine cheese at 1s. per pound. We could well have used it all, but the price was tempting and the sovereign will be as useful when landing. The steward gets 9d. per pound for round E . , both salt and dry. He also gets 1s. per pound for bacon and ham, but we have bought none of these, neither spent a penny

for anything since coming on board at the Isle of Wight; but we see our neighbours frequently buying something, especially London porter at 10d. per bottle, of which a very great quantity is used. We do miss not having a good Irish or Scotch ham, for on salt beef days we have little dinner. The beef being in general so very salt, lean, and dry that it is scarcely eatable, but the pork is very good and the fatter the better.

Tuesday, April 16th.—Sailing very rapid at nine knots through a heavy sea, and now heavy rain with the hatches down over us, and the vessel laid so much over that it is difficult keeping our feet between deck, and something constantly upsetting. Still I write this through a borrowed light from the fore-cabin.

Thursday, April 18th.—North latitude 33 degrees south and 10 west longitude. Both yesterday and to-day fine weather and sailing pleasantly, direct east by south. Saw a large albatross bird to-day. They have very long wings. As we approached the Cape we expect to see these and other birds in great numbers. I have been particularly struck with the absence of flying fowls of every sort, with the exception of now and then a stormy petrel or two, a small black bird like the water crow or blackbird, flies very close to the water. The flying fish so often talked of are not worth naming, being so very small and so like the water that they are difficult

to be seen, though at times they are in great flocks.

The very sight of a good flying bird, even a number of crows, would be an object of interest in this dreary waste of waters, the view of which is every day sameness itself. You fancy the ship sailing in the centre of a great circle of water, bounded all around by the blue horizon, but ever imagining that when you have advanced onward to a supposed point before you, you will see over the hill so to speak, and enable you to rest the eye on some distant land soon to be obtained; but no, to-day is as yesterday, and so on it will continue for other two months yet to come. Nevertheless day after day passes on wonderfully.

I have here to record another death—a child of eleven months died yesterday morning, and its body was committed to the deep in the usual rude form at 5 o'clock last night, when the usual service was read by the captain. The mother seemed much affected when she saw it passed into the sea. It was the youngest of that only other family on board who had eight children—Hoskins by name, a shoemaker by trade. But the life of the child was as great a wonder as its death, and we would say a great blessing to it. It was somewhat painful to look at, such a miserably small living image, and its face more like the puggy than any other creature. Still its own mother thought it a sweet babe,

and asked me to look at its face after death for some hours to see how pleasant it looked, which I did. So this death was no wonder to any. There are still one or two other children very delicate with teething, etc. The weather is now much colder, bathing in the morning is all over, and underclothing resorted to by several. White coats and hats are all laid aside.

Saturday, April 20th.—Still fine weather, better could not be desired in any part of Her Majesty's dominion—neither too hot nor too cold, and a bright sun, calm sea, and gentle breeze, and in the evening the moon shines so very clear that it seems a treat to be on deck, for from 6 to 9 o'clock it is crowded, and it is with difficulty that the children will give up their play for bed. Most of yesterday the cuddy gents made it a sporting day by firing from the poop, first at two or three large birds flying about the ship's stern, but I heard of no deaths, and for want of more of the feathered tribe they threw empty bottles into the sea and fired at them. I don't intend spending my powder and shot on such uncertain game. I understand that the gentlemen have a large stock of fowling pieces with them. We regret not having more general supply of everything, both eatable and wearable. Being known now as the merchant on board, we are almost daily enquired at for something, and we are resolved to sell every shilling's worth we can spare as



the price is always good. Had we had a better stock of Scotch whisky it would have turned to good account at 2s. 6d. to 3s. per bottle, but we had so very little a quantity that we have none to dispose of. The prohibition for bringing it on board is all fudge ; no one ever asked whether you had one bottle or 100, and really a glass now and then would be a great treat with so long bad provisions and bad water—very bad smelling like rotten eggs, and some days as if it had come out of a clay hole.

Monday, April 22nd.—Yesterday (Sabbath) passed over in the routine service and evening meeting, still better attended and quietness. To-day has been a busy day on deck for all hands, viz., the taking down the fore topsail yard and putting up a new one in its place ; the old one had got sprung in one or two places with the ship's rolling in the Bay of Biscay. It is a very large heavy yard. After being clad with all the iron rings and bolts, etc., it would make a good mainmast for some small craft. All hands, passengers and all, were required at the pulling of it up to its proper place, and now the sail and all the ropes are still to replace. Of course this work could only have been done on a fine day, and assuredly a finer day than this and yesterday could not be desired. All the sailors declare that they never saw such fine weather at this place. It is more common to have heavy weather in rounding



From *Pictorial Illustrations of New Zealand*—London, 1847.

S. C. Brees, C.E.

### TOWN OF NEW PLYMOUTH AT TARANAKI

“This morning . . . all were on deck to see, if they could, a small speck on the distant horizon like a white cloud or tent, said to be the top of Mt. Egmont, nearly 100 miles off.”—page 86.



the Cape. The fineness of it, however, prevents our progress. The sea is perfectly calm and light breeze, if any, more like line weather.

Wednesday, April 24th.—The ink could scarcely be dry in the pen with which I wrote the last few lines giving such a fine account of the weather when the clouds began to assume a different appearance. Throughout the evening the moon was only seen dimly through the clouds, and surrounded by a “baogh” indicating a near shower, and so the morning light was ushered in by foul wet weather. The hatches and tarpaulin over it had to be kept closed all forenoon over us. Still a great deal of wet came down and made it uncomfortable, and as the day advanced the breeze heightened, disturbing the calm bosom of the mighty deep, at which it soon showed its white angry teeth all round. Our gallant ship was also proud enough to continue to show off her lofty main royal and top gallant sails and stud sails, but she also had to come down from her towering position by furling one sail after another, still holding as many good sails as drove us on almost before the wind at from nine to ten knots an hour. The rain ceasing by midday again the main royal and studs were set, being determined to make all possible sail with a fair wind. The sea rose heavy and the ship rolled before the wind all last night at a sad rate, at times little short of the Bay of Biscay ; but we are now 200 miles further

on, and to-day again is fine weather, favourable breeze at seven knots direct, so all the hurry of yesterday is already quite forgot, and we are reading a book on the fore-castle as formerly.

Tuesday, April 30th.—Since writing last we have experienced very foul weather. Friday and Saturday wind right ahead, driving us again south by west, and very cold. Sabbath morning was ushered in wet and sleety, preventing all service or even walking on deck. (This is only the second Sabbath we have wanted service since leaving the Channel.) Most people were necessarily below. I had occasion to find fault with a fore-cabin young gentleman during the day for whistling, a practice too common with them every Sabbath. I told him that whatever he might think of the Sabbath he ought to have some regard for the feeling of his neighbours. To us, I said, it was very painful and annoying; that if he had been even taught to repeat the Fourth Commandment in his early days he would not surely have done such a thing. He said very little and whistled no more that night. Our meeting in the evening I am persuaded commands silence at both ends for the evening; it lasts only one hour.

Yesterday (Monday, 29th) was ushered in by a continuance of foul weather, heavy rain and high wind from the south-east. By midday it increased almost to a strong gale and tremendous sea, the heaviest by far we

have yet met with. All sail was mostly taken in, except four, and these close reefed. The sea broke violently over the ship's bows and frequently across the main deck, pouring at times down upon us through the main and fore hatches in torrents, flooding us all over, making our cabins very wet and uncomfortable. The vessel rolled and pitched heavily, upsetting almost everything movable. The hatches were closed and covered with a tarpaulin, leaving us very little light. In the evening the wind and sea both moderated considerably, and more sail was set. We went early to bed and enjoyed a good sound sleep until this morning at 7 a.m., when the weather showed a very different aspect, clear and dry, calm sea but a heavy swell, fair wind, and our course almost due east. It may now well be said "the storm is changed into a calm at His command and will," and again, "Oh, that men to the Lord would give praise for His goodness." But I daresay someone reading this will say, What becomes of the children during storms? Why they just play about as usual in the highest glee, often tumbling over at they know not what. They neither know nor feel any danger. The older children glory in a storm as fraught with fine sport, seeing their older neighbours drenched at times with a heavy sea, and at times tumble right over on deck when the ship gives an unexpected lurch, of which there were not a few yesterday. Amongst others,

poor Black Caesar, while carrying a basket of dishes from the cuddy dinner, fell right down, breaking some, which produced a loud laugh at his expense. They declared it made him become white as a cloth, although he is by nature as black as a "sloe."\* He seems, however, a quiet inoffensive good servant, acting now in the capacity of chief cook.

Yesterday morning the third mate caught a live albatross with a line and hook. It is a large bird about the size and very like a swan, but short in the neck, long beak like a duck, pointed like a hawk, wings measuring about nine feet from tips, yet it cannot fly from off the deck. It walked about for some time until all who liked saw it. It is almost pure white except the wings which are mostly black, and is really a beautiful bird. However, they killed him and plucked him to-day for the feathers, giving the carcass to the dogs, being of too strong a nature to eat. Several others were shot a day or two before which fell into the sea. We had expected ere this time to have been fairly round the Cape, but we are still west of it by longitude, although we have now been 12 weeks on board yesterday, still, however, all in good health.

Friday, May 3rd.—Since writing last the weather has been still very variable, sometimes foul, and sometimes fair, which is what they call Cape weather, and we have had our share of it these last three weeks, being six weeks yesterday since crossing the line, and

\* Sloe.

three months at sea, during which time we have made the one half of our journey, at least we have still from seven to eight thousand miles before us. Nevertheless we are living in hopes of seeing New Zealand in six or seven weeks, as we are now fairly clear of the Cape, there being no more lines to cross, neither capes to clear, nothing but plain sailing in a straight course in a fair wind, which I am happy in adding we have got since yesterday, the ship being now running right before a stiff breeze, with main royal and four stud sails set, at nine to ten knots an hour in latitude 43 south and 20 east longitude, hoping a six weeks' continuance.

The captain is now bespeaking a vessel right ahead by signals. She is the *Lord Byron* for East Indies. Yesterday being our oldest son's birthday—now 16 years—he treated us to a bottle of porter, the first we have had since coming on board. It was very good, but little of it when eight of us had a tasting of it. It was also the birthday of another young gentleman in the forecabin who, it seems, was not so easy pleased treating his friends. They kept it up until 2 a.m., when all was blue. A vast amount of drunkenness has been practised by some young gents in the forecabin. It has often appeared more like a riotous public house than otherwise, and I have seen more than once one lying on the floor so drunk and vomiting that he could not go to bed (gentlemen, eh?).



## CHAPTER VI

*Another month of storms at sea—"The mighty wonders of the deep"—Death of another child—The Islands of St. Paul and Amsterdam—The sinful sailmaker, sings profane songs on the Sabbath.*

Monday, May 6th, 1850.—Yesterday (Sabbath) fine weather. Had the usual morning service on deck, private reading McDonald's Life during the day, and the evening meeting. During the night a heavy storm of rain and lightning, a deal of rain water came down on us by the main hatchway. To-day is again fine and sailing rapid and beautiful. During the last 24 hours we have run over 240 miles, having now fairly caught the south-west trades which, if they continue steady at this rate, will carry us to New Zealand in five weeks. The days have now become considerably shorter, it being now quite dark by half past 5 p.m., and no light in the morning until past 6 a.m.

Thursday, May 9th.—On Monday evening we went again on deck to see the vivid lightning, so different from any we had witnessed in Scotland. It confined itself within or between the clouds and the sky, bursting regularly at two given points at about two miles distant, darting with the rapidity of lightning from one point to the other behind the clouds, showing their transparency. It was more like an exhibition of

fireworks than otherwise, and continued through the evening. To us it was quite a new display of the Creator's works, but since then we have paid for the sight, for in this southern latitude, as well as in the northern, fire at night indicates broken weather, so ere the next morning's dawn it rained heavily and continued to do so throughout the entire day, keeping us under hatches. But that was nothing compared to the following night when the rain and the wind increased to a strong gale, raising the sea tremendously. We had to run under close-reefed topsails. The mizzen sheet gave way, by which we nearly lost two men; they were thrown over, but hung on by the rope and were immediately restored. Through the night the ship both rolled and pitched heavily, the sea frequently striking her broadside with great violence, so sleep there was none but with the children. From 4 to 8 in the morning the sea broke regularly across the main deck, pouring down upon us in torrents, even though the hatches were on and covered with a tarpaulin (observe the main hatch is only grated). Of course those of us nearest the main hatch had to turn out of bed and gather up the water with all speed to keep our berths from floating. Those next you never trouble themselves though you were floating.

Happily the next day the sun broke through brightly early in the forenoon, and

a few of us got on deck, and standing on the forecastle it was truly a fine sight to look across the seas running mountains high and our gallant barque rising over and skimming through these seas at the rate of ten knots an hour. It is only now that we are seeing this "mighty wonders in the deep." In the morning one of the good wives attacked the assistant for a glass of brandy after getting so much wet, but he got off by saying he had none on board. However, at about 12 o'clock, when a number of gentlemen were standing on the poop, a tremendous sea unexpectedly broke over the stern sweeping the poop, rushed into the cuddy, and in torrents down both the fore and main hatches, giving us the same labour to do over again. Shortly after the surgeon came down and said he would treat all the adults with a glass of gin, from which we made a drop of warm toddy, which we felt did us much good. Little or no more water came down after this; still the sea is very high. I fear in writing this minute account of a bit storm that it may deter others from following our path, but while it lasts we must be of necessity very much alarmed. Let me assure those who may read this that such is not the case. Fear never seems to enter the head of anyone, either male or female. The general result is, when the sea gives some a good ducking, a hearty laugh. However, it is far from being comfortable.

It is once again my painful duty to record the death of another child, viz., one of the twins of Dr. Coward, our superintendent surgeon, being the stoutest of the two. It was weaned before coming on board, while the other was still nursed by the mother. I am not at liberty to hazard any observations, but we would not have liked to see any of ours nursed in the same way. What we have seen of the English here exhibit great want of skill in nursing young children. This child, however, got a coffin made, lined with white and covered with black cloth and a quantity of sand at its feet to carry it down. It was cast over privately from the captain's cabin window in the stern. This is the third child's death, besides poor Donald.

Friday, May 10th.—Since writing the above we have been sailing at a very rapid rate at about ten knots an hour over a heavy sea and strong favourable breeze with a good deal of rain.

Tuesday, May 14th.—Latitude 39 degrees east longitude 61 degrees.—During the last seven days we have sailed 1,240 miles, good work, and still running nine to ten knots. Yesterday forenoon we were doing twelve knots, but it came on to rain by 12 o'clock and continued so all day, keeping us in darkness, and hence an uncomfortable and weary day; but to-day is dry and sailing very pleasant. We expect to see the Island of St. Paul by Saturday lying in 78 east longitude.

Ever since rounding the Cape we have a goodly company of flying fowls attending the ship. The largest of these is the albatross, about the size of a good swan or goose, with wings extended from nine to 12 feet, a beautiful bird, of which two have been caught with a simple bait and thread line by some of the young gents. Mrs. H. would very fain have got the entire skin of one or two of them to send home to certain gentlemen in the Lang Toon for being stuffed, but the birds were foolishly dissected. The next largest are Cape Hens—a brown bird with a short tail, about the size of a common hen at home. Next are the Cape pigeons, a beautiful bird, with speckled wings and white breast, about the size of home pigeons. Then there is Mother Carey's chickens and stormy petrels—smaller birds like water crows and swallows.

Tuesday, May 21st.—After a few days of fine weather last week it came to blow very hard on Friday evening, bringing us down to reefed topsails. At same time a watch is kept all night on the outlook for the island of Amsterdam lying in our direct course. On Saturday the wind moderated considerably, and about half past twelve noon we heard the cry of land ahead, which was first observed by Mr. Archibald, late of Burnt Island. We were soon all on deck, at which hour we fancied we could see in the distant horizon a hazy cloud which was called land. However, every hour brought it more distinctly in view.

By 3 o'clock we were so near it as to see the nakedness of that desolate isle, rearing its rocky head in the midst of those waste waters. Passing it about two miles off, or even less, we could not discern the smallest vestige of either bush or shrub. It is a bold precipitous rock to the westward, sloping gradually into the sea towards the east, on which side only a little greenness was to be seen. To my judgment it appeared about the size of Inch Keith, but it is said to be five miles broad and 15 miles in circumference, without possessing a single inhabitant. Still it is said wild goats are to be found on it, and the South Sea whalers lounge about for a few months in summer. Barren as it was, it is surprising how much interest was exhibited in it among the passengers, chiefly from the circumstance of having been entirely shut out from such a sight for the last three months and a half. I should think we will all give three cheers when we first see the high lands of New Zealand, barren though they should be.

By 5 o'clock we were quite past it, and very glad we were so by daylight, for very shortly afterwards again began to blow very hard, and continued to blow a strong gale for 36 hours, during which time the wind carried away our bomb yard foresheet and split the main top gallant. At last we ran for some time with almost bare poles, at most only one sheet on the fore and mainmast. The

sea of course rose very high, and the vessel both rolled and pitched heavily. The sea often broke across 'midships and poured down the water on us in volumes, chiefly through the night ; but during the time of a storm the water also comes oozing through the sides of the ship or drops down by the beams from the deck so as to wet our bed-clothes in the cabin to such a degree that they are unfit to sleep on, but we have been more fortunate than some of our neighbours for, when we had only a few drops, it was running out of their cabin door.

Sabbath was again a silent one, hatch closed on us and no light to see to read even though we could. The company allows no oil to burn through the day ; so what with one thing and another it was a very uncomfortable and unprofitable day.

Monday forenoon it still blew as hard as ever, but towards afternoon it fell down to almost a calm ; but before 8 o'clock in the evening the breeze freshened so much as to hurry us on at 11 to 12 knots an hour. The wind being favourable we moved on steadily, so we passed a tolerably good night—the first for the last three nights.

Tuesday, May 21st.—To-day is fine. The wind and sea both fallen. The hatches off again, and all is bustle again on deck refitting the sails, etc. We are to-day in east longitude 90 degrees ; all well.

Tuesday, May 28th.—We have had another week of wretched weather, heavy rains and strong winds. Before Saturday last the fore topsail had been split through several times, and that a strong new sail. Between Saturday night and Sabbath morning it blew a regular gale and no mistake, by far the heaviest we had yet encountered. The sea rose very high and tossed our gallant barque like a piece of cork upon the waters, the rolling and tumbling were very uncomfortable, but nothing to the quantities of water that found its way down upon us from the seas which continued to break over the ship both fore and aft (and the poor bull on deck was nearly washed away). It took us most of the night gathering up the water to keep ourselves from being flooded, and yet could scarcely keep our feet without holding on ; but Sabbath morning brought a change, even almost a calm, with sails flapping in the wind. Still a very heavy swell in the water, causing the vessel to roll from side to side like a cradle. It was next to impossible to walk the deck, and everything both above and below was so miserably wet that we could do nothing but keep the children in bed all day, and again it was a poor Sabbath. The sailmaker sat near our cabin door, below the main hatch, for a little light, repairing the fore topsail all day Sabbath, and at times singing profane songs, and he a Scotchman,



an old man from the north, but has been out of it for 30 years—poor old sinner.

Monday and Tuesday were both nearly calm, but Wednesday and Thursday rained again throughout, with a strong head wind, so we did little good on our journey; but yesterday morning it changed quite favourable, and a smart breeze sprang up in the evening, sea calm, and sleeping soundly again, but still everything so damp that the general complaint is weariness to get to our journey's end.

## CHAPTER VII

*The old sailmaker gives further evidence of being a hardened sinner—The ship goes as far south as Stewart Island and as far north as Auckland to reach New Plymouth—He deploras the intemperance and dissipation on board—The amount of liquor consumed—They get ready to drop anchor at New Plymouth, but are blown out to sea for a week.*

Saturday, June 1st, 1850, east longitude 120 degrees.—Expect to see Van Diemen's Land by this day week, and New Zealand by Monday, June 17th. I understand that a sweepstake has been entered into by the gentlemen in the cuddy and forecabin, 28 tickets are sold at 10s. each on a bet that we will cast anchor on June 17th, ten days before or after. Whoever gets the ticket nearest the 17th and the ship's arrival gets the 14 sovereigns less half a dozen of wine. The captain has sold one of his small dory boats to a gentleman on board for £16 (sovereigns), and to another one of his favourite dogs for five sovereigns. Every day there is merchandise of some kind or other going on. The other day I sold some German matches at 3d. each box, and 2d. each for paper boxes, single dip. I get 1s. per pound for carbonate, indeed what you like to ask, but unfortunately my stock is very small.

Tuesday, June 4th.—Since writing last it has been fine weather. To-day is as fine as

you are likely to have on the 4th June in Scotland. Bright warm sun, calm sea, light breeze, and sailing very slow in east longitude 126 degrees, off the coast of New Holland, 270 miles south, so if we wished we might be in Port Philip in two or three days ; but this fine weather makes us forget all our past storms, and we would willingly give a week or two longer rather than have a repetition of the wet. On Sabbath last we had service in the cuddy and our evening meeting. Early in the morning the old sailmaker took his old seat near our cabin door, busy making a pair of new canvas trousers to himself, and talked incessantly to those around him. I soon stepped up to him, and said he seemed to work to a hard master. "Who's that," said he, "is it the devil?" I said I did not think that the captain would have asked him to work, although he did so last Sabbath. He said "no ; it was his own job this." Then I repeated, "you serve a hard master." He said there was no fear of him going to hell, for he was to be drowned at sea where there was plenty of water, and there was none in hell. I said that such profane language was dishonourable in him, both to God and to his country. He said he knew all these things as well as me. Then I said, "so much the worse, for he who knew his Master or Father's will and did it not would be beaten with many stripes," and so on a deal more ; but nothing can be made of this old hardened sinner. I



From a Panorama in Wakefield's *Illustrations to Adventure in New Zealand*—London, 1845.

### THE TOWN AND HARBOUR OF NELSON IN 1842

“Altogether Nelson is a fine place; could like it well; the people all prosperous; . . . plenty of room for hundreds more.”—page 103.



said he would yet perhaps remember what had been said to him on board the *Poictiers*.

Tuesday, June 11th, east longitude 146 and latitude 46 degrees.—Just off the southern most point of Van Diemen's Land, but have got no sight of it, having been driven so far to the south of it by foul weather during the end of last week, which was wet for several days and so misty that we could not see the sun, making little progress in the right direction, hence weariness and discomfort. But yesterday and to-day have been both clear and dry with a strong breeze within a point or so of the right direction. The captain says he never saw such foul wet wether in this quarter before. We have been as far south as latitude 47, much nearer Otago than New Plymouth, our intended first landing place. Should the weather be anything favourable, we should see that place in ten days now—a most welcome sight to all on board. We think we will be content with a very humble place indeed after so long endurance in this miserable ship. In Scotland this is called the long eleventh day of June: here it is the very reverse or shortest winter day. At half past seven in the morning we can scarcely see to put on our clothes, and again it was dark at quarter past four p.m., at which hour our tea water is served out boiling; and after that hour we have nothing until eight next morning, which makes a long weary night. The ship oil has run short, too, so we are only

allowed one lamp all night, having no alternative but to go early to bed. The children often sleep eleven and twelve hours at a stretch, but all in good health and spirits; indeed they have grown fat and strong at sea, while the writer has fallen off considerably.

Yesterday completed our eighteenth week since coming on board, but yesterday also reminded us of a still more important day to us, viz., the anniversary of our marriage, but we had no opportunity as on former occasions to have our friends together and enjoy ourselves over an extra bit of dinner, etc. Yesterday we had only pea soup and salt pork. This season also reminds me of the sacramental season at Kirkaldy on the ensuing Sabbath. Would that such a season was so near before us here. I shall endeavour to be with them in spirit, though many seas roll between. We have had great quietness on board these eight days past, in consequence, it is said, of the beer being all sold—that is in bottle. To give some idea of the quantity consumed since we left England, the steward told me that he had sold three hundred dozen of porter and ale and about 50 dozen of wine, a proof of the drought occasioned by the salt provisions, or rather a strong proof of the intemperance and dissipation carried on on board. It must have been a costly passage to some of them, but I believe the captain and steward

realise the profit between them, which cannot be less than 100 per cent., but of our money they have received nothing except 1s. 8d. for two bottles the boys bought for their mother. Indeed we have been from necessity almost teetotallers these two months past; still we have a small quantity in the hold could we get at it.

Tuesday, June 18th.—After writing last week we had a continuance of unfavourable weather, still keeping us too far to the south, even as far as Stewart Island, and the captain told me on Friday last that if he had had his will of it he would have gone to Otago first, but being chartered to go to New Plymouth first, he must endeavour to make it, which he said might now be done in five days with a fair wind. The same evening the wind changed right aft, and continued steady for three days. We never had more pleasant sailing right before a gentle breeze with all sails set; also upper and lower stud sails, until last night the wind has fallen clean off, leaving us to-day in a dead calm. But so beautiful clear sunshine than I scarce can think there can be finer in Scotland, only chilly. A Mr. Cullen, one of the passengers, who has already been seven years in Nelson, New Zealand, says this is now quite New Zealand's weather, even in winter. All preparations now making for coming to land. Yesterday all hands were employed in making a thorough cleaning, scrubbing the deck



and bulwarks with sand and water, making everything look as tidy as possible for visitors that may come on board. To-morrow we take up the cable chain from the hold to be ready to drop the anchor at New Plymouth, there being no harbour there. These movements, together with the fine weather, seem to cheer the hearts of everyone, expecting to see the land in two days, being only about 250 miles off.

Tuesday, June 25th.—It is now eight days since writing last, and still no sight of land. Our fond hopes of seeing land so soon after writing last week were very soon disappointed, and both our faith and patience put to further trial. Another gale of wind sprung up on Wednesday last, which blew very hard for three days, carrying us off our course out again to sea in a north-west direction. We ran under close-reefed topsails, but latterly had to lay-to, as it is called, and let her drift for about 18 hours under bare poles. Fortunately this gale was off the land, otherwise we might have blown on a lee shore. As it was we were kept under hatches for two days and sadly knocked about. But our ship rides out a gale gallantly, and on this occasion shipped very little water. On Saturday last it cleared up fine, but leaving us as far from land as on Saturday week before. Since then we have enjoyed very fine weather, but light breeze, and what is of it is against us, hence little progress. But we have been north as

far as Auckland, but can't get into New Plymouth, so we have sailed almost the entire length of the islands. To-day we are said to be only 150 miles off New Plymouth, but when we may see it we know not for we have no wind. This delay has finished all the betting that was laid as to the ship's arrival, yesterday having run down the last of them, so everyone gets back his money.

## CHAPTER VIII

*First sight of Mount Egmont—The Sugar Loaf Rocks—Again driven to sea—They cast anchor at New Plymouth—Brief notes of Nelson and Wellington.*

Thursday, June 27th, 1850.—This morning at 8 o'clock the cry of land in sight was made, when very soon (mostly) all were on deck to see if they could, a small speck in the distant horizon like a white cloud or tent, said to be top of Mount Egmont, nearly 100 miles off. This is the highest mountain in New Zealand, 9,600 feet above the level of the sea, that is twice the height of the highest in Scotland. It became much brighter through part of the day, but at times again invisible. Still all are satisfied that it is the long looked for land, and the anchor chain has been drawn up from the hold this afternoon, making further preparation for landing, but when we may yet cast anchor is uncertain, the wind being still right against us, but so very light that we are making very little progress. Indeed, the weather is so very fine since the last gale that we would fancy we were to land in midsummer instead of in midwinter. The moon also has been most brilliant for some nights past, making it very pleasant to walk the deck in the evenings. What a contrast from the time of a storm, when you can't show your face out of doors. This is now 17 weeks and two days from sight

of land to land. We had considerable delay and difficulty in leaving the English coast; so it is now with delay at least we can reach that coast now so long looked for.

Saturday, June 29th.—Yesterday morning a fine stiff breeze sprang up in the right direction, carrying us straight on to New Plymouth at about eight knots. Every hour the landing came more visible, and every eye was also stretched trying to discover some new object. In approaching New Plymouth in this direction the most prominent object is two rocks, which stand boldly out from the shore alone in the water like two large hay ricks, hence they are called the Sugar Loaf Rocks. Sailing nearby them, about one and a half miles further on, guides you into the anchorage ground, which we reached about 5 o'clock p.m. We fired a gun to arouse the natives. Shortly after we saw a small boat coming off to us, pulling against a head wind by six oars. They brought a pilot on board to guide our anchorage, there being no harbour here. The pilot said it would be inadvisable to anchor that night, the wind blowing rather fresh inshore, so after putting out the letter bags and four of our passengers who went ashore, the pilot remaining with us, we put ship about and put out to sea.

The wind soon increased almost to a gale, bringing us under close reefed topsails. We were said to be 50 miles off before midnight, and a heavy sea. This morning the wind

moderated a little, and the ship was again put about, but under short sail, as it is no use attempting the shore again until the wind changes, so up to this hour (4 o'clock) we have never seen land again, it being so hazy. This want of a safe anchorage or harbour at New Plymouth is certainly much against it ever becoming a place of great importance, although the pilot on board speaks highly of it. Everyone so soon becomes his own master that they have no labourers for hire ; neither can they get them. The first appearance of it to us was certainly not very inviting, but it was the gray gloaming. We hope the next sight will be more favourable. Came to an anchorage on Sabbath morning, and remained there until next Sabbath evening week, when we weighed and set off for Nelson, which we reached on Tuesday evening in very wet misty weather, which continued for a week. The account of this place is given in my letter to Andrew. Here I made my first merchandise in this new country ; having sold all the herrings at a good price I rebought 1,200lbs. fine flour at 14s. per 100lbs., which I expect 20s. for at Otago.

Nelson seems a prosperous settlement, exports a good quantity of produce to other settlements, including Sydney, where they always have a ready market by a regular trading small brig which brings all kinds of British produce to the merchants and takes

in return wood, wool, potatoes, etc., etc. Here are two very comfortable breweries which send beer at £4 10s. per hogshead to Otago. I was introduced to both by a Mr. Ross, baker and storekeeper here from Edinburgh, who showed me great kindness, and told the brewer to send what I wanted. Mr. Ross came here as poor as a mouse and as thin as a lantern, but is now worth £1,000 and is as fat as any provost. Says he has enough and to spare, would not return to do business in Edinburgh again for £200 a year guaranteed. This settlement is chiefly sheep, but depastured chiefly at 15 to 50 miles off. There are about 90,000 in the settlement; and many thousand goats at 5s. each. Geese without number very large, at 2s. 6d. each; fowls, 1s. each; pigs from 6s. to £2 in abundance. One of Mr. Nicholson's elders, a Scotsman from Glasgow, has a ropery of the native flax. Saw him dress it to a very fine fabric, makes from waste twine small cord up to ship lines, and has a good demand from Wellington and Otago. I bought 20s. worth at 4½d. per pound. He says he is making money; has seven acres of land, several cows, etc., etc.

Wellington, Thursday, August 15th, 1850.  
—Left Nelson on Monday evening, July 29th, in fine weather. Arrived here all well. Since then have been on shore daily and in the country ten to fifteen miles. Like all the other stations, the country is mountainous and

wooded in the extreme. Our journeys were both romantic and wild, but the settlers everywhere were prosperous and happy and very hospitable. Little or no farms—all cattle and sheep runs. The town of Wellington is considerable ; a great many shops and stores filled with goods of every description, yet most of them making money. The mail leaves to-day, otherwise would have wrote a longer account of this place. Have lived two days on shore with the Rev. Mr. Kirton, late of Pathhead. They were extremely kind. He is the Scotch minister here ; has a good congregation and preaches well. Our vessel expects to sail for Otago on Sabbath. Will write again soon. Have also posted a letter for Andrew, and one for Mr. Paterson, Edinburgh, and some newspapers which you may see. Have never had an opportunity of writing home sooner, but all is well. With kind regards to all friends.

The first part of the journal is sent to Mr. Paterson, which you can have, and send him this when you have all seen it.

## CHAPTER IX

*This Chapter, a letter to his brother Andrew, describes in vivid and interesting detail the settlements of New Plymouth and Nelson—The keen eye of the merchant takes note of the retail prices charged by the grocers, and he is at once busy buying and selling—But his other main interests (the Church and Sunday School) also occupy a prominent place in his observations—He is impressed by the Colonial hospitality so freely extended to them.*

On board the *Poictiers*, Monday, July 8th, 1850.

By the good providence of God we have at length been brought to the shores of New Zealand. On Sabbath, June 30th, we cast anchor in New Plymouth roadstead, exactly 18 weeks from the Isle of Wight in the English Channel.

Independent of the journal which I have written during the voyage, meant for the perusal of all concerned, I mean now to write you an account of the different settlements that we stop at. It being Sabbath morning, as I said, only one boat came off to us all that day, bringing the resident agent, who stopped only a short time, taking with him on shore the captain and surgeon and mail boxes. The captain and surgeon returned on board in the evening with some fresh provisions.

On Monday William and I went on shore with the first boatful of luggage—a distance



of nearly three miles, pulling against a strong head wind—and were landed just on the beach and carried ashore on men's backs in the old Kircaldy style. They have no other way of landing here, either for goods or gear, having neither harbour nor jetty. Five shillings is charged for each person going on shore and returning—not settlers—being desirous to see the land, as well as put our foot again on *terra firma*. We paid the expense, and well we were repaid our trouble, for it blew hard all that night and all next day, so that we did not get back to the ship until Wednesday, after which, however, we have had very fine weather, like midsummer.

The town of New Plymouth lies close to the shore, surrounded by several villas and gardens, mostly whitewashed, which have a fine appearance from the sea. The most prominent house is the English Church, a large stone building, besides which there are other three places of worship—the Methodist, Wesleyan, and Independent—with both day and Sabbath schools, besides a Maori mission house built on a rising ground about one mile out of town, and has fine appearance from the sea. They have a missionary of their own and schools. They, the natives, are very strict in their observance of the Sabbath; will not carry a parcel nor go a message for anyone on that day, in proof of which you scarcely saw any person on shore on Sabbath; indeed we wondered what had

become of the people even to look at our big ship, which they only see one of in four months. Such would not have been the case, I fear, on our own native shore. The town and surrounding country contain about 1,200 inhabitants, a good proportion of which are natives who still wear the blanket hung loose about the shoulders, the body being naked. Some have a small shirt under, and some have a mat above the blanket. They seem very fond to see newcomers, laugh heartily, and shake hands with you. A good few of the old ones are still tattooed and look rather fierce like, but are very kind and gentle. The settlers say they have no fear of them by night or day ; are very fond of tobacco or a shilling or a sovereign. Some of them have good horses and good bullocks which they hire out.

There is a brewery, three flour mills, two good inns, four large stores, two good bakers' shops, and two surgeons ; altogether it is a thriving looking place, and the people both kind and hospitable, and from partiality in favour of their own settlement were desirous that we should go no further, saying theirs was the best ; indeed it is set down as the garden of New Zealand. The ground is clear or fern land for three or four miles back, after which it appears to be the bush or a forest of wood as far as the eye can reach. Mount Egmont stands to the south-east of the town, raising its lofty summit 9,600 feet above the

level of the sea, covered with snow a third way down, then heavy wood. One would suppose it only six or seven miles off, but we were told it is 20 miles to it, but unapproachable from the forest and steepness. I called on two of the storekeepers who had well-filled shops of general merchandise. Retail prices of some articles were, viz., tea, 3s. per pound ; sugar, 5d. and 6d. ; loaf, do. ; coffee, 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. ; soap, 6d. ; candles, 8d. ; mould, 10d. ; oil, 3s. per gallon ; bread, 6d. 4lb. loaf ; beef, 6d. ; and mutton, 3d. ; good pork, 3d., of which I bought one jigot of ham, 17lbs. for 4s. 3d. ; flour at the mill, 13s. per cwt., bag included, of which I bought 1cwt., it being so fine ; fowls, 1s. 6d. per pair. I sold the remains of my red herrings at 1s. 6d. per dozen and wanted more ; sold also three half barrels of salt ones at 20s. each. Might have got 25s., but the captain had sent ashore six or seven half barrels at 20s. The pilot on board said he would not be afraid at 20s. per barrel. He bought my spyglass for £2.

Shortly after landing, William and I, in company with a Mr. Cullen and a William Smith, fellow passengers who went on shore with us to enquire for a friend who lives in the country, set out together in search of him. After travelling four or five miles over fern land, we came to a public house or inn, where we all dined on ham and egg, bread and sweet butter for 6d. each, and good strong

beer at 8d. per quart. Mr. Cullen proceeded on one and a half miles further into the bush to see his friend (who, by the way, had buried his wife just two weeks before). They both returned to us at the inn, but then too late to get back to the town that night. Mr. Cullen and his friend both returned, and Mr. Smith stopped in the inn, the only bed they had, which he got with supper and breakfast, which he got for the whole charge of 6d. William and I went to a neighbouring house, a joiner, where we were kindly treated with supper and breakfast and a good bed for nothing. Besides they gave me a basket of seed potatoes, about half a cwt., also a basket of pumpkins for soup, and some Indian corn—all gratis; and even sent them to town in a cart passing. The joiner has got four acres of good ground of his own, a milk cow and some pigs, a house of his own erection, and plenty employment, has plenty to eat and to spare. The innkeeper came without a shilling—now they have 30 acres of land, two cows, and plenty of pigs and poultry, pays £5 license for beer.

After breakfast we set out in search of Mr. Cullen. A Mr. Law from Edinburgh showed us the way through a forest of wood—the thickest I ever saw. The green undergrowth was so close that we could not see many yards before us. The main wood so thick in girth that I measured several at five, six, and seven fathoms round. I went inside

of one which had been burnt down, leaving the rind only standing. It would have held other 20 more such. Mr. C's friend had 120 acres of such bush land with about 50 acres of it cleared. They just set fire to it and burn it right down, leaving the trunk standing, then throw in the wheat round the trunks, and there it grows without plow or harrows. Some put in grass seeds, and then pasture it for four or five years, after which the roots are easily pulled up by a rope and a pair of bullocks. Bullocks are all the go, both in carts and plows, and boys generally driving. Was told I could easily get 8s. to 10s. a week for each of our three oldest without meat. Labourers are not to be had here at any price. Everyone gets on the best way he can without servants of any kind. Then the land is so easily wrought, everywhere as free as a garden after the first breaking up. It is the finest soil everywhere I ever saw. The wooded land the best, plenty of water everywhere, but not a drain is required anywhere, only a fence to keep out stray cattle.

After reaching Mr. Cullen, where we got a drink of fine milk, and wandering through the wood, we all returned to the inn and had only two pots of beer. Were again treated with pumpkin tarts, bread and cream and sugar gratis, and then we returned to town. But from the high wind there was no boat, so we set out in different course to see a Captain King's grounds, a very pretty place.

Fields of as fine wheat newly brairdes as ever I saw at home ; also fine grass fields with plenty of fine sheep. His land steward saw us crossing the field and made up to us, asking if we were from the ship, and kindly asked any two of us to go in with him all night. William and I being both very weary, we soon accepted the invitation, and had a good bed, supper, and breakfast free ; also plenty of dahlias and iris roots, cuttings of ivy, honeysuckle, briar, etc., etc., as I could carry from his garden, with lots of information as to the settlement ; said he would not return to England for money. Got all safe back to the ship by midday, laden with spoil. Everyone that had been to land here were delighted with the country. Having from 30 to 40 tons of goods to put on shore, and many of them very bulky, all in small boats and so far off, it was Saturday night until all was cleared, and it was Sabbath evening before we took up the anchor. There being no wind, we did not sail ten miles until Monday evening. Since then we had a beautiful run down to Nelson on Tuesday afternoon, where we expect shortly to cast anchor ; 3 o'clock p.m. and all well.

Monday, 15th.—We cast anchor in Blind Bay on Tuesday last at 4 o'clock. It is well named Blind Bay for even in a fine clear day you can see nothing but hill upon hill all round for twenty miles or more, the farthest off being snow-capped all the year through.

But that night we arrived was so hazy that we only saw land on one side, although only four or five miles off. However, by constant sounding we cast anchor in seven fathoms water by guess, quite in a safe place. It rained heavy and blew hard. We fired off two guns but got no reply. Next morning still very wet ; fired other two guns, saw no land, but off came a pilot in a boat, said we were all right, and that he could not take us into the harbour ere the next morning. Next morning was dry and calm, so we made for the harbour at an early hour, but as we drew near the shore a more forbidding appearance for human habitation we could scarcely conceive. The town of Nelson being entirely hid from our view, nothing to be seen but hill upon hill, or rather mountain upon mountain, rising from the water's edge, and hid with fern or brush wood, with scarcely a vestige of cultivation to be seen, only a few goats seen wandering among the fern.

The entrance to the harbour, or rather inner anchorage ground, is only at stream tides for large vessels, and is entered closely by the water edge, and requires considerable experience on the part of the pilot, who really is here a very efficient person. Once entered all is right, being as safe as in London Docks. A very singular natural breakwater called Boulder Bank runs across the head of the bay ; it is very much like that forming to protect Granton, but you can suppose it

reaching from Leith Pier to where it begins, for they say that the bank is ten miles long, and is a very pretty place. We cast anchor a short way within the entrance, and only about twice the ship's length from shore, and the watermen charge 6d. for each person each way. Then you have about two miles to walk up to the town, which is built on a low flat of alluvial land or even a marsh at the foot of a glen or ravine, and it having rained ever since our arrival we have seen it at a disadvantage.

The passengers for this place were mostly landed on Friday, and I went on shore on Saturday with Mr. Wallace, the minister's son, from near Thorn Hill, who had a letter from Mr. Nicholson, the Free Church minister, here. We called on him together with it, who entertained us very kindly, kept us to dinner, showed us about the place. His present house being situated on the face of a hill overlooking the town, he is building a new manse at his own expense on a still more elevated spot, and a more delightful view of romantic scenery is seldom to be met with. He grows grapes in his garden in great abundance, even in cwts. Gave me a basket full of carrots and greens for our use. His church is the largest building in the town; is white-washed, and commands a fine appearance; holds about 400, and what of it that is finished is in first-rate style of fine native wood polished up like light mahogany or



satin wood ; has a good congregation, there being a good proportion of Scotchmen settlers here, although the most are English, who have a church and two ministers, and are at present building another larger house. There is also a very good Wesleyan church and a small Roman Catholic house and priest.

Tuesday, July 30th.—Since writing last we have been enjoying ourselves all the time at Nelson. When the ship gets into port they seem in no hurry to get out again. Besides landing the passengers and goods, the captain seems to do a good deal of business at each port he calls at. Here we have not only put out a good many tons of goods, but have again taken on new cargo of wood in deals, flour, and potatoes, also 15 new passengers for Port Cooper. We left only last night and are now on our way to Wellington. The first week we were at Nelson was very wet, some mornings hard frost, and once snow on a neighbouring hill which the settlers say has been the worst winter they have had for seven years. But the past ten days have been the finest weather we could desire even in summer, having been on shore almost every day, and walked from five to ten miles each way from the town ; have had a good opportunity of seeing the country and talking with the settlers. Met a good many Scotchmen, all very kind, amongst them was Mr. Simpson's family from Kinross, who has got 15 acres of land about a mile out of town. Has

got a good house, and some three or four acres turned over with the spade. One acre of wheat above grass, besides peas. They are all in good health and seemingly soon to be very comfortable. Was twice out there drinking tea, and Ma with me.

William and I were also out in the country seeing Mr. McHardy, for whom I had a letter from the Rev. Mr. Black of Kircaldy. He first went to Otago but did not like the place, and so came up to Nelson, and is about nine miles out of the town. He is a gentleman from Aberdeen with whom Mr. Andrew Inglis was tutor, but he now lives in a very humble mud cottage, like the poorest cotter or collier house at home, and no servant. They were very kind ; gave us dinner and tea, but could not keep us all night, though it rained heavily, at which they were sorry, for they all slept on the floor. They gave a poor account of Otago ; said that Mr. Craig from Kinghorn had died, and his property disposed of, which I was sorry to hear ; but his friends will have heard of it long before this reaches home.

We put up in an inn about one and a half miles off, where we met other three ship-mates, and spent a happy evening with the landlord who is an old traveller for a Glasgow house ; has now land, horses and cattle in abundance ; pays £30 license for the inn, and charges moderate—bed 1s., breakfast 1s. The farm servants that came out with us have all got places at £25 per annum, bed,

board, and washing, but expect £30 next year. Plenty of employment to be had for all classes, and good wages with moderate living. Bread 8d., beef 6d., mutton 3d., pork 4d., butter 1s. 4d. but in summer only 8d., eggs 1s. but in summer only 6d., candles 10d. a pound, all from Sydney. What an opening for John Brown! He and his family would soon make a fortune here. Tallow cheap and candles dear, and no duty and no rival. It would be an act of charity not only to himself but to the Colony to send him. Oil is not to be had at present here. Linseed oil from 5s. to 8s. per gallon, carbonate of soda 1s. 6d. per pound—had the offer of 1s. for it in casks—washing soda 4d. a pound retail but 20s. per cwt., soap 6d. Could have sold three or four crates of stoneware at any price. Did sell a few remains of Wymss stock old ribbons at 3d. to 6d. a yard, worsted napkins at 4s. to 8s., stockings 1s. 6d. a pair, old bone moulds 10d. per gross, and other sorts for braces much wanted, so is everything woollen. Could have made a good deal of money if I had had a stock; also sold all my white herring at high prices and could have sold more, but had no reds which was most wanted. Shall write to Mr. Ireland for more as soon as I get forward. They were all in good condition. Have promised to send more to Nelson when I get them. Got introduced to all the principal merchants, who began as poor as I, and without the same knowledge,

but are now all wealthy in five or six years. Dined and drank tea with them in turn, and it was interesting to hear their history. Are to send me flour and other goods when settled.

Mr. Campbell has the flour mills here, and a large store ; exports flour both to Wellington and Otago ; is the founder of Sunday Schools here ; built one at his own expense ; and supports others in the country. They are always in in the afternoon and no sermon. I visited his twice and had the honour to address the children last Sabbath at Mr. C's request ; about 100 present. Ten teachers as active and vigilant as at home ; they muster 500 to 600 scholars at their annual meeting. Was asked to go to the country six miles to a soiree at a village examination, but it was wet and did not go, but went with the minister on Sabbath afternoon eight days ago, where he preaches monthly to a few settlers ; walked all the way, and he preached at home at 6 o'clock in the evening. Mr. Nicholson is a hard working man, has two or three stations to supply besides home, which he does in the afternoon. Besides his morning school at 10, and teaches in the evening.

Altogether Nelson is a fine place ; could like it well ; the people all prosperous, and every privilege as at home ; plenty of room for hundreds more from home if they could just get out. Vines grow here in tons ; peaches and plums by the thousands, and every other thing in great abundance.

## CHAPTER X

*As in the previous letter, so in this one, the reader will be struck by the comprehensive and intimate account of the life of a young settlement in New Zealand as it appeared in 1850—In the course of a few pages the writer sketches the town of Wellington, the houses, hotels, shipping, harbour, and climate, as well as the country out to Porirua and the Hutt, the prices of groceries, a Roman Catholic funeral, the Scotch Church, a drowning accident, and an earthquake.*

On board *Poictiers*, Wellington Bay, 24th August, 1850.

Ten days ago I posted my journal of the voyage, including a sheet for Andrew, together with a letter for Mr. Paterson, Edinburgh, by a vessel going from this to Sydney which we hope will go safe. Also posted several newspapers. We have been disappointed at not getting an earlier opportunity of writing home.

It is three weeks yesterday since coming into this port, but are now weighing anchor for Otago direct. We are now very wearied of ship life, as also to get to our journey's end. Nevertheless, since coming to the shores of New Zealand our time has passed by more agreeably in seeing new faces daily—not to mention plenty of fresh beef and potatoes. As for myself, he has been on shore for the most part every day, where I never needed to pay for a meal neither in



From *Pictorial Illustrations of New Zealand*—London, 1847.

S. C. Brees, C.E.

### THE BEACH AT TE ARO (WELLINGTON)

“Wellington is a town of considerable size, containing about 2,000 inhabitants scattered over nearly two miles extent round the head of the bay, and has a commanding appearance from the water.”—page 105.



town nor country, and never wanted my dinner. Got introduced to a good many folks, and some of the principal merchants, some of whom kindly offered to supply me with goods in Otago if I wished. Some of the houses hold large stocks of goods of all kinds as agents, and the number of retail shops is great ; indeed every door is a shop of some kind for a mile at least along the beach, yet all are making money. Some are wealthy who began with little or nothing—numbers of them Scotchmen.

Wellington is a town of considerable size, containing about 2,000 inhabitants scattered over nearly two miles extent round the head of the bay, and has a commanding appearance from the water. The houses are almost wholly of wood and only one storey, or one and a half. Many of the villas around are very neat, but the churches and barracks have the most prominent appearance. The hotels are next and are very numerous for the place, who all pay £30 or £40 yearly license, and some of them £200 to £300 yearly rent, yet some have made little fortunes ; but it is a trade not to be coveted from the number of drunken sailors and soldiers constant customers, and I am told that a great deal of gambling goes on during night by the townspeople. You will observe from the papers that the shipping here is very considerable, reminding us of Leith Roads. California is a new market opened up but



recently for Colonial produce, and not a few have emigrated to it. On entering the heads from Cook Strait, called Port Nicholson, you come into a large and spacious bay from 20 to 30 miles in circumference, more like a lake than otherwise, surrounded by high hills all around with only one entrance and that unseen from the anchorage ground. Here ships can ride in perfect safety, although it sometimes blows very hard. Indeed, Wellington is proverbial for wind, its position being in the mouth of the Straits is like as in a funnel, and it catches it every way from the sea. By the way, we caught it in right earnest that night before getting in here; it blew a gale, rained in torrents, and mirk dark, and us locked in the Straits. Every two hours had to shift stays; was once within ship's length of the rocks. Had we struck it would have been all up with us. It was the only night on which we were afraid, but were mercifully preserved and got in next morning in safety.

During my stay here I have had two excursions to the country in company with a Mr. Marshall, a fellow passenger. The first day we travelled 14 miles to a place called Poririe (Porirua). The road was through a pass or glen all the way, more romantic and sublime than anything I ever saw in Scotland. From the bottom of the glen to the highest summit it was covered with wood so thick and high that it must have stood from

the flood. Some trees I measured upwards of 30 feet in circumference. Nevertheless we found people living here and there all along the road, and several acres cut down. We stopped all night in a Mr. Brown's—brother-in-law to Marshall—where we were hospitably entertained. That is Colonial—abundance to eat and drink.

Another day we went as far another way to the valley of the Hutt, where we crossed a river in a native canoe at 6d. each ; stayed another night in a bush house with a Mr. Sinclair, once the head waiter in the Waterloo, Edinburgh. Came here with a few pounds : has now 100 acres of land and plenty of cattle. Everybody here who seems willing to work gets on well, though in a rough way. Even steady labourers get good encouragement. Marshall and his wife, newly married when leaving England, have got engaged at £40 per annum with both their keep in the house. Another man and wife got a place both to serve at £50 per annum ; £25 to £30 is a common price for a single man, as stock-keeper or shepherd, but servant maids are most in demand here from 5s. to 7s. per week and board is a common rate ; and young chaps like our boys from 6s. to 10s. per week. I could have sold my herrings here at a still higher price, especially the reds. Some come here from London in tins and sell at 3s. to 4s. per dozen. Stoneware is sold in retail at 6d. for every common

article—jug, bowl ; cup and saucer, 1s. I hope there will be some by the *Mariner* for me at Otago. Although the retail price of groceries seems high from the papers, yet you can buy very cheap at the wholesale stores taking a quantity, viz., tea in a small box at 1s. 6d. ; sugar at 3d. to 4d. in bags ; soap at 3½d. in a box, etc., etc., which is the best way to lay in for a family, of which I have been enabled to do so here from the proceeds of odds and ends sold at Nelson, etc. (besides the herring money). I have everything to keep us for nearly six months to come.

The Roman Catholics have a firm hold here ; they have already one good chapel and are building another, called a cathedral. Saw the funeral of Captain O'Connell, nephew of the late Daniel's. It was done in all the pomp of Romanism, the priests walking in the procession with their white robes, carrying their prayer books and candles, and went through some ceremony at the grave and prayers in Latin. Burnt incense and sprinkled the coffin. The soldiers fired three rounds of cartridge. The priests are a Jesuitical looking set of men. The ceremony occupied from 9 a.m. to 1 o'clock. The Sabbath upon the whole was outwardly tolerably well kept, but religion upon the whole is very formal ; still I met with some good people. The Scotch church is well filled, though small ; is made up of Moderates and Free and other dissenters. They would have preferred a

Free Church minister to Mr. Kirkton, but he preaches better than I expected. Heard him three Sabbaths. He was very kind to us, and so were several other Scotch families.

There was a melancholy accident happened when laying in Wellington. The upsetting of the canoe a few miles from Wellington when crossing a small bay by a gust of wind ; it contained two Messrs. Drummond and one of their sons and a native, all of whom were drowned, and that in sight of several on shore. One of them was a son of Mr. Drummond, banker, Coupar, Fife. The Messrs. D. were both much regretted. The minister said on Sabbath there were more deaths by accident in this country than otherwise. There was one slight shock of earthquake when we were laying at anchor, but it being in the night time I did not feel it, although several in the ship did, as well as those on shore ; but the people are so used to them now that they do not mind them much. Was told that the great earthquake did the town a deal of good—it set so many to work rebuilding churches, warehouses, etc., but now mostly all of wood.

## CHAPTER XI

*After seven months "by the good hand of God we are at last all safely landed here"—  
Eleven days' voyage from Wellington to Otago—His first impressions of Dunedin,  
"as good if not the best of all the settlements"—Dr. Burns.*

Otago, Dunedin, Rattray Street,  
September 13th, 1850.

By the good hand of God we are at last all safely landed here on the evening of Friday last week, the 6th current, exactly seven calendar months since going on board the ship, the longest passage of any of the Company's ships yet known. Even our last days from Wellington occupied eleven days, although only 320 miles, during which we all wearied very much, it being very cold, not to speak of the return to salt beef and biscuits. Indeed, now that the voyage is over it was anything but comfortable. In addition to the bad weather and contrary winds our medical doctor and the passengers were at cross purposes most of the way, so much so that he was brought before his superiors at Nelson and he had to pay a fine of £15 to the men for drawing the water and punishing them. We all signed his liberty at Wellington, and so went without one the rest of the voyage. He lost two babies, twins, which,

with other two delicate children and a seaman, were all the deaths on our long voyage. Happily our family all stood it well; indeed the children are remarkably stout, and even fat, their usual clothes will scarcely fit, especially the boys who, by the way, earned among them £2 8s. during the voyage.

Now as to my first impressions of this place. Notwithstanding all we heard by the way to the contrary, it is as good if not the best of all the settlements, and its appearance far exceeds what I had expected after seeing the other settlements. It is even amazing what the people have accomplished in little more than two years. There are already upwards of 100 houses, all of a superior quality—at least would match any hundred either in Wellington or Nelson. There are four large buildings entirely of stone and lime, one of which is another half added to the church equal to the first, forming a double-roofed house like Abotshall, but only to contain when filled about 400. I am glad to add that the first house is already too small. On Sabbath last it was crowded, both fore and afternoon, that extra forms had to be brought into the lobby; and I am also happy to add that Mr. Burns preached far better than I expected—indeed it was excellent, and was told he was always as good. There is also a prayer meeting in the church or vestry every Wednesday evening. The schoolmaster's house is the next largest

building—two stories, but regret to add that Mr. Blackie, the teacher, is in bad health and not expected to recover.

*[The concluding paragraphs of the Journal have been transferred to form the opening to Part II, as they relate to events which occurred after arrival at Dunedin, and form a convenient introduction to the letters.]*

Setting them in Order

EXPLANATORY NOTE

PART II

Letters from Otago



## EXPLANATORY NOTE

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*As far as possible the extracts from the letters have been grouped for convenience in chapters according to the topics indicated in the title or headnotes. But where reference to any topic is very brief the passage has been left in its context.*

*In a few places extracts have been added from some brief Reminiscences, written by my grandfather for his family in 1870, and where these occur they are marked "Reminiscences, 1870."*

## CHAPTER I

### Settling Down in Dunedin

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*My grandfather's letters after leaving the "Poitiers" record his early experiences in Dunedin. The Rattray Street house appears to have been on the south side, the stream of water at the back door being the Kaituna\* Creek, which flowed down Maclaggan Street through the Grand Hotel site into the harbour at Water Street.*

September 13th, 1850.

On landing at Port Chalmers on Wednesday of last week, I proceeded immediately by a small boat, along with some other gents, to Dunedin in order to secure a house for our large small family, which I readily got in Rattray Street—a house of four apartments, up and down, for 8s. per week, or 7s. if kept for six months or upwards. We took in along with us the two Messrs. Wallace, minister's sons, of whom I formerly spoke on the voyage. We get 21s. per week for their board and lodging, using and washing their own clothes. This will only be for a short time ere they go to their land, but I am sorry to add that the younger one, George,

\* Most authorities think that the correct name of this creek was "Toi-tu"—see article by Fred. Waite in *Otago Daily Times*, March 23, 1923, also pamphlet by Alfred Eccles "Records of Early Days" (1929).

is very poorly indeed, so weak that he is confined to bed, and we think is consumptive and not likely to recover; Dr. Purdie\* has visited him frequently. We have had a visit from the new Judge Stevens†; also the minister, and Captain Cargill. The Captain very kindly invited Mr. Wallace and me to drink tea with them last night, which we did, and stopped till 9 o'clock talking over ways and means. He is very conversible, although an old man; has a house full of big daughters, one (M.) of which was proclaimed on Sabbath last for the first time to a Mr. Johnstone, a merchant here.

The first night I lodged in the hotel, as good a house as you could wish for in Scotland, everything served up in style, and a waiter. Six of us breakfasted next morning sumptuously on roast beef, cold tongue, warmed potatoes, two eggs each, both tea and coffee, and plenty of bread and butter; indeed I was like to forget being so far from home.

Two of us walked back to Port Chalmers—a distance of nine miles by land; took us four hours. The first half is through a beautiful romantic valley called the North-East

\* Dr. William Purdie (1797-1876) reached Otago by the *Mooltan* in 1849, and was one of the earliest medical practitioners in the settlement. He was in the Provincial Council (1857-62) and a member of the Town Board (1855-60).

† Sidney Stephen came from New South Wales in 1850 as puisne judge for Otago. There was insufficient work to keep him employed, and he was soon removed to the North Island. He died in January, 1858.

Valley, where there are a number of settlers on their ten acres. The latter half is over a very high hill, densely covered with bush, and the road was very bad, sometimes to the ankles in mud ; was very wearied.

Next day got all my tribe out of the ship by the Company's boat, free, to Dunedin. but the Customs are very strict here, and the following day suspected my big boxes being more than luggage, so sent them ashore to the bond, causing me to return to Port Chalmers on Monday when they opened every box, but found nothing worthy of notice except the three windows, which they valued at £5 and cost me 14s. 6d., besides hiring an extra boat to take them up with cost £1 5s.—nothing for nothing. However, we are now all safe and snugly lodged for the time, but have very little prospect of remaining in the town, there being very little business to be done in it, and already too many at it, viz., merchants, unless selling to them on ship's arrival which I could do from stock from England. They have to buy from Wellington and Sydney, and then irregular. I have sold only one pair of moria blankets for 6cwt. of potatoes, value 21s., but cost me only 74s. at Ryde. I have been twice out at the country called the Halfway Bush\*

\* Halfway Bush is two miles from the centre of the city and at an elevation of 1,000 feet. The route from town proceeded in a north-westerly direction past the York Place cemetery to Halfway Bush and on towards the Taieri Plain. The road was not metalled, and in wet weather bullock drays were frequently imbedded in its bogs.

looking for a ten-acre section, but have not fixed yet. The best is mostly taken up or held in reserve by the Company who, by the way, are a lot of jobbers, and no one should buy land before coming to see it. There are always bargains in the market by some discontented, or ne'er-do-weal, or death. Was very sorry to find Mr. Craig had died before we landed a long time. The Company sold off his effects for almost nothing.

September 13th, 1850.

The accompanying sheet I again send to you by way of a centre man, but of course intended for all friends. I can add little more as yet regarding the place from the shortness of time since arrival, but will give you more particulars in my next. I may add that the last winter here has been the mildest and best they have known for years back ; they say no winter at all. I have seen garden peas in full bloom and pods also in the minister's garden, although this is only the first of spring with them, equal to our March in Scotland, so we have arrived at a good season for getting in a crop if once fixed for a spot. There is less employment here at present for labourers or servants than at any other of the settlements, owing to so little cultivation as yet and the Company's work at a standstill. However, I hear there are double more this year than formerly. Flour is 19s. per 100lbs., or 9d. the 4lb. loaf ; beef, mutton, and pork all at 6d. to 7d. per pound, all of

fine quality ; butter, 1s. 6d. per pound ; eggs, 2s. dozen ; milk very scarce and dear ; fire-wood, 12s. to 14s. per cord or cartload, but our boys carry in plenty from the hills free, and there is a stream of water at the back door. The people are mostly all Scotch but, like the writer, have little capital. Very industrious in getting well on.

I must now acknowledge the receipt of your kind and welcome letter enclosed in the parcel sent from Mr. Paterson, Edinburgh, together with the one from Andrew, Mrs. Shanks, and Mr. Cameron, to all of whom you will not fail to give our united thanks. The parcel arrived here four weeks before us by the *Mariner*, which had again sailed before we came in. I will write each of the parties in my next letter. Remember us also kindly to all our old friends and acquaintances, viz., Mr. Goodall, Mr. Tough, Mr. Davidson, Mr. T. Miller, etc., etc., to whom I will also write soon. I often think of Kirkaldy and all our old friends and doings, and can scarcely reconcile the fact that we are now so far removed from you all. I expected the cut glass for the windows, but will be quite in time next vessel as you write. Would be glad if Mr. Rattray or Oliphant would send me some manila rope for boatline about an inch thick. It is much wanted, also plough line for tying cattle. Swedish turnip is in great demand, and yellow bullock. Tell Mr. Tough that ryegrass is 14s. per bushel.

It could be packed amongst the crockery ; also all garden seeds are very high. All worsted yarn for stockings not to be got. Also worsted stockings and socks.

We remove to Halfway Bush very soon, and set to work on the land immediately. It is a beautiful locality, and has several respectable neighbours. I have been twice seeing it, and will give you the particulars in my next. Adieu once more.

*Letters written two years later; the family is settled at Halfway Bush, where the farm is being worked and developed by the older boys. "Shortly after getting settled in Halfway Bush, Mr. James Macandrew arrived, bringing with him a whole shipload of merchandise for sale. Mr. Macandrew did not know what to do for a person who could take charge of his store along with himself. Meeting with Dr. Purdie one day, Dr. Purdie told him of my having been brought up to the business and whom he could recommend. Sent word to me to call on Macandrew at his store, and although having no thought nor intention of taking a situation, I engaged to come and make trial, and there I remained for three and a half years."\**

October 28th, 1852.

On the other side I send you a duplicate of the letter and account sales forwarded to

\* Reminiscences, 1870.

you in September last, which letter as well as this I hope will reach you safely. The last letter was sent away so hurriedly that I got little time to say anything to you in it, but indeed there was so little that I could say from the fact that we were totally destitute of home news for four or five months, but I am very glad to say now that since then the *Persia* has arrived, bringing with her the largest mail that ever reached Otago at one time. In fact she brought three English mails via Wellington, each having the appearance of a bag of corn, out of which I had the good fortune to receive eight letters and fourteen newspapers, one letter each from Nelson, Sydney, London, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Kirkaldy, so you see I am getting into correspondence again, and really it makes our heart right glad to receive such home news. But you cannot conceive a greater disappointment than a ship arriving and no letters nor newspapers for you.

I may here mention having written also to Mr. George Douglas in September last, with account sales, but through you at this time must acknowledge receipt of his kind letter and invoice (of February, 1852) of herrings and corn bags, now all safe to hand ex the *Persia*. I also received your invoice of sundries ex the *Stately*, but she (*Stately*) is still in Wellington, and it may be four or five weeks before she reaches this place. Your invoice is dated April 6th, 1852. By



it you give me no news at all, but hope that when the cask arrives we will get Fife letters and papers.

I am glad to see in your invoice a quantity of more ryegrass seed. The last is now all sold at 10s. per bushel. This spring will be past before it comes to hand, but it will be ready when wanted. The farmers' mounting, too, is very acceptable, and will be of great service when we get up our new barn, which we intend to do this summer. We only want the riddles now, which we hope will be here before harvest. Cannot say about the hob-nails yet till I see them how they suit the trade, but the shoemakers have got up the price of boots and shoes very much, viz., 26s. for watertight boots, and youngsters' they will scarcely make at any price. In your next box put in a few pairs of very stout ones for our own use at least, but nothing would pay you better than to send a hogshead of boots and shoes of all kinds and sizes. The tartans and shawls we anticipate will be a great boon. Expect the worsted and stockings in your next—as many as you like. Don't forget the blue flannel, best quality, also the light blue drugget and coloured ditto for dresses, also checked linen—all best quality. If convenient also to send six dozen each blue Kilmarnock bonnets, Glengarry ditto, and blue caps with fronts—all good and assorted.

We expect to get some Kircaldy news when the letters come forward in the cask, although we got some account of them from Mr. Douglas, as well as seeing some of them in the papers. Still the particulars from your own hand will be very acceptable. How is your own business doing? About six months ago a gentleman arrived here, a settler, named F. Broke Holinshead.\* He has chosen eight sections in our neighbourhood, and is preparing to build a fine house. He has already formed a fine road to the place at his own expense. It has already cost him £200. He pays about £25 in wages weekly, and seems to be doing good in the place.

I must now conclude as my paper is nearly all filled. The ship *Persia* has left the port again for China, so must send this by the next opportunity. There is no word of the *Stately* yet. Last night I was away at the North-East Valley seeing Mr. Russell,† who unfortunately fell and broke his leg. He is rather nigh-sighted and had stumbled over a stump. It is a great misfortune for him. They are a fine family, but not very robust for colonial life. I am glad to say that

\* Frederick Brock-Hollinshead, of the 17th Lancers, brought £20,000 with him, and commenced to build a mansion in a part of Halfway Bush to which he gave the name of Brockville. Hocken says: "The name and extensive foundations remain to this day." (1898). Brock-Hollinshead was one of Cargill's nominators for the Superintendency. He soon returned to England.

† Apparently Andrew Russell, one of North-East Valley's first teachers. He was later a farmer in Southland.

we are all in good health and spirits. We had a very wet winter, and Ma was a good deal troubled with rheumatism. She is now a good deal better, and the weather so very fine. Our crops are looking very well this spring, and we are busy planting potatoes (October).

*George Hepburn's optimism concerning the Otago Settlement greatly influenced relations in the Old Country. In 1853 Mrs. Hepburn's brother, James Paterson, decided to come to Otago, and later other Kirkcaldy friends joined the Dunedin circle.*

Dunedin, March, 1854.

I intended to have sent you wool for your account, but by the last arrivals we have heard of the fall in the market at home ; so that I am at some loss what to do. Before this news arrived the wool season was about over ; the most of it bought up at 1s. 2d. per pound, fully 2d. per pound above the former year's price. I have only seven bales bought, value about £120, but was to get as many more as I required from J. Macandrew and Co. at what they paid for it, but at present there is no vessel to take it away. Mr. Jones\* engaged the *Eliza*, now in port with a full cargo for Sydney, at 5s. per bale

\* John ("Johnny") Jones, pioneer whaler and settler at Waikouaiti in 1843, for a time controlled markets in the young settlement. He was the principal competitor of J. Macandrew and Co. as general storekeepers.

more than we could give. Should I think it advisable when the next opportunity offers, I will include your amount in the wool I will send to Messrs. Lockhart, and give you an order on them for the amount ; if otherwise, I will send you bills on London. I have told Mr. Douglas both the difficulty and risk there is in sending our produce to the Australian market on their account until we have more direct communication there.

Mr. James Paterson\* (who had just arrived) says that things looked better than he expected, especially the flower garden. He scarcely expected to find such fine walks bordered with thyme and daisies, with a rich display of dahlias, not to speak of a long hedge of English fuchsias in full blow, which even the Rev. Mr. Bannerman exclaimed to be the height of extravagance at home. At home, he said, they were glad of a small piece in a flower pot. Our gooseberries, etc., were nearly over, but he got a tasting to see what we have had. Not only our garden but all our crops have been excellent this year, and now I am glad to say are all safely housed in the barnyard. This has been the finest harvest season we have seen ; indeed all the summer the weather has been super-excellent, and the crops everywhere good. The potatoes only are light from the dry season, the price

\* Afterwards Hon. James Paterson, M.H.R., a member of the Stafford Ministry, 1865-66. He arrived by the brigantine *Clutha* on February 12th, 1854.

of which will consequently be high this year, and none for shipment. All our produce is expected to be high this season; wheat, 10s. to 12s. per bushel; we will have about 100 bushels. Flour is now at 38s. per 100lbs.

I daresay that you will think my letters now so much business letters that I give you no other news, but really I am at some loss what to write about, for our news comes all from your end, and we now hear of such rumours of war all over the Continent that we do not know what will be next. Then we have our new Constitution\* here occupying all our attention—our Provincial Council and House of Assembly at present just called for the first time to meet at Auckland, some 600 miles distant. The Government brig is just in our harbour at Port Chalmers, come express for the members from Otago, giving them only about ten days' notice. Our Mr. Macandrew being one of them has put us all in a stir arranging for his departure. The papers of this date will show you their letters to their constituents. We expect to get on in these matters much better now.

\* After some years of bitter controversy in the Colony the New Zealand Constitution Act was passed by the British Parliament in 1852. This measure, which provided for a Provincial Council in each province and a General Assembly for the whole of New Zealand, was proclaimed by Sir George Grey on April 30th, 1853. James Macandrew, John Cargill, and W. H. Cutten were the first members of the House of Representatives from Otago. The General Assembly first met at Auckland on May 27th, 1854.

## CHAPTER II

### Early Difficulties in Dunedin

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*Banking and exchange, shortage of labour, saleable and unsaleable goods, and the demand for land are some of the topics discussed in these letters of 1854-55.*

September, 1854.

At present there is some difficulty in getting bills on home ; so many have been getting out goods that everyone is asking for bills to send home, and the balance is at present against our house, there being so many goods always coming ; the wool season generally turns the scale, which comes on in January. Besides, we expect to get a bank established very shortly, which will facilitate business very much ; but I know you home gentlemen can have no idea of the difficulty we labour under for want of means of transit or postal communication, being, as I have often stated, whole months—two, three, or four at a time—without a single arrival. However, the ship *Nelson*, now in this country, will relieve us a little.

The carpenters here are all thrang, and have no doubt are making money at 7s. per

day of eight hours.\* Sawn timber has advanced from 12s. to 20s. per hundred feet, and other materials in proportion. Tradesmen and labourers of all kinds are not to be had (when wanted) even at any price. It is quite a favour to get one to do a job. We have much need of more labourers being sent. This is one good sign of our prosperity—plenty of employment and plenty of money to pay for it, if men could be had.

The house carpenters are all doing well, but scarcely one of them do it by contract—all by day's wages. Every year the style of new houses is superior to the former, and quite in your way, most of them being all wood together. At present there are plans and estimates wanted for three or four new churches and manses. The English folks are to build one . . . and one or two each for our last two ministers. We in Dunedin must have a new one in one or two years at furthest. Then there are new courthouses and public buildings to go up, besides private cottages constantly going on, so there is no want of employment if you could only make up your mind to make the change.

March 12th, 1855.

I received enclosed invoice of the crockery which I hope will arrive in safety. They seem

\* The "Eight Hour Day" was introduced to Otago by the Rev. Thomas Burns, who promised the *Philip Laing* immigrants to use his influence to fix an eight-hour day at 3s. 6d. to 4s. a day.—(Hocken, p. 103.)



DUNEDIN FROM BELL HILL IN 1852

"As good if not the best of all the settlements."—page 111.





to be a fine assortment. I have no doubt but the ploughs will also be of the right sort, and should bring all the price you mention. The corn bags will also be very acceptable, even although they had been 500. There is now a great deal of oats shipped off from this which consumes the bags.

The boots, I fear, are too high priced from your market, besides our market here is stocked with them ; but I must thank you very kindly for the pair you have sent for my own wear. They are just what I was in need of. There is now plenty of ryegrass grown here, but only the freight on it will be very little if anything. The writer expects to have the crop of three acres to cut next year. It looks well at present. The box you refer to as being suitable for our threshing floor must be applied to another purpose, as I am glad to say our barn was laid with 1½ inch boards at the first. Besides we have a large threshing board also. But thanks for your good intentions.

May 14th, 1855.

I again take the opportunity of sending you a few lines advising you of the safe arrival of the goods you sent by the *Simlah*. The long delay she had at Wellington made us very weary before she reached this. Since then we have been very busy storing and unpacking, but before the *Simlah* was discharged the *Sea Snake* arrived with a very

great quantity of goods for this place, but no papers for us—chiefly for Mr. Jones. As she is to sail from Wellington in a day or two I send this by her. The brig *Amherst* is also in port from Melbourne, taking in produce. By her our house is shipping 50 tons potatoes at £8 per ton. and about 2,000 bushels of oats at 6s. per bushel; but the captain will take nothing on freight, so I have no chance of sending any for Mr. Douglas, but we have been uncommon thrang. Every day eight or ten drays are coming in loaded with potatoes or oats, which are all to weigh and store, then to recart and ship, so all our boats and barges have been in full requisition. Last week we gave out 120 gunny bags for potatoes alone, so it is a fair potato harvest in the country and in the finest dry weather. All the season through our weather has been excellent and crops abundant, and the prices I have just quoted are a fair return, even at the high rate of wages.

But I am forgetting what I intended to speak about first, namely, the goods you sent. First, the very large box containing the plows was fully one half larger than any other containing the same number, because yours being all the length, others are jointed at the mould board, which makes them pack in far less room. But they seem just the thing and please well. I have kept one and sold the other two at all you said—£12 each—and could have sold half a dozen more if I

had had them. People are only now beginning to use the plow generally, and every year will be more so since the cheap land has been selling so freely. It was a good idea to send the cross-trees, but there are generally two socks and a hammer for each. If the price pays, you may send other three ; also one or two sets of harrow tines and mounting with a dozen spare cleeks or esses. The cleeks cost 3s. 6d. per pair here. Also two or three pairs hames. You need not send any more ryegrass seed as we now grow more than is wanted. We exported 140 bushels with the last steamer. When you have any spare room or small corner to fill do it with corks. Neither send any more boots, your price was far too high for yielding you any return. Fine London made Wellington boots can be bought here wholesale at 20s., and the other day I bought good strong watertights at 11s. 6d. at a sale. But 15s. to 16s. is the wholesale price. The place is full of them at present. But I must not forget to thank you kindly for the pair sent for my own use ; they fit beautifully, and I was much in need of them. The flowerpots came pretty safe, only a few were broken. But regret to say that the crate containing the milk dishes had six dozen of them broken. This being the winter season there is little demand, but even if summer was come again I fear that they won't sell well ; they are far too shallow and too small. I am sure that neither you nor

Mr. Methven ever saw such milk plates before. If they were made to order, they must have misapprehended me. They are so very extremely shallow, but we must now do our best with them. Tell Mr. Goodall not to send any more gingerbread. The half nearly of the last case by the *Clutha* is still on hand.

I have forgotten to mention that there had been an oil cask leaking in the ship, and had run down on a large case, so that all the boots were wet with oil. Some of the lead caked together, and all the newspapers were so destroyed that we did not get a word of them read. We pulled up the captain for it and had damages at £3, but were only allowed 30s., which we accepted. We had only eleven barrels of good dry seed.

You will likely hear of the new era in the sale of land here since His Honour the Superintendent of the Council fixed the price to be only 10s. per acre for all sorts, both rural and suburban. One month's notice was given before beginning to sell at that price. On the first day that the office opened for that purpose, applications were put in for 4,000 acres and upwards, all by present settlers. Dunedin was like a market day with country folks. A good many neighbours put in for the same spot, but for the most part it was amicably arranged without coming to a sale by competition. Some, however, got £10, £20, and £25 privately to quit their claim.

Only one case came to the hammer for decision, viz., 150 acres at the Molyneux, being applied for by two persons, viz., Mr. Maitland from Edinburgh, and an Irish lad from the diggings run it to £85 premium. Mr. Maitland got it. I had no thought of seeing such a contention for the land seeing that cash was to be paid down in six days after application. Neither had I any intention of buying any more at present, but when I saw that all around us was soon to be picked up and that we would be confined to our own small sections, after a day or two I applied for 80 acres, all in one block, lying in front of the house, well watered, and all arable, all of which I got without opposition; but had I waited a few days longer I would not have got them for every one ten-acre section is now bought up. It will no doubt turn out a valuable property, being so near the town. Now I only want men and money to put it under cultivation. It is all open and fit for the plough. That is now 120 acres I have of suburban land with plenty of timber.

*In 1855 my grandfather resigned his position as manager of J. Macandrew and Co. to become a partner in James Paterson and Co.*

June 30th, 1855.

I am sorry to observe your remarks about the wool I sent turning out a bad spec., but up to this time I have not heard from Messrs.

L. about it. Since then I have done nothing in it, although it could have been got here this last season at 1s. to 1s. 1d. fine quality. I somehow think I was rather jewed with it. It happened to be a small lot which came from the north and was landed at Port Chalmers, so we never saw it, but I know from the books that Messrs. McA. paid 1s. 2d. for it. I will look better after the next, expecting soon to have more time on my hands, and I may here at once mention my intention of leaving my present situation next month and joining Mr. Paterson in business for a short period. I may again state that he has so much work to do in his own line that he can attend to nothing else, and again his sales in the store would require a person constant in attendance. I will have far more liberty and be better able to attend to the interests of my home correspondence, besides, from my long acquaintance with all the settlers, have no doubt that we will be able to do a good share of business ; but you will be duly advised of the particulars when it occurs. I may add that my leaving is in the best terms with the house. They only feel sorry for it. The house added another £25 to my salary last year, and said further if my money was the reason of my leaving, I had only to name my own price ; at same time highly approve of it.

[I remained there (James Macandrew and Co.) for three and a half years, when I joined

my brother-in-law, Mr. Jas. Paterson, James Paterson and Co., as general grocers. After being a few years in business together, and meanwhile Mr. Macandrew having become Superintendent of the Province and his time wholly occupied with political affairs, he offered to make over to us his whole business in Manse Street, stock in trade, and buildings, at a fair valuation with terms of payment. All this was gone into and settled. The auction business which Mr. Macandrew carried on was continued, and ultimately my son William took up the hammer for us and continues to wield it in his own firm, McLandress, Hepburn and Co., till this day with success.]\*

We only wish we saw you and Catherine here beside us. We are sure you would do well. Every carpenter, as they are all called, has more work than they can get done at 8s. per day of eight hours. Few estimate jobs, all days wages, and keep no stock but the saw and the hammer. The builder provides everything. I have had one man for six weeks past at 8s. per day and his dinner, putting up the addition to our house, which is now just about finished. I will enclose an inside drawing if I can remember before closing.

Everybody here seems to be thriving amazingly, as a proof of which two cargoes

\* Reminiscences, 1870. McLandress, Hepburn and Co. were succeeded by Park, Reynolds and Co.



of sheep, horses, and cattle per *Gazelle* from Sydney were sold in two weeks after arrival for cash at very high prices, say sheep at 32s., horses from £30 to £60 (very lean), young heifers, £14 per head, 18 months old—our house were agents. Since then (last mo.) we have given the *Amherst*, for Melbourne, a full cargo of produce, say 118 tons of potatoes at £8 per ton of 20cwt., and nearly 2,000 bushels of oats at 6s. per bushel. And now we are busy lading the *Sybil* from Geelong with the same—a full cargo. All these goods come through my hands first, all weighed and stored away in the store, then recarted to the jetty and sent down to Port Chalmers in our own barge at 10s. per ton. This gives us a great deal of work. I have had two extra men in the store these six weeks back. We have also got an additional clerk. Besides we have two schooners, the *Star* and the *Endeavour*, constantly trading coastwise.

T. J. White has left the firm and gone over to Mr. Jones' store (no loss), and our W. H. Reynolds is just away to Melbourne by the *Amherst* to spend £600 on free passage money to labourers from that quarter, seeing they won't come direct from the Home Country. Hope he will send good ones. Since the cheap land was sold, labourers are scarcely to be had. I told you in my last about that matter, and that I had added to my possessions. A draft of how the land lies will also be enclosed if I can. Now I only

want strength to get it fenced and improved. Can't you send me out some good decent farm servant? I will either give or find him employment on arrival. By the way, I have sold all the three ploughs. Could not get one kept, such is the demand for them, but our Sandy thought they were rather light at the bridle point of the beam, but you just send other three the same, a little stronger there if you can, for breaking up new land, and with double socks and jointed at the mould board, if you can, so as to go into a less box. Mr. Bethune's was done that way by Barrowman.

By the way we have had no winter as yet, and it is now our shortest day, only a little frost and sharp mornings, but beautiful weather during the day although very changeable. Both last summer and autumn have been the best seasons we have seen here.

This year there are two portable threshing machines in the settlement of two horse-power, one of which we have hired from the Green Island bush to come and thresh our crop at the Halfway Bush. We have had it for the last two days, and it has done all our own wheat and oats at once. Now ready for the market, and saved the boys a deal of labour and time. During threshing time all our neighbours turned up to assist. Then we go and assist them. The two on one side having no barn carted their wheat to ours, and so with our next neighbour. Two men

and two horses came with the machine and stopped three nights with us, so our house has been in a bustle like harvest time. Though the shortest day with us, we had very fine weather and moonlight. This is the way we get through our work in our district—helping one another.

We will be needing a pair of cart wheels by next year. I was thinking they may be sent out loose, spokes and naves all fitted to put together. The axle and iron rims could be lashed together. Could Mr. Rowan not manage it in that way? But if not, to send them as before, complete with trace chains and back bands, crosstrees, and clicks, etc., barrow wheels and axles.

## CHAPTER III

### The Church in Otago

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*My grandfather, before leaving Scotland, was an elder of the Free Church, Kirkcaldy. He was inducted to the ruling office in First Church, Dunedin, on March 16th, 1851, and he served that Church and later Knox Church in many capacities. His name is on the list of elders associated in 1854 with the First Presbytery of Otago, and, indeed, of New Zealand.*

October 28th, 1852.

Last Sabbath the church at Port Chalmers\* was opened for the first time by Mr. Burns. Of course there was no sermon at Dunedin. Accommodation, however, was provided for conveying as many as possible by boats to Port Chalmers; the morning being fine six or seven boats started with a good complement. The sail was pleasant and beautiful, so with our company and those at Port Chalmers, etc., the house was well filled. The ship *Persia* was laying in port with all her colours flying, and all the boats arriving at the same time, filled with well-dressed

\* There was no settled minister at Port Chalmers until the induction of the Rev. William Johnstone on June 23rd, 1858. The Rev. Thomas Burns walked there to preach every Sunday in the summer of 1848-9.

people, had a most imposing effect. The Sabbath bell very shortly after landing began to toll from the tower of the new edifice, for the first time sounding among the woods around. The house stands on a rising ground looking over the town, and commanding a most splendid and imposing prospect over the whole lower harbour to the Heads, seven miles off. The collection at the door amounted to £18 3s. 4d., which was not very bad for a small seaport village in Otago. Mr. Burns preached two very excellent sermons to a very attentive and solemn congregation—forenoon text, Psalms cxix and cxxxvi; afternoon, Luke i, 78, 79. We got all safe home in the evening.

March 12th, 1855.

In Dunedin we are just in a bit of a dilemma about getting a new church built. Part of the money is subscribed, but we cannot come to an agreement as to whether it is to be built of iron, stone, brick, or wood, and having few architects amongst us we cannot get an estimate. It is to be built on a hill-top close on the bay with a bell on it. Our present house is quite crowded. Cannot you come over and try your hand at it, without joking. I have no doubt but you would make more money here than at home, provided you were willing to put your own shoulder to the wheel. Besides you can now get land to buy at 10s. per acre. A few years' business here, with a small live stock to

begin with, you could soon live independent. A carpenter here keeps no stock of wood, and if a man wants to build he must provide all materials before the tradesman begins. Besides we have an emigration fund here now of some thousands which, although you don't need, yet if you have any tradesmen or friends you want to send out and can recommend them to me as willing to repay their passage money in the course of two or three years by instalments, your writing to me their names, ages, and calling, I will guarantee their passage and send for them immediately. Those having families or friends here will be preferred. Now I am in earnest about this, there being great want of labourers and tradesmen, and none more than female servants who get from £20 to £30 per annum.

We shall be very glad to see the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Bethune when the *Simlah* arrives, which we are looking for daily. Margaret Lindsay of Kinghorn has just come into town from the Waitaki—a place about 90 miles north of this on the way to Canterbury. She looks sunburnt but in good health.

*After the arrival of the Revs. Wm. Will and Wm. Bannerman in February, 1854, he records the fact that "our two additional ministers are giving general satisfaction and getting on well. We anticipate good results from their labours. Our congregation in Dunedin is still quite full, scarcely a seat to be had."*

March 12th, 1855.

The Rev. Mr. Bannerman has just returned from a tour from the same northern quarter,\* accompanied by Mr. John McGlashan. Everywhere and in every house they met with the kindest reception. The people voluntarily subscribed to the extent of £112 yearly in the prospect of getting a minister to themselves. Mr. Jones subscribed £200 towards erecting a church in his neighbourhood, called Waikouaiti. The Presbytery called a *pro re nata* meeting and sent for a minister for them immediately.

June 30th, 1855.

Lately I sent home an account of a journey I had to the Molyneux. Since then I have had another journey as far in the opposite direction, about 70 miles in the direction of Canterbury, coastwise, in company with the Rev. W. Will, on a missionary tour to that quarter, calling on every house and preaching frequently. Mr. Macandrew was appointed by the Presbytery to accompany Mr. Will, but could not get away at the time, so he sent your humble servant. We had a horse each, and were absent eight days; but more of this after. . . . Intend also enclosing a journal of my journey if ready and not too large, for when I begin I am guilty of being too prosy. I enjoyed my week's journey very much, only my back became very sore

\* North Otago or, as it was then known, Waitaki.

for want of custom in the saddle. Last Sabbath was our winter sacrament, both the young ministers were assisting. The day was fine ; we collected at the door £25 odd to help to pay the passage of the next minister, now sent for.

*This excerpt from his account of the North Otago visitation opens with a reference to the natives of Moeraki.*

They had the most fiendish looking faces of any Maoris I had seen, much tattooed and much wrinkled with age. They also were fond to shake hands with an attempt to smile. Their neighbours introduced the man as "Bloody Jack\*" and the old woman as his wife. Mr. Will said, "Why call him by that name—it's not a good name?" All they could say was, "No ken—the white man call him that." But there is no doubt that were his early history known it would unfold some dark deeds of horrid cruelty. We enquired of them if the missionary ever visited them. They say, "No, only once." After enquiring the way to the house of Mr. Hertslet,† which we knew was near at hand, we bade them good-bye.

\* This was not John Tuhawaiki, known by that same picturesque title, who was drowned off Moeraki in 1844 shortly after arranging the sale of the Otago Block to the New Zealand Company. He bore a high character with the Europeans.

† Henry C. Hertslet came to New Zealand in 1840 and settled at Waikouaiti about 1848. He afterwards acquired a large property at Oamaru, where he died in 1901.



These native huts are built very near the seashore with a considerable rising hill behind, all covered with evergreen trees, very like a home gentleman's policy ground. We both admitted the place as the prettiest native reserve of any we had seen. Here it began to rain rather heavy, and before we got over the hill to Mr. Hertslet's house we were both wet enough. However, we soon got dismounted, tethered our horses—which is all the feed they get—and made ourselves quite at home around the fire as usual. I was well known to Mr. Hertslet, and they were very glad to see the minister, only apologising for having no better accommodation than a sofa and a shakedown for our beds, either of which we were glad to get after so long a ride. We spent the evening very agreeably, and after breakfast next morning we started for another day's ride.

The tide being full we had no room to pass on the beach, but had to go a circuitous round through bush and over by a precipice of a landslip—rather a dangerous road in the dark. We found two or three settlers living in the bush—old seamen married to Maori women with whom they got a piece of land as a dowry. One told us that his taking a native wife was his only safety on landing. Had he not they would certainly have cooked him some day. He was an old man, nearly 80, a native of Edinburgh, had only one eye and his wife had only one also, so they were

quits on that score. Mr. Will asked if he had a Bible. He said he had, and at once showed a good family one from a box, which he said he had got from the missionary. Mr. Will said he hoped he read it daily seeing he could not live long now. He very readily replied there was no fear of him dying for 20 years yet, that he was sure of living to 100, for he had been 25 years in New Zealand without having a sore head. Mr. Will prayed and left the poor old man. His wife with the one eye showed us the path to the next house, but unfortunately in crossing a soft sort of ditch or water-run Mr. Will's horse went down to the belly all fours, leaving him (the horse) all mud from the nose to the tail. This was the only bad step we made on the whole road. My horse shied off and I rounded it all safe.

We again reached the beach all safe, and had a nice canter for two or three miles. Again we turned off to call on a Mr. G. B. Wright, where we met a warm reception. He is from England, has a wife and three children, very superior and pious people. This was to be our abode for the following night, but had still to visit another station called Otepopo, some eight or nine miles further off. After taking an early dinner, and arranging for a meeting to be held in his house in the evening, we started off over a fine level country. Still we went off our way a little, and it took us to get back by 6

o'clock, just in the gloaming. Nothing of interest occurred at Otepopo; only saw the men. After tea in Mr. Wright's, some eight or ten persons met, to whom Mr. Will read and expounded the Scriptures, your humble servant acting always as precentor. After the meeting one old man, Jack Hughes,\* was asked to wait a little for conversation with Mr. Will and Mr. Wright, who both very tenderly and faithfully enquired as to the state of his soul. After a lengthened conversation of one hour, the old man generally approved of what was said, but seemed quite satisfied that all would be right with him at last, that he had done no great evil, but taking a dram; but he knew really nothing about it—that is salvation. We spent the evening very agreeably and profitably.

Next morning we were all ready to start on our way homewards when it began to rain and blow very hard. After two hours it cleared away, during which time Mrs. Wright gave us some very splendid pieces on the piano. She is very accomplished, very humble and kind.

It being now Saturday and engaged to preach at Goodwood, we were obliged to be off by 11 o'clock. It cleared all the way. Making two or three more calls by the way we reached Goodwood by 6 o'clock, where

\* Possibly J. Hughes, whaler, of Moeraki, Tuckett's guide from Moeraki to Waikouaiti in 1844.

we were again hospitably entertained. Next, at half past ten, a good company filled the large dining room, to whom Mr. Will preached a very excellent and faithful sermon. After sermon we had lunch served up in style. Our horses all ready up at the gate, the whole family shook hands as if we had been relations. We bade good-bye and scampered off for Waikouaiti, which we reached in two hours, where the people were all again waiting. In crossing the river here, the tide being full, my horse was up to mid-saddle, so my feet got very wet. However, I got a change and was all right. The people heard attentively, and some again met us in the evening, with whom we had prayers. Next day we rode round visiting all the people in that district, all welcoming us. Stopped another night in the same house, and started next morning (Tuesday) for home over the mountain. The day was beautiful; got other two men to go with us to Dunedin. About half-way we made tea, etc., in a whare—very acceptable. Reached home at 4 o'clock, where we found all well and a hearty welcome.

Thus ended in the good Providence of God another stage in our wilderness journey, having realised the fulfilment of His gracious promise that He will keep His people in all their ways—no evil shall befall them in their going out and in.

March 4th, 1856.

With regard to church matters I cannot boast great things. Still we are keeping up. A few weeks ago we had an addition to our office-bearers of six elders and six deacons. I am glad to say that Uncle James is one of the elders. We are also getting the church all ceiled and the walls papered, giving it rather a smart appearance inside from the bare walls and rafters.

June 28th, 1856.

I have got a little more time to fill up my paper, but having already written so much nonsense that I should like to change the subject. Our winter sacrament was observed on Sunday two weeks ago, the third Sabbath of June, I think the same day with the Kirkaldy midsummer. The weather was fine and dry up to the Saturday evening previous, when it began to rain. Sabbath was both wet and cold, consequently our meeting was thinly attended. Nevertheless we had a comfortable season, Rev. Mr. Bannerman assisting. All the days and forms are observed here same as at home. Our quarterly collection for the schemes of the Free Church at home was £16 odd that day.

We have lately made a great improvement on the inside of our place of worship. Formerly it was only the rough stone and brick walls with all the roof rafters open. Now the walls are lined with wood four feet from

the floor, one inch boards, and are planed and plowed as with you. For want of good plaster the walls (upwards) were first lined with grey calico, then paper and wainscot, and the ceiling white. Vestry inside door covered with cloth and spring back. The passages laid with cocoanut matting. The improvement is very great and much more comfortable. It cost about £80, made up by private subscription. Uncle James was the most active member of committee in carrying it forward.

Notwithstanding these favourable looking accounts of our well-doing, there are not a few disaffected persons amongst us who have no love towards either our Church or Minister. Some six months ago a few families united together, headed by Dr. Purdie, some other Independents and Voluntaries, invited a Rev. Mr. Jeffreys, who was living here in retirement (an English Independent), to preach to them in the Mechanics Hall, where they now have stated worship numbering from 30 to 50. How long they will hold out we don't know. The English Church is attended by about double that number.

There are also amongst the English portion of our community a few would-be gentlemen—our Mr. Editor\* at the head—and who

\* William H. Cutten (1822-83) arrived by the *John Wickliffe*. He was in the Provincial Council (1853-63), in Parliament (1853-55, 1878-79), on the Town Board, and Commissioner of Crown Lands.

are still mortified at the Scotch people ruling our Province with the old Captain at our head, and the majority of our Provincial Council Scotch. Are at present leaving no stone unturned to upset our Government. The education question, coupled with the teaching of the Shorter Catechism, is the arena at present, and am sorry to say that, what with our people's apathy and in the absence of the Superintendent and Macandrew, they are carrying the day at the meetings ; the feeling betwixt parties is very strong.

April 13th, 1857.

I must now refer you for a little to what is going on in Dunedin. You must have seen from the last newspapers sent you a course of public lectures advertised, and now are going on. They are delivered in our church and are very well attended. Last night was the fifth lecture by the Rev. Mr. Burns on the "Present State of Europe." It was a very able and splendid lecture, and the house was filled to the door ; more than 300 would be present. This course was got up by one or two in our place of business, Mr. Paterson being a leading member. They had all the lecturers engaged and the nights fixed before the public knew anything about them. Now they have formed a Young Men's Society for mutual improvement. The first essay to be delivered next Wednesday evening, so you see we are making some steps in advance

towards intellectual improvement as well as mere money-making. You will see also from the papers that we are taking steps towards building a new church. Private subscriptions have been got in Dunedin amounting to £930.

*In his first ten months in the southern parish—from Milton to the Bluff—Mr. Bannerman walked 3,600 miles in his pastoral work. Forging rivers and sleeping out were but incidents in a trip. By 1858, when George Hepburn enjoyed his "fine jaunt" to the South, the worst of the pioneer's problems would be over.*

December 29th, 1858.

Our sacrament was last Sabbath week. We never had so many people; 374 communicated, and the collection at the door for the Colonial Scheme was £40. The Presbytery agreed to a memorial to send home for another minister for Dunedin of a first-class order, but have no time to-day to give particulars. The Presbytery appointed your humble servant to go down to Invercargill along with Rev. W. Bannerman to see after the state of religion there, and to create that district into an educational district under the Ordinance. Hope we will get good weather. It will be a fine jaunt of three or four weeks at Government expenses.



October 21st, 1859.

At present we are ill off for rain, and last week we had as much wind as might suffice for a long time ; it did us no harm, but you will see from the papers that some fires which occurred during the gale had an alarming appearance, and unfortunately burnt down the manse near Port Chalmers, when it was just about ready to go into. It is a loss to the congregation of £400 to £500, and a great disappointment to their minister, Mr. Johnston. These were the greatest fires and the highest winds ever we saw here. The weather is again very fine.



THE HALFWAY BUSH HOME



## CHAPTER IV

### Home Life at Halfway Bush

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*In the early days the opportunities for social entertainment were scanty enough. Hocken says that an occasional lecture at the Mechanics Institute on some solid subject, or a tea meeting followed by excellent speeches did much to liven the community. At such homesteads as that at Halfway Bush it was considered a privilege to entertain friends and kindred. Dancing to 5 a.m. and a reference to prayer in the same paragraph point to a more broadminded attitude than we are accustomed to associate with this era.*

September, 1854.

We are all in the continuance of the best of health and spirits, and all going on busily at the Halfway Bush. This is our spring, equal to your March 10th, and on Saturday last we had the first rhubarb tart for the season. Our young wheat looks well, and other things budding beautifully. The first early potatoes are planted, and the garden all in first-rate order. Sandy and Bill are busy now putting up a new fence along the

roadside of the section of post and four rails morticed very strong, not to be overmatched in the Colony.

I send you a paper containing a short account of a harvest home we had some time ago. It was rather a fine affair for New Zealand, the barn being handsomely decorated with flags and evergreens. The tables ran the length of the house with a cross one at the top, covers laid for 60 upwards. Silver plate at the upper table, viz., candlesticks, bottle, and cruet stands, a large china punch bowl with silver ladle, a bottle of the best Islay in each brewing, also plenty wine and brandy, two chandeliers hung from the roof overtopped with the heart of a spread fern tree. Your humble servant, being in the chair, of course put his best foot foremost. The evening was spent with great good humour, and dancing kept up till 5 o'clock morning. Similar meetings had been previously held in the other districts. I have written this account very hurriedly as the captain of the *Thetis* has just come up from Port Chalmers saying he intends sailing to-morrow, sooner than expected, so had to finish off in the store. I enclose a pastoral letter which you will have some pleasure in perusing, and please to circulate it to Mr. Cameron, etc., etc. Remembering you all often in my prayers, hoping still to enjoy the same from you, and commending you all to the grace of God.

## LETTERS FROM OTAGO

*The arrival and departure of the Bethunes are recorded in letters of May and June, 1855. The Rev. Alexander Bethune was school-teacher at Invercargill and elsewhere in Southland from 1861.*

Since the arrival of the *Simlah* we have enjoyed the company of Mr. and Mrs. Bethune with us at Halfway Bush. I brought them home with me on arrival, and they have remained ever since. We like them very much. Mr. Bethune has been at the Molyneux and back, and has fixed on a spot about ten miles south of the river at a place called the Warepa Bush; but as it is unsurveyed he cannot get possession for want of a Government surveyor. He is waiting the decision of the Provincial Council. He preached one afternoon for Mr. Burns very acceptably, but not over bright. I esteem them both good people.

They have been living with us since their arrival. Only left us this week to spend the winter months at the Green Island district, teaching and preaching on Sabbath, until he gets right possession of his land at the Clutha.

May 15th, 1855.

On Thursday last, William, Sarah, and I were at a marriage in the North-East Valley, viz., Mr. R. McKenzie, son of the Rev. Mr. McKenzie of Farr, to a Miss Smith, an Aber-

donian. There were about 50 persons present. The hilarity of the evening was kept up until about 2 a.m. Plenty of dancing in the barn to the bagpipes. They (the Smiths) kept Sarah until the Monday following.

The night following the marriage, mother and I, together with Mr. and Mrs. Bethune, were invited to tea and supper at our next neighbours, Mr. Marshall's.\* There were about 20 present, and everyone gaily dressed, as at a home party, and the tables covered with everything that is fine. The party being very select, we enjoyed ourselves very much (never forgetting the Queen and absent friends). We also remained together until an early hour, so you see we have our friendly enjoyment here as well as you have. When the addition to our house is finished we intend having a blow-out here on account of our first-born son being now 21 years of age. The carpenter expects to be done in two weeks now, the roof being on and the windows made. He has only the floors to lay and doors to put on, but more of this after.

March 4th, 1856.

In my letter to Janet I think I mentioned something of a marriage which was to take place in our house betwixt Margaret Lindsay, late of Kinghorn, and Mr. Andrew McNeill, Molyneux. I must give you some account

\* James Marshall was one of the first deacons of First Church. His daughter Margaret married William Hepburn.

of it, there being some little novelty attached. I may first state that marriages here are in general kept up in great style with large parties, so Margaret was resolved not to be behind ; got everything provided in the most sumptuous manner, and every accommodation provided for a large party. Wednesday was fixed for the ceremony at 4 o'clock (the law here prohibiting any to marry after that hour). The feast was all prepared, the company had mostly arrived, the ladies dressed in white with their kid gloves on, the minister also appeared at the hour appointed, the bridegroom only was awanting. What could we do but sit and wait and talk, and try to laugh, but to no purpose. Five o'clock arrived ; the minister took his leave, leaving Margaret quite in the dumps. I asked if she would give us any dinner. She answered, "Oh, yes." The tables were soon covered with plenty, of which we all partook heartily—less the bride. After dinner, as usual, the toasts and song went round merrily up till 9 o'clock, when I was called out of the room into the kitchen where, lo and behold, I saw the bridegroom and bride sitting together!—all right, only sore fatigued and very wet. However, I soon introduced him to the company which produced three hearty cheers, raising all our spirits, so that we could not part till "the wee short hour ayont the twal," and that only after taking a promise from each one to return next day at the same hour.



Now, if my story is not too long, I must tell you what detained the bridegroom. He had to come from the Molyneux, upwards of 60 miles, but the roads and rivers were all flooded with water with having rained incessantly for several days—indeed we had not seen such a flood for several years. He, along with two brothers, left the Molyneux on horses on Monday and reached the Tokomairiro River that afternoon, but it was impassable. They rode six or seven miles further up the stream to no purpose. They had to wait there that night, all Tuesday and Tuesday night, and still it rained. On Wednesday morning they constructed rafts made of the flax and brushwood, called by the natives “mugies,”\* and sailed across on them, swimming their horses, which they accomplished in safety, although not without some considerable danger. After this they pushed on through mire and swamp, but the horses got knocked up when they reached the next, the Taieri River, still 25 miles from Dunedin, but where there is a good ferry. Leaving his brothers to follow next day, Mr. Andrew got a fresh horse and did his best, but as I have already said, did not reach until 9 o'clock, so you perceive that love even in New Zealand is not easily cooled even at the age of —.

Next day came, and the same work here was all to do over again. Such a bustle of cooking and brushing and dressing, etc.

\* Maori *mokihiki*, a raft.

Andrew himself set off with two fresh horses to meet his brothers, which he did some 12 or 15 miles off. They all returned in good time, but then another difficulty arose. The minister was pre-engaged to marry another party in town at the same hour. We had to go and treat with them to get married one hour earlier, which put them also about, their friends being invited at that hour. However, half an hour was granted, and a horse got to the minister, which brought him to the Halfway Bush just at 4 o'clock, where the same party was all waiting, with several additions. The knot was soon tied, and the minister again took his leave. The tables were soon spread and again loaded with plenty, and as tastefully set out as you could wish to see in the Lang Toon. No one could have known that anything had been touched the day before. We all enjoyed it with fully more life than the day before, especially those strangers who had come through such fatigue. At an early hour in the evening the whole party repaired to the barn, where the dance was kept up till an early hour. Supper was also set for as many as liked to partake, but all passed over in great good humour and happiness. Next morning 17 sat down to breakfast. After 10 the young couple set off on horseback, getting a volley of old shoes thrown after them by the young folk. Thus ends my long story, which has grown much longer than I intended, but for want of a

better it will be something for you to read. Our young folks found no fault with what occurred, thereby they got two marriage dinners and two sprees instead of one, but you may be sure it caused no small stir in the house, everything being cooked and baked in the house, and really Margaret did it in style, sparing no expense.

Sarah had a letter from them saying that they had reached home safely, sending at the same time an invitation to her and William to come to his brother's marriage next week, to take place at the Waihola Lake ; but they are not going at this season.

*Referring to another wedding in the same year, he writes:—*

June 28th, 1856.

Our rule here is to stand three several days calling in church, which they were not very anxious to submit to ; but the days passed over, and the ceremony took place in her own house at half past three o'clock. After tea almost the whole number—about 20—moved off to the Halfway Bush, the ladies in a cart, five of the gents on horse-back, and the rest walked. The roads were fine and the moon beautiful. Our William being best man, he and the bride had horses, set off at full gallop, never slacking bridle until they reached the Halfway Bush, leaving Uncle\* and I to come at our leisure (he not

\* The bridegroom, James Paterson.

being a rider). All arrived in safety at 7 o'clock, where a large party of our best neighbours had assembled to meet them, all very gaily dressed. Thirty-eight, besides children, sat down to a splendid supper in our parlour. Everything was set out in as good a style as we could have possibly done at home, and everything was baked and cooked in our own house except the bride's cake. The proper one, by the by, was cut up in Dunedin, was three storeys high and very splendid; but a receiving one, very large, and ornamented was sent to our house.

The supper consisted of roast beef, boiled mutton, steak and kaka pies, fowls, tongues, plum pudding, custards, jellies, etc., port and sherry wines, brandy, Scotch whisky in abundance. Your humble servant in the chair gave the company no time to fag. Song and toast went merrily round till 11 o'clock, when the young folks got up a dance in the new kitchen in which most of us joined by turn. About 2 a.m. the company broke up, but a few of our youngsters kept it up till near morning. The next day the young folks walked and rode about our place, when they went into town quietly in the evening, where a few friends had met to receive them, and had supper. Thus ended the spree. In justice to the parties I should have added their liberality to us. In addition to white kid gloves, Uncle presented Mother and Sarah each with a splendid new sarcenet gown

made in the newest fashion. The bride gave me a beautiful super black surtout and vest, the same as Uncle got. The bride was married in a coloured sarcenet and a figured black ditto on Sunday, so everyone was very gay. Gaiety now is the order of the day in the town at least, but it is the first new coat for Sabbath that I have got since leaving home, or gown for Ma either, so it's an ill wind that does na good. About a month before the marriage we had another harvest home, fully more gay than the former one two years before, but we did not print it. I wanted the chaps to write you the particulars ; they took the whole management.

*A Birthday Party, Christmas and New Year celebrations are also recorded.*

December 29th, 1858.

Last Saturday being Christmas was held as an holiday. Shops all shut. So we had a family party at Wakari—in all 17 sat at dinner ; all very happy, not forgetting absent friends.

Saturday, 1st, being New Year's Day, is another holiday to be kept in Uncle James's at dinner and a picnic in the evening at his new grounds. Would you not both wish you were with us ?

Happy to inform you that William has succeeded in getting his license for his run for 14 years, so he is now all right. It was a

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hard push to get his cattle all forward such a distance in good time. However, he managed it with perseverance. Will give you a better account some other time.

October 1st, 1860.

Last week our whole family dined together with all the Patersons in Uncle James's new house, "Essequibo,"\* above 20, in celebration of Grandpa's birth, viz., 85 years of age, who is still in good health and spirits, on which occasion he made a fine speech and even sang a song. I gave "Absent Friends," which I never forget. Mr. James Adam was the only stranger, so we spent a happy evening.

\* The Hon. James Paterson was in business in Georgetown, on the Essequibo River, British Guiana, before coming to New Zealand. The High Street School and Mr. E. C. Hazlett's residence now occupy the site of "Essequibo," where many family gatherings were held.

## CHAPTER V

### Widening Interests

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*In December, 1855, George Hepburn was elected with John McGlashan and William Smith as a representative of the western district of the Provincial Council, which had been enlarged to 19 members. "The writer also got entangled with political affairs; was first elected member of the Provincial Council for Wakari, which seat he continued to hold (with re-elections) for ten years, four of which he had the honour to sit as Chairman of Committees. Meanwhile he was also returned as member for the House of Representatives at Wellington, which seat he also filled for three years, delicate health only caused his resignation."\**

March 4th, 1856.

When this letter was begun I expected to have got it away by last ship, but having a number of business letters to write at the same time did not get yours finished. Since then my time has been a good deal occupied with the sittings of the Provincial Council, which was something rather new to me, viz., legislating for Provinces. It was a position

\* Reminiscences, 1870.

quite unlooked for on my part, but pressed upon me by my constituents. Our sittings lasted for ten days, but long sederunts from 1 o'clock till 10, 11, or even 12 o'clock. Had a strong opposition of six to contend against in all our measures, which is generally the case on all public bodies. The newspapers will give you all the particulars if you think them worth reading. The principal measures were the Education and Road Bills. The first day we met we were all specially invited by card to a *dejeuner* in the Superintendent's house, which was served up in great style. Another morning all those on the Government side were invited to a breakfast in the house of Mr. Reynolds, and on another evening the whole Council supped together in a private hotel. Captain Nicol\* of the *Gil Blas* being our guest in honour of being the first captain that had brought his ship up the harbour within a little of the jetty—a thing at one time thought impracticable. The Council has voted him £500 as a bonus to run his ship regularly for one year betwixt Melbourne and Otago, which will facilitate our markets. The Council also voted £500 to be spent on the improvement of the roads, and £1,500 for building schools and schoolmasters' houses; but, as I said, the papers will tell you all our doings in public matters.

\* Captain John Nicol brought the brig *Gil Blas*, 175 tons, up to Dunedin on March 1st, 1856. The Provincial Council tendered him a public dinner. He settled in Otago and died in 1877.



June 28th, 1856.

After being subjected to endure a silence of upwards of three months of what is going on either in the commercial or the historical affairs of the world, we have at last received during the last two weeks letters and papers in abundance. First a coastal vessel via Wellington bringing a pretty large mail, in which we received letters from Kirkaldy till January 29th. Then in a week after another coaster arrived via Canterbury, bringing another large mail of eight bags—the accumulated mails of three to four months—this said vessel being five weeks on her passage betwixt this and the latter place, distance only 150 miles. Contrary winds had driven her twice back from our coast (nevertheless, these prevailing winds at certain seasons we never experience anything like the destructive gales you seem to have at home). But those long delays which occur in the transit of letters, both to and from New Zealand, serve to show why letters are so long on the way. All the other settlements in New Zealand, however, have got steam communication but Otago. That also we expect to share in soon.

By the last mail referred to we had letters from Kirkaldy dated November and December, 1855, duplicates of invoices and letters received three months before, so the first came last. Mr. Douglas in his letter of January 29th mentioned his having forwarded to London along with his own goods some crates

of crockeryware from you. This we are very glad of, being sore run out of a good many things. We could have wished you had sent the invoice along with his, but when the *Sir Edward Paget* arrives, which we now look for daily, we expect both invoice and goods. Being anxious to let you have a little more money, we have paid this day into J. Macandrew and Co. to be paid you through them in bank bills from Melbourne for the sum of £50, which sum we hope you will not be long in receiving, as a vessel leaves this for Melbourne on Monday first. We will embrace the next opportunity of sending you the balance of last shipment.

We observe from the Auckland papers that our representative, Mr. Macandrew, has carried a Bill through the House of Assembly empowering the Provinces to establish banks or carry on banking on a more extended scale than at present. We may, therefore, expect some branch here immediately. You cannot be wrong in sending three or four crates of crockery twice a year, the kinds we will advise you of after.

March 14th, 1857.

I mention these things merely to show you the disadvantage we are at in being so long in getting goods after we expect them. Our letters, too, are still in the same position, notwithstanding the very rapid passages made by the new company's line to Australia; we are as long in getting them forward to Otago

as ever. The authorities at Melbourne or Sydney won't send the New Zealand letters any way but by the *William Denny* steamer to Auckland, 700 miles from us, from which we are sometimes two months in receiving them here, but you will see from the papers sent you that great exertions are making in order to get the mails delivered direct to each Province, to aid in which we have voted £2,000 as our share of a bonus for a steamer to call here with a mail, so we expect to be all right by and by.

In your letter you also complain about the length of time in getting your money for what you send. I frankly admit of the reasonableness of your complaint, and do regret it very much, knowing the difficulty you must have in being kept so long out of it. I hope that that also will be remedied by and by. To be sure we have now got a bank established, but they charge us 10 per cent. for discounting a bill and three per cent. more if we ask a bill on home, so we have not troubled them yet in any way. What money we deposit we get no interest for, so there is no inducement there but merely for security. We sent you lately £100 by Mr. W. H. Reynolds of Messrs. J. Macandrew and Co., who left this by the *Gil Blas* via Melbourne for Scotland, and who will pay it over to you on arrival. He promised to call at Kirkaldy on Messrs. Lockhart, but I forgot to give him your address, but it is likely he will call on

you also. He is on a marriage jaunt with a dashing young wife—a great favourite of mine. Tell Mr. Lockhart to send him to you, and you take them to see Catherine and the children.

You seem to think that I charge too much commission—that is by doing so on the gross amount. To be sure I do—it is the regular practice; besides, we give you a good deal higher percentage on the goods we retail than what we would give to other importers here. For instance, we now get crockery laid down at 100 per cent. on the original invoice, with an allowance off for breakages, and almost all other merchandise at 50 per cent. You will see from our newspapers sent the great quantity of goods that Mr. Jones brings in, which he is very anxious to sell at a moderate percentage to keep down small importers. We don't get half our supply from Home, so are compelled to buy from others from whom we easily get three or four months' credit, so in making sales we have to do the same just as at Home. This year money will be very scarce owing to the very low price of produce. However, we have no reason to complain as yet.

You will see also from our papers that gold seems to be found in the southern part of our Province—several are now working at it—but whether it will continue to be a profitable field we cannot tell. If it should, it will likely produce a great influx of people. People we

do need ; labour is still as high as ever—10s. per day was given this harvest, and 9s. to 10s. is very common for carpenters and other mechanics, and house servants are scarcely to be had. The public works going on by the Government, too, would require a great deal more hands than they can possibly get. When you come out, there is no fear of my not speaking—there is no difference whatever. You might very probably get the first sight of me wheeling a barrow down the jetty to save the sixpence for shipping. If anyone here thinks himself too high for doing anything connected with his own business (servant maids excepted) he is a fool.

I forgot to say that collectors are busy taking subscriptions for erecting a new church for Mr. Burns. The Halfway Bush district has raised £200—the others not reported yet.

The first sale of land for the new town at Invercargill took place here yesterday. The room was crowded, and bidding for quarter acres only was very spirited. For some sections the competition was very great, running up from £8 to £46. Altogether the sale realised £1,500 for town sections only, so you see the people are going ahead for town property there.

June, 1858.

The demand for town sections of late has been excessive. There is a monthly sale of

## LETTERS FROM OTAGO

those who are applied for, and the competition is sometimes keen. This month there are upwards of 100 sections applied for. The price of building ground in the business part of the town is selling at £1 per foot of frontage. One lot has been even let at that price.

## CHAPTER VI

### Farming and the Purchase of Brooklands

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*The purchase and development of the Halfway Bush property, first as a home and then as a farm, are detailed in reminiscences of 1870:—*

Hearing of a much better empty house about two miles out of town at a place called "The Halfway Bush," I walked out one day with the owner to see it, and although inconveniently too far off I rented it from him for a year, to which place we soon removed, all the family and traps, and there we still remain ; eventually we purchased it, including 10 acres of sub. land for £200. Afterwards we purchased the adjoining 10 acres from Mr. Mosley for £60, making it one block. Having brought with me from home a N.Z. Company's choice for 10 acres of sub. land, I selected a section fully a mile distant from the house, which I resold many years after to the (first) Waterworks Company for £200.\* At one period the Provincial Government advertised all the remaining unsold sub. sections at the low price of 10s. per acre or £5 per section. Fortunately I was advised

\* Apparently part of the Ross Creek Reservoir Reserve.

and persuaded to take up those near to myself which I did, viz., 8 sections or 80 acres.

My second son, James, not long after our getting settled at the Halfway Bush, had the offer of a situation as shepherd to Mr. Lees, West Taieri, which he accepted. He was sent to an outside station fully two miles from the master's where he cooked for himself and slept alone. There he continued two years and gave satisfaction. Then he made a fresh engagement with Mr. C. Kettle to keep his sheep on the opposite side of the Taieri Plain at the Kaihiku, with whom he remained one and a half or two years.\*

April 13th, 1857.

Our harvest is all over two weeks ago. We had a very good crop, averaging about 40 bushels per acre, both wheat and oats, and we never had finer harvest weather. James came home from his shepherding in January last, and has remained with us since, but he and George were occasionally speaking of the necessity of going to look for another place for themselves and their cattle. Our united stock now numbers about 60 head, which is a third more than we have a legal right to run in this district, so they had made up their minds to start for the south immediately after harvest—that was two weeks ago.

\* Reminiscences, 1870.



However a few days before then a gentleman called at our store in town just to do a little business on his return from the southerd, where he had been seeing a sheeprun of from five to ten miles square, which he had just got. I simply asked him if he had sold his estate in the north yet, which had been advertised in our newspapers for a few weeks, and which you will see by looking at the papers for March, lately sent you, under the title of "Estate of Brooklands." He said "No, not yet; would I be a purchaser?" After a very short conversation I promised to think of it, and would give him an answer next day. Next day I kept my word and made him a verbal offer for all the lands, buildings, and fencing thereon, providing everything met with our approval on inspection. Accordingly we agreed to start for Brooklands on the following Tuesday, distance 44 miles to the north of this over the mountains.

The day fixed was fine, so James, George, and I, together with the gentleman, all set off about 8 o'clock, but we only had two horses, so had to ride and tie in the old Scotch style. We all reached the place by 6 o'clock evening, quite ready for our tea. Next morning the gentleman and I saddled our horses and rode over all the ground, while the boys and the son traversed the bush to inspect all the cut fencing, etc. We all returned by 12 o'clock, and all expressed fully satisfied

with everything about the place. We there and then exchanged missives, after which we had dinner. That being done, we proceeded to take an inventory of all the movables outside, consisting of a dray, two ploughs, one grub plough, harrows, fanners, grinding stone, wheat steel mill, etc., etc., some household furniture, all the wheat in stack (about 200 bushels), half an acre of potatoes, and one riding horse. The price of everything was left to myself, and by 5 o'clock all was settled without a word. I agreed to let the family remain in the house for the winter months, while they agreed to let us have the use of their bullocks free so long as they were unremoved. It was further agreed that the boys take possession next morning and proceed to work; it was further agreed that the old gentleman and I should return to Dunedin next day (Thursday), which we did, reaching home by 5 o'clock. Next morning we gave in our agreement to an attorney, and by Saturday night at five I had the titles complete in my pocket, and he had satisfactory documents for the full price thereof.

I have thus been minute in detailing all my movements in this affair to show you how we can do business here, that is to say, that in one short week we completed the purchase of an heritable estate of 500 acres, together with all the buildings erected thereon, and movables, etc., upwards of 40 miles distance. It was rather a stunner to some of the town

inhabitants and afforded a little gossip, and some speculation about my intentions.

From the enclosed sketch you can form some idea of its appearance, situated on the banks of the Pleasant River, from the windings of which you may fancy the flatness of the land. Three hundred acres stretching along the banks is as level as the floor and quite dry ; with very little trouble the plough could run all the length. The river forms a natural fence along the whole length, the channel being very deep. The soil is deep alluvial, fit for wheat for many years to come. The narrow part of the triangle contains about 50 acres of heavy bush, which adds greatly to the value of the property, out of which bush the first proprietor cut 8,000 posts and rails for fencing, all of which we get. There is already 50 acres fenced in, in three fields or paddocks as they are called here ; also one acre to the left of the house close fenced for a garden ; also a large strong stockyard and piggery.

There is also a very good dwelling house, weather boarded and lined, consisting of three rooms below and four small bedrooms above. There is also a very good clay house at a little distance for the men servants. Indeed a very great deal of work has been done during the last two years, the proprietor fancying it to be a homestead for him and his family. His name is Mr. William Dalrymple, late merchant in Cupar Angus, and commission agent for



THE HOMESTEAD AT BROOKLANDS



Robert Hutchinson and Co., Kirkaldy. We had done a little business with him before in purchasing goods he had brought out. He is a thorough business man and lang-headed. This farm was considered a first-rate choice. He being in favour with the surveyors was directed to it, but now wishing to become a sheepfarmer he goes and sells it; so much for men's changeable nature! I have not seen any place superior to it since coming to New Zealand.

But I am afraid I have written too much about this affair. You will be tired reading it. I will now leave it to the boys to write you their own account of it. I may merely mention that it is wholly intended for James and George, whose names are embodied in the title, and by next year will both have a vote for an M.P. We would have lived long enough in Scotland before I could have placed them in such a farm of their own. We are very happy in getting a place for them so near us, only one day's journey. Had they gone to the south it might have been three times as far. We only now want men and money to carry it on to advantage. Suppose George Sinclair and his wife would come out and take charge of the cattle and milking they would get £60 to £70 per annum with double rations. William will be rather surprised when he returns and finds the boys both from the home.

Since William\* left this the Provincial Government has sent home a Mr. James Adam as Agent to bring out as many people as he can get, either friends of the present settlers or labourers and mechanics and servants. When you hear of him being in Kirkaldy, I would like you to see him. He is a personal friend of ours ; was a member of the Provincial Council, and one of our elders. You will find him an independent character, but will be ready to answer all your queries.

June 4th, 1857.

I have little additional to say about the boys here, viz., about James and George, but they have now left the house and are located on their new estate. After spending the first two or three weeks on it, that I formerly mentioned, they came home and remained about three weeks plowing our land for the next crop and finishing up some things. They again left us, taking away all the cattle—63 head, and of course not all mine—in one mob, only leaving us three milk cows. For several days before starting they were employed daily gathering in the dry cattle, which had wandered over the mountains and in the gullies for ten miles distant. At last the whole were brought into our stockyard and were counted out that morning they left, so they made a goodly appearance when they left the Halfway Bush.

\* William Hepburn visited Scotland in 1857.

We were both grieved and glad when we saw them depart. Mother remarked with tears in her eyes that they were better off than Jacob was when he left his father's house. Well, with the assistance of only one young man, they managed to drive the whole herd all the distance without losing a single beast, and the road—or rather no road—is not like the home country, but over high mountains and along ridges so narrow that in some places only one can pass at a time.\* About half way they slept a few hours on the hills in their blankets. Next day they reached their destination in safety about 5 o'clock. Since then we have had a visit from George (on his horse Lion) in order to get all their things packed up and shipped off by vessel round to Waikouaiti, about ten miles from them, to which they have a good level road, which things have all gone in safety and George off again, so we are now left with a great blank in the house, only we have got back Sandy Dickson who, with David, are jobbing away at leisure keeping the place in order. We have no servants just now, but we have much need of one. We offered £20 for a servant by the last ship, but did not get her; she got £2 per month from someone else.

\* The old Maori track over the crest of the Flagstaff range was the usual route to Waikouaiti until the main road and Cobb's coaches ended this uncertainty of travel in the 'sixties.



We are living in hopes that William will bring somebody to help us. We have had to keep Jessie at home from the school this quarter to assist, but Rachel is still attending the Misses Dods' day-boarding school, and Andrew goes daily into Dunedin to the High School, where he is making wonderful progress, though slow but sure. He is getting writing, arithmetic, grammar, and geography, and is pretty often at the top of his class. Now, without any intention when I began, I have written you a pretty detail of what is going on at the Halfway Bush.

October 30th, 1857.

I wrote in May last with a detailed account of a new place I bought for James and George called Brooklands, which letter I presume you will have opened, seeing it was from New Zealand, and that you will now be in possession of all the particulars. It is now six months since they left us, and I am happy to inform you of their welfare and of their succeeding well so far as they have gone. They have ploughed up an additional ten acres of new land (George is ploughman) with a team of eight bullocks and a driver carrying a whip 15 feet long. Their cattle are all doing well. They (James and George) and another young man live together in the bachelor style, but would be all the better of a housekeeper. About three weeks ago Sarah went to see them and to put their house

somewhat in order. She went by sea, a voyage which can be accomplished in five or six hours, but it came on a storm just at sailing, so after beating about five hours on the river\* had to take shelter at Port Chalmers for two nights until the wind changed. Still she had a rough passage, but reached in safety. The boys came to meet her at the beach ten miles with their dray. After staying with them three weeks James and she came home over the mountains on horseback only last Saturday. That road is both wild and romantic, and it is rather an event for a young lady. They were 13 hours on the road, but reached in safety.

January 29th, 1861.

About ten days ago, being slack, Uncle James and I proposed a jaunt to Brooklands, he never having seen it and I not for nearly two years; rather I should say Uncle consented to go if I would go with him—agreed. The day was more than ordinarily fine and hot. The Geelong steamer sailed at 12 noon (only a three hours' sail to Waikouaiti). Off we set, but no sooner were we outside the Heads than we encountered a heavy sea, reached the landing place by 3 o'clock, but landing was impossible, the sea and surf being so heavy. There we lay and rolled all night, until next morning at 6 o'clock the Maoris came off for us in small boats. We were all

\* The whalers' name for Otago Harbour.

safely landed on the beach, five miles off from the nearest accommodation house, which we had to walk to before getting breakfast. This we partook of heartily. Then there was nothing for it but walk another five miles to Brooklands. They knew nothing of our coming, or they would have had the horses there for us. By the by, little Andrew was with us too. However, we tramped and took them by surprise just as they were at dinner (after cutting among the wheat all forenoon). Rested ourselves all afternoon. Next day we kept walking about the whole day over all the farm, and in through the thick bush and neighbourhood. Uncle seemed much pleased with everything he saw. Their crops are excellent, and the improvements of fencing are first-class. Besides they are building a new barn of stone and lime 40ft. by 20. The fine stone and limestone they get plenty of at the back of the house; burn their own lime, and drive the driving. Masons' wages, however, 10s. per day and keep, so it will cost something; but they could not do without. The following morning I left Uncle behind and set off for Dunedin, Andrew accompanying me the first five miles with a horse; then he took it back, and I walked on to the beach and got a passage back on the same steamer. Reached home about 6 o'clock and found all well.

[The two youths remained happily together for several years. George, poor man,

caught a heavy cold which sat down on his chest and ultimately cut him off, aged 24 years. David, our fourth son, next joined James in the farm. It unfortunately happened one day that they were delivering some fat sheep to the butcher from the yards. One sheep broke off from the rest. David, poor fellow, jumped on his horse, which was standing close by, with a view to help the man away with his lot. The single sheep was fixed on by the strange dog and came among the horse's feet on which David rode, causing the horse to fall and roll over David, thereby crushing him internally so severely that he never spoke after it. He was carried into the house; a doctor was speedily got, who did all he could for him. We received a telegram. Mother went off that night; she saw him still breathing but insensible. He died before I reached by next morning's coach. Aged 29 and much regretted.]\*

June, 1858.

We have just finished the threshing of our oats at "Wakari" by a threshing machine which cost us 50s. per day. This year we had ten acres of oats, the first crop off our new 10s. per acre open land. It got three furs, lay fallow one year, off which we have 450 bushels oats (at 5s. per bushel), beside a great lot of fine straw, one half of which I sold for £12 on the spot. The oats

\* Reminiscences, 1870.

I have shipped to Melbourne on my own account of risk, expecting to realise even better return. (The *Strathfieldsay* is loading oats for Melbourne.) Sold our stock of clover hay for £11, but our potatoes have been a very light crop this season from the drought. Prices are £10 per ton of 20.

## CHAPTER VII

# The Gold Mining Boom

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*A great change came in the Province of Otago with the discovery of gold at Gabriel's Gully in 1861. Thousands of miners flocked into Otago from the other provinces, from Australia, and the United States. Not only labourers but men in all grades of life hastened to the diggings, and business houses in Dunedin suddenly found themselves on the crest of a wave of prosperity.*

*In 1859, James Macandrew, in anticipation of taking a more prominent part in politics, sold his business to James Paterson and Co., and they were in a position to take better advantage of the boom.*

October 21st, 1859.

We have now got fairly established in Macandrew's premises, and got into something like working order. The first week our auctioneer sold upwards of £1,500 worth of goods. This week the sales have been smaller, but you will see that our next are of a larger description. Sales by auction are now almost of daily occurrence, and if well managed expect this branch of our business to turn

out well. Our Mr. Walker is a very nice gentleman, and we think equal to the best in town. Our William is taking a general oversight of what is going out and coming in ; complains of being so hard wrought that he will be grey-headed in a month. George Sinclair and another man act as porters, and a Mr. Lockhart as principal clerk. With all we have plenty to do. The old store is still kept going as a retail store under the care of a Mr. Knox from Edinburgh.

Since William came into town he has taken in a partner with his run—a gentleman of means, who has as an equivalent to his share put on the run 750 ewes value £1,000. He also puts on 1,000 more ewes on terms. The one half of the profits of all is William's. After paying expenses very shortly it will yield him £500 a year. Am sure you will say he has been a lucky fellow. The other run which we applied for is now under offer to another party by us for a few hundreds, although we have never seen the country.

*Letters of January, 1860, show how George Hepburn advanced in political life, and was re-elected to the Provincial Council.*

January 26th, 1860.

The contract was signed yesterday for the new Athenaeum for £6,500, and plenty other work always springing up. In your letter you say you are sorry we did not send you

an order. Indeed, we don't know what to send for, there is now such an abundance of everything that we are with many articles inundated. The neighbouring provinces, hearing of our prosperity, are sending goods by the shipload to be sold even by auction. You will see by our advertisements that this is the case. The *Cheviot* from Glasgow with Mr. Holmes completely overstocked this market, especially with oatmeal, 500 barrels.

By the by, you will see from our papers that we have had a general election throughout the Province. Mr. Macandrew is on for Superintendent, and your humble servant is again returned to his old seat for the Western District. It was again contested for by a poll, but the old three members all got in. I had to meet with my constituents at two different places, stand up and make a speech about my views of parliamenting, then stand an examination for nearly an hour by every Jack and Tom. However, I came off with great *eclat*, having given general satisfaction. Having now a very full intercourse with His Honour, a good word could be easily put in for a friend for a good job (not to be repeated).

*Difficulties of exchange and the sudden expansion of business are topics of letters of the early 'sixties.*

March 31st, 1860.

Wish we had had another £100 bill to send you. Will try and get something by



next mail. By this one we are sending bills to Messrs. Lockhart, Douglas, and Edmondston, and at the same time never saw money so tight as at the present. The banker has pulled the strings tightly with everyone. We have upwards of £600 of paper in his hands undiscounted. Besides we have taken up above £800 worth of Monson Bros.' paper. No wonder then we are scarce at present. The harvest is just nearly over, and for the last month or six weeks trade has been very flat, as is always the case during harvest. The crops are very good all over the province, except the potatoes. They are very light from the extra dryness of the season. The farmers are also very hard up for money because there are no demands for grain for shipment.

There is a very large quantity of oats grown this year, but no sale. Wheat, however, is worth 7s. to 8s. per bushel.

Other provinces in New Zealand seem to be much worse off in business than we are. Indeed, we are evidently the most prosperous of all the islands. The proof is that they (especially Wellington) are shipping goods to us for sale by auction at what they will bring, destroying our prices.

Our newspapers show a good front of advertisements now and must pay well. The proprietor of the "Colonist"\* is building

\* W. Lambert founded the *Otago Colonist* in 1856 and carried it on until 1862.

a splendid dwelling house, about the best in the province. He came here below par I believe.

The new courthouses are now nearly finished; as also the new church and manse for Mr. Stuart—all excellent buildings. Mr. Kilgour, late Ross and Kilgour, is building a large new store, two storeys, all stone, and it will cost £1,000. The Athenaeum is not begun yet, but is contracted for—cost £6,000.

October 1st, 1860.

The news of so many ships and people coming here is causing shippers to send out so much. During the last month you will see from the papers we have had great additions to our numbers in the arrival of the *Pladda*, the *Robert Henderson*, *Henrietta*, *Bruce*, and *William Mills*, besides *The Evening Star* is daily expected. Notwithstanding all these people arriving, they are picked up very shortly and vanish away from town without knowing very much difference. However, the mouths are all to feed, and the consumption must greatly increase. Steedman from Loch Gelly has arrived, all well, and handed me your note. A number of deaths were on board the *Henrietta*, and I may add a great many in Dunedin during last winter, far more than ever we saw before in one season.

January 4th, 1861.

For the last ten days I have occupied my seat in the Provincial Council (just brought to a close this day). The early part of the proceedings which you will see from the newspapers now sent has been of a painful nature, insomuch as it has involved the character and reputation of the highest officials in our Province. Amongst other items brought up you will perceive our name coupled with that for the railway plant, not that we are implicated in the slightest degree but that the auditors could find no trace of said sum having been remitted to the home agents, and our last letters from home proved that. However, he assures us in a note that the money was sent in August last (next mail will prove that also). Be that as it may, we hold the Government bound for his intermittencies, and will stick to the material until paid for. Further than this we are in no wise involved. Only just now we have had to meet a heavy sum, being part payment of our purchase of his business premises, which sum he was bound to take up the acceptance being granted to meet his own pressing necessities, but he appears to have no means of doing. We will now make arrangements to meet these payments from other resources other than our business, but it has put us about in the meantime. The whole affair is very sad; still he maintains his innocency and that time will clear everything up.

Perhaps the news you get about the war with the natives in the North Island may give you some anxiety, but to us here it gives little or no concern, and hear as little about it as you do. We think it is made more of in the home papers than even here. We regret deeply, however, that such should be the case. It has been very hard for the poor settlers of Taranaki ; hope it will soon be put an end to. We see from the great number coming with the *Lady Egidia* that the folks at home are not afraid to come to Otago yet. Our population has greatly increased during the last year, and everything is going on with good spirit. The Council has just passed another Appropriation Bill for £126,000.

Having entered upon another new year, we paid you the compliments of the season. We spent a very happy New Year's Day, all our family being together. The young folks, with some acquaintances, forming a party of 13, set all off for a ride to the Taieri Plain. I accompanied them for 12 miles, where George and I called upon an old friend and had lunch and returned. The party went on to the river, about five miles further. After resting and enjoying themselves for a while, they all returned in safety for tea, then had a dance in the barn, and parted good friends.

September 7th, 1861.

You cannot fail to see from our papers sent up to date the extraordinary excitement

here in consequence of the Goldfields.\* The arrival of vessels daily, all crowded with passengers, and the number advertised just ready for sailing from Melbourne is very great, so we will soon be lost in the multitude. What the result will be time will tell. You will also see the astonishing amount of gold that is coming in from the field, but the papers will give you a fuller account than I can possibly do in a short letter. None of our family has gone yet. However, James has sent over his dray from the farm (the men having all left him) and put it on the road to the Diggings. The first load from town was at a £100 per ton. Now he is at the Waihola Lake, about half the distance from town, at about half that price. He pays his driver £5 per week and his keep. Jessie and David are the only keepers at Brooklands at present, George being still with us at Wakari. He is still much the same, going about, but unable to go to the farm until better weather sets in. The price of every sort of labour about the town is nearly double. Lighterage, 20s. per

\* Mr. W. Pember Reeves writes: "The good Presbyterians of Dunedin hardly knew in what spirit to receive the tidings. But some of them did not hesitate to test the field. Very soberly, almost in sad solemnity, they set to work there, and the results solved all doubts. Half Dunedin rushed to Tuapeka. At one of the country kirks the congregation was reduced to the minister and precentor. Before many months the Province's population had doubled, and the prayerful and painful era of caution was swept away in an era of Victorian enterprise."—*The Long White Cloud*, p. 228.

ton instead of 10s. ; carting, double ; beef, 10d. to 1s. per pound. We have started a horse and cart at the jetty for our own goods and for hire. William has taken out a license as auctioneer. You will see he has a good lot to start with on Tuesday first. We have parted with our old auctioneer, Walker ; he did us no good.

Monday, 9th.—The *Pladda* has arrived yesterday, all well, with her numerous living cargo. Also the *Arabia* and *Ocean Queen*, from Melbourne, containing about 700 more. That is upwards of 1,000 persons since Saturday. Last night, Sabbath, about 300 were brought to the jetty by a steamer from the Port, breaking very much the usual quiet of our Sabbath eve in Dunedin. Alas now for quiet Sabbaths. Next Sabbath is our quarterly communion in Knox Church. Rev. Mr. Stuart has just returned from the Goldfields, where he has been preaching for two Sabbaths to the multitudes among the hills and gulleys. He was much pleased with his journey.

*George Hepburn was elected M.H.R. for Roslyn in 1866, retiring in 1868 from health reasons. His interests appear to have centred more in provincial than in colonial affairs.*

February 13th, 1865.

About a week ago we got a servant in the person of Mary Cable from Westertown ex

*Paria*, but only to be for a month or so. The fact is that servants are worse to be had now than ever, and are getting higher wages—£30 being almost the lowest price for a common servant, professional much higher. The two we had previously, only one month each, were not worth their salt, yet got at £30.

Uncle Jas. Paterson is still at Wellington and is in the Ministry, a much better billet than the Mayorship.\* Mrs. Paterson is here also at present, but we expect them down by March 1st, there being a General Election coming off next month, and he must look after his "seat" for the city. Your Uncle George is also in the field for Roslyn District, but is to be opposed by Captain Borton, and as all my family are against my going I am thinking to withdraw.

October 19th, 1866.

You will no doubt know that Uncle James and I have been at Wellington for three months past attending the General Assembly now prorogued by a change of Ministry. Uncle has lost his position as Postmaster-General, so he returned with us. Mrs. Paterson was there all the time I was. We lived all together in private lodgings at a cost of £3 10s. each weekly. Everything is very dear there during the Assembly. The people are also very gay and very hospitable. Balls

\* The Hon. James Paterson was defeated by a small majority by W. Mason in the first election for the Mayoralty of Dunedin in July, 1865.

LETTERS FROM OTAGO

in private families every week. The last one I was at there were about 160 persons present—all in full dress. I dined also with the Governor at Government House ; also with Sir David Monro, the Speaker.



## CHAPTER VIII

### Closing Years

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*The foundation and development of Knox Church was the major interest of George Hepburn's later years. By 1858 a second Presbyterian Church had become necessary, and the Rev. Donald McNaughton Stuart reached Dunedin in January, 1860. George Hepburn was one of the interim Session, and also one of the first elders appointed by the new congregation.*

January 27th, 1860.

Happy to inform you of the safe arrival of the *Bosworth*, all well, only this day. A few of the passengers came up, including the Rev. Mr. Stuart, to whom we have been introduced. He seems a fine gentleman, but will give you further account.

January 29th, 1861.

I should not forget to tell you that our new minister, Mr. Stuart, is giving great satisfaction. Indeed he is a general favourite. He preaches excellent sermons, without the paper, very striking and impressive. Besides he is constantly visiting the people with acceptance. Mr. Burns has been away for

the last six weeks at Invercargill, Mr. Stuart occupying his pulpit to an overcrowded house daily. Contrary to former usage, Mr. Stuart and I have broken through the old law regarding Proclamations. Instead of taking three separate Sabbaths, he has done it all in one day and married the ensuing week. We expect to be taken over the coals for it when Mr. Burns returns. Mr. Stuart has agreed to come to our prayer meeting at Wakari once a month. Last month there were 40 present. He seems a great acquisition to us ; will infuse new life amongst us.

June 18th, 1861.

I mentioned that our sacrament was on a recent Sabbath. It was the first Sabbath after the opening of the addition to our new church.\* The day being fine the house was filled in every part, containing 900—all on the ground floor. It is now really a grand house. On the opening Sabbath the collection was about £78 and the next Sabbath about £10. About 400 communicated that day. All the centre area seats were used as communion seats, covered with . . . so two services held the whole. In the evening the house was again quite full. The Rev. Mr. Will of Taieri preached, and again on Monday evening.

\* Old Knox Church, situated on the site of the present Knox Sunday School, corner of King and Frederick Streets.

Since then our annual soiree took place on Tuesday last, when about 600 were present. After tea and the annual report read, after which your humble servant was deputed on behalf of the ladies to present our minister with a new pulpit gown, Bible, and Psalm book, a crimson coloured cushion for it to lay on the pulpit, together with a communion service for the congregation—all from the ladies. I did the best I could, and it passed off very well. |

August 3rd, 1872.

As you observe we have all much cause of thankfulness to our Heavenly Father for the long continued measure of health which we all enjoy at our advanced years, and as your worthy minister says, "We are too apt to mourn over small trials and overlook the many thousands of God's mercies which are being daily showered upon us. I congratulate you on the continuance of your minister amongst you. Don't forget him in your prayers; it may do more good than even a purse of sovereigns (although they are not to be despised).

July 30th, 1876.

You will perhaps see from the papers sent an account of the annual meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association and soiree held in the new Temperance Hall in Dunedin, at which I was present, being a member. Mrs. Barr had the chief table on the platform;

upwards of 400 sat<sup>1</sup> down to tea. The speakers and choir were first-class. I stopped at Mrs. Barr's all night. New Knox Church\* will be open in about four weeks. The finishing inside is very splendid. The whole building will cost about £15,000. Professor Salmond gives a public lecture in Old Knox Church vestry every week on the "Evidences of Christianity versus Evolution," now making such an ado in the present day. The Professor is very popular. You will see it in "Record."†

February 27th, 1879.

We also in Otago, New Zealand, have again been visited with another sad, sad calamity, worse than the great floods last autumn. Within two miles of Balclutha and Inchclutha there is a large coal mine called Kaitangata, which was blown up by fire damp about ten days ago, thereby burying 34 men alive at one stroke—not one was got out alive—leaving 22 widows and 80 children fatherless. The news in Dunedin was dreadful, and the scene at the shaft mouth heart-rending. All the country is stirred about it to the core. Meetings and subscriptions to relieve the distress are being got up all over.

\* Old Knox Church, though it accommodated 900, was soon too small; but it was not until April, 1874, that the building of the present church was commenced. The architect was R. A. Lawson, George Hepburn's son-in-law.

† *The New Zealand Christian Record*, a non-sectarian weekly published in Dunedin from 1873 to 1883.

The newspaper sent to Mr. Green gives some details of what is doing, but next monthly summary will be more full. Oh, how wonderful are God's ways of working with the children of men upon the earth. It may be men's own fault in this latter, as well as in other cases, "but who can by searching find out God—His ways are in the deep," etc. Our part is to watch and be always ready. Two of these men who are killed had arrived here only a week ago by the ship *Wellington*, and it was only their second day in the pit—sad news to send home.

But to turn to another subject. You will see from the "Record" sent a pretty full account of Mr. Varley's work in Dunedin for the last three weeks. He held meetings twice every day, Sunday and Saturday, from one to two hours each time, generally to big audiences. The biggest churches and even the theatre were crowded on Saturday evening. I heard him several times during the day, but did not go in the evenings; it made me too late. Trust a blessing will follow his arduous work.

*The development of Kaikorai Church is recorded. George Hepburn maintains membership in Knox Church, but gladly serves both congregations.*

January 26th, 1880.

Since writing last another year has passed away and a new one begun, but who of us

shall say whether we shall see the end of it. Our duty is to listen to the words, "Watch and be also ready." We get many warnings. If spared to see the 28th of next month I will finish my 77th year. O how good has been the loving kindness of our Heavenly Father; still spared in health and strength and sound mind; still able to work a little in the Master's vineyard. I still teach a class in the Sunday School. There is 156 scholars and 15 teachers. There is a congregation and church about half-way into Dunedin from us, who got a new minister\* last April, and since an addition to the building, a transept, to hold other 200. The new minister is giving great satisfaction, and has increased the numbers in attendance and the money for the new part, £500, is nearly all got—the work is finished. I have acted treasurer to the congregation for nearly three years past, but have now got relieved of it, they having elected new and younger officers.

28th.—Since writing the above I was in town all next day. Met with Mr. Downie Stewart and went with him to dinner at his own house in Heriot Row. We went by tramway for 3d. each. I suppose you know that we have both steam and horse tramways running the whole length of the town of Dunedin every ten or twelve minutes—the whole day, all for 3d. each way. They are very convenient, only our first laid streets are rather narrow for double lines.

\* Rev. R. R. M. Sutherland.

Our William and his wife also went away on a journey to Invercargill on Friday last per train from 9.30 till 3.30 and had a nice day and well. William had a large land sale there on the next day. Were to return on Monday, but young Mr. G. Ross and his young wife followed them on the Monday and got Mrs. William to accompany them on a further excursion trip to the Lakes (Wakaitipu), other 60 miles off by train and steamer. William could not be so long absent, so did not go, but they are to return on Saturday night. Their family are all well, so are all other friends. |

October 14th, 1883.

To fill up this half sheet I may mention that our quarterly communion sacrament was observed in all the Presbyterian Churches and suburbs on Saturday week, the 17th inst. Although there is a church at the Kaikorai Valley, only ten minutes' walk from our house, and a good minister and a good congregation, and a fine Sunday School of 200 scholars and 16 or 18 teachers, where I still have a class of females, I still stick to the Rev. Dr. Stuart's congregation, called Knox Church. We drive to it in 20 minutes. Well I was there on Sabbath forenoon and took my part in serving the elements along with the other elders. There were 601 communicants at one sitting in the area of the church. Professor Salmond preached the

sermon and the Doctor served the element. The collection at the door was £68 10s. on behalf of the Benevolent Institution. Dr. Stuart took Mr. Salmond and the writer to the manse to dinner, after which, at 3 p.m., the Doctor and I went to the Sabbath School meeting in the old church, where Rev. Mr. Arnott addressed the children. Dr. Stuart opened the meeting, and the writer was called to the platform to give the closing prayer. There were 500 scholars there. Afterwards I walked home two miles uphill, and went to the evening service at the Kai-korai. Home at 8 p.m. Visited William and had the books as usual. Home at 9 odd. All well.



## Epilogue

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF DR. STUART  
UNDER DATE OF 17TH DECEMBER, 1883\*

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“Mr. Hepburn, the last of my first elders, died on Sabbath morning, the 9th, after an illness stretching over three months. He died as he had lived, trusting in the mercy of God in Christ. For nigh 24 years he was my cheerful helper and adviser. He was a Sabbath School teacher for 61 years, and was as enthusiastic to the last as he was in his hot youth. I feel now that the old advisers have gone, as if I should prepare my house to follow. I have worthy office-bearers, but the old wine was of the best quality. The Lord be praised for the service they rendered to the Gospel. Death has of late been mowing down several of our good men. Still, God’s cause does not depend on individuals. The divine rule is the next man foremost, and there is an Isaac to succeed Abraham, a Solomon to succeed David, and a Philip to succeed Stephen.

“. . . His considerate service to the wife of my youth always rose up in my mind, and gave softness to my voice and tenderness to my hand as I tried by prayer and sympathy to help him in his dying hour.”

\* C. Stuart Ross, *Life and Times of D. M. Stuart, D.D.*, pp. 142-3.





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