

Memorandum of a voyage from England to Australia per S.S. St. Osyth. 3<sup>rd</sup> Class.

May 11<sup>th</sup> 1875.

Left Gravesend and proceeded to Plymouth, where a few passengers and a little cargo were taken on board.

May 12<sup>th</sup>. Left Plymouth at 11.30 PM, distance taken from Eddystone Lighthouse.

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine,  
Sailing Lat. 48\_6N. Long 6\_11W,  
Distance 146 miles

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine, till about 5PM when it got dull and lightening was seen in the distance coming nearer, about 6 we had a thunder storm over head and a tremendous shower of hail came down, the hail stones being as large as walnuts and some larger, they made an awful noise on deck, the storm lasted one hour and a half  
Sailing Lat 43\_59 N, Long 9\_50 W,  
Distance 291 miles.

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine, getting very warm, in the morning several whales were seen blowing, and during the day numerous porpoises were seen swimming about the ship and jumping out of the water about 4 or 5 feet high  
Sailing Lat 40\_04 N, Long 12\_43 W,  
Course S29 W, Distance 268 miles

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May,

Weather very fine calm, there was service (English) in the saloon by the Doctor at 10-30AM and one of the passengers (3<sup>rd</sup> Class) preached to us on the upper deck  
Sailing Lat 35\_49 N Long 14\_57W  
Course S 23 W Distance 277 miles

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine,  
In the morning some of us got up at 4AM as we expected to see the Madeira Islands, we were just getting in sight of them, we passed some on each side, we signald to one of them, they were very high and mountainous.  
Sailing Lat 31\_35 N Long 17\_15 W  
Course S 24 W, Distance 278 ½ miles

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine and very warm, our shadows at noon is all at our feet. one of the fireman got put in irons for being tight (light?)  
Sailing Lat 27\_23 N ('N' backwards), Long 19\_35 W  
Course S 26 W, Distance 280 miles

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine and very warm, during the day the engines stopped three times for about the space of 10 or 15 minutes each time for screwing up,  
Sailing Lat 23\_0 N Long 21\_57 W  
Course S 26 W, Distance 293 miles

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine

Sailing Lat 18\_38 N ('N' backwards), Long 23\_44 W

Course S 21 W Distance 280 miles

127 miles from St. Vincent

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May

Weather very fine.

We arrived at St Vincent last night about 12 oclock, there was a strong wind blowing from the land, most of us stayed up till we anchored then we all turned in.

When we got up in the morning (at 6) there was a good many natives alongside in their small boats, some were on board selling strings of beads and shells others wanting to take us ashore, at 8 oclock 9 of us took a boat and went ashore (there was a notice stuck up on the ship all passengers to be on board at 1.30) without our breakfast, as soon as we set foot on shore we were surrounded by a lot of youngsters begging for money the natives are very black but the Portuguese are copper coloured, when we got up to the town or rather village we went and had breakfast but there was very little to be had, except plenty of wine so we had bread (sour) and wine, the wine is cheaper than beer here, wine 1/6 and 2/ per bottle, beer is 2/ per bottle after breakfast those who had letters looked for the Post Office but it did not open till 10 oclock after getting them posted we had a look round the place the streets are all sand

did not see a blade of grass in the whole place, I was told by one of the inhabitants that the population was about 2500 the place is kept very clean, it is merely a place for vessels calling for coal, it is a very fine harbour it is one of nature surrounded by high rocks there is no proper pier, just a few small jettys, the natives can speak a little English, in the forenoon nearly all the passengers had come ashore, and we were all right glad to get our legs stretched, we had some jolly fun with the people and by the time for going on board there were a good many had got light and there was nearly a riot the people got armed with cudgels and the volunteers such as they turned out, but after all they managed to get (got) on board all right, they had not done coal till 8 oclock and we weighed anchor again at 10 oclock

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May

Weather clear but a strong wind blowing, and the sea id rougher than we have had it as yet, there was a few sick, we were out of sight of land when we got up in the morning

Sailing Lat 14\_35 N, Long 23\_51 W,

('Course S' crossed out) Distance 164 miles

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May

Weather very fine and very warm, the water that they took in at St Vincent has turned out to be very bad (salty they had not tested it before leaving, we are put on short allowance till they get enough condensed it is not drinkable nor fit for cooking, so we get it for washing purposes, we got it twice (to our?) tea but we could not take any.

Sailing Lat 10\_47 N, Long 21\_22 W

Course S 33 E, Distance 271 miles

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine and very warm slept all last night up on deck, going about with my shirt sleeves rolled up for coolness I got my arms blistered with the sun, I soon had to put them down again, about 5 PM it got very dull and about 7 we had a good deal of lightning and a heavy shower of rain, after which we had some wind which made it very cooling.

Sailing Lat 7\_9 N, Long 18\_17 W  
Course S26E, Distance 270 miles.

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine in the forenoon but after dinner it got very dark, and in the evening it came on wind and rain it continued equally all night and made the ship pitch a little, being a head wind.

Sailing Lat 3\_20N, Long 16\_27W.  
Course S31E Distance 268 miles.

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May

Weather, two heavy showers of rain in the forenoon, after dinner it cleared up with a nice cooling wind, there was a few slightly sick owing to the sewell (swell??) that was on

Crossed the line shortly after 12 oclock noon.

Sailing Lat 0\_1N, Long 14\_4W  
Course S36E, Distance 246 miles

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May

Weather fine and cooler than it has been for some days past having a light head wind, in the forenoon they began to shift coals from the fore hold aft to the bunkers and there was a fearful mess of coal dust flying about, some of the cabins got a good share of coal dust dirting all there bed clothes, the fourth class is worst off as they hoist the coal up through there place, there was a good deal of grumbling about it.

Sailing Lat 3\_18S, Long 12\_22W  
Course S25E, Distance 220 miles  
Current W by S 30 miles

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May

Weather very fine, and cool, there is still an awful mess with the coal yet everything and everybody looks very dirty a few of the passengers took slightly ill, the days are growing shorter daylight from 5-30AM till 6-30PM

Sailing Lat 6\_16S, Long 10\_18W96  
Course S37E, Distance 222 miles

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May

Weather fine with the exception of a shower or two they stopped coaling last night till next week, we are in the S.E. trades

Sailing Lat 10\_11 S, Long 10\_18 W  
Course South Distance 235 miles

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> May

Weather equally, service held as usual.

Sailing Lat 14\_8S, Long 9\_53W  
Course S6E, Distance 238 miles

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May

Weather very fine and pleasant, after breakfast I went up on deck and was going to lie down to read, but I had not read long when I noticed the ship was only going half speed, then took walk round to see if anything was wrong and to my inquiries I was told that the coals had taken fire, I got a little surprise, I went to where the fire was but did not see much sign of danger, it is a common occurrence on board steamers, a lot of the ladies had very long faces looking very much alarmed, I beleive they lost a good deal of coal, I heard about forty ton, they burn about 35 ton a day, the fire began about 3AM they got it out at 11-30AM, we were going at ful speed by noon,

the engines stopped two hours, in the afternoon they killed one of the bullocks, in the evening there was the most beautiful sun set I ever saw  
Sailing Lat 17\_36S, Long 8\_58W,  
Course S14E, Distance 216 ½ miles

#### Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June

Weather very fine, there was a beautiful sun rise, there is not a ripple on the water if we had been in a sailing ship we would have stood still after dinner a swell came on and when we were sitting at tea the dishes began to slide from side to side, the ship was rolling so much, in the forenoon we got notice that the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> class would have a concert aft on the poop at 7.30 there was a good attendance but the best fun was the forms and chairs with the people sliding from one side to the other, they has up the piano from the saloon, but they had to lash it to the deck, there were songs from 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> class passengers it was all over at 10 oclock, there was a collection taken as we came away it was for the benefit of the Merchant Seamans Orphan Asylum.

Sailing Lat 21\_1S, Long 6\_21W  
Course S35E, Distance 250 miles

#### Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June

Weather fine, I did not get a wink of sleep last night for the rolling, and there was a lot of tins shuffling backwards and forwards making a noise, but the worst of the rolling was that it caused a lot of water to come into our cabin from the fresh water tanks in the forecstle, we had to lift our boxes till it was dried up, it is very difficult to walk about without a hold we have to hold our dishes at our meals.

Sailing Lat 24\_15S, Long 3\_34W  
Course S30E, Distance 253 miles

#### Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Weather very fine, not rolling so much, shifting coals from the after hold to the bunkers giving the gentry a share of the coal dust

Sailing Lat 27\_48S, Long 0\_34E,  
Course S37E Distance 263 miles

#### Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June

Wheather fine, the ship was rolling most of the day

Sailing Lat 30\_46S, Long 3\_30E,  
Course S50E, Distance 279 miles

#### Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June

Weather showery in the morning but cleared up a fine day, we saw a good many large Albitroses, we expect a good run for tomorrow as most favourable wind has sprung up

Sailing Lat 33\_58 S, Long 7\_10 E  
Course S44E, Distance 266 miles

#### Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> June

Weather in the morning it was dull and wet, after dinner it cleared up till about 8 oclock when we had more rain wind still favourable, saw a few Cape peigeons,

Sailing Lat 37\_9S, Long 12\_31E,  
Course S52E, Distance 331 miles

#### Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June

Weather fine, the mornings and nights are getting chilly we have to put on our topcoats at night to keep ourselves warm, the waves are very high today they are coming after us, and this being a long ship we do not feel the effect of them  
Sailing Lat 39\_6 S, Long 18\_30 E,  
Course S70E, Distance 304 miles

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June

Weather in the forenoon it was dull and wet but cleared up in the evening, they are shifting coals again making everything a mess of dirt, the crew had a turn out in the evening selling the old horse, a usual thing when sailors have worked for a months pay they realised about £4 or £5, the wound up with songs and dancing  
Sailing Lat 40\_9S Long 24\_11 E  
Course S77E, Distance 272 miles

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June

Weather very fine, still coaling some of us shifted the sails and the yards to let the sailors keep at the coals, daylight from 7.45 till 5.30, ships time two hours before Greenwich time, fine cloudless moonlight night  
Sailing Lat 41\_35S, Long 30\_2E,  
Course S72E, Distance 280 miles,  
Distance to Melbourne 4980 miles

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June

Weather moderate, after 10PM, a fog came on the whistle sounded at short intervals all night  
the were coaling from aft today  
Sailing Lat 42\_25S, Long 35\_52E,  
Course S79E, Distance 265 miles

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June

Weather still foggy, I went up on deck at at (*repeated in original*) 4A.M. this morning to see the fog I could see the stars overhead but I could not see half the ships lenth (*length*) round about, they kept sounding the whistle all forenoon, in the afternoon we hat (*had*) thunder and lightening and a heavy shower of rain which cleared away the fog, they did not get the sun at noon so we did not get the log but I asked the distance it was 256 miles.

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June

Weather very fine, but bitterly cold, we have to keep walking to keep our feet warm, I heard that the engines were stopped 2 or 3 hours through the night for screwing up  
Sailing Lat. Lat. 44\_19S, Long 47\_53E,  
Course S76E, Distance 275 miles

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June,

Weather fine but very cold, too cold to have service on the upper deck had it between decks, I have to put my topcoats over me all night it is so cold  
Sailing Lat 44\_46S, Long 54\_23E,  
Course S84E, Distance 250 miles

Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June

Weather moderate, and not quite so cold all sail set  
Sailing Lat 45\_26S, Long 61\_23E,  
Course S8E, Distance 300 miles

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June,

Weather, cold wind and rain, the day being dull we did not get the log  
Brought forward from wednesday  
Sailing Lat 45\_26S, Long 68\_30 E,  
Course S89E, Distance 301 miles,  
engines stopped one hour and ten minutes in the afternoon

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June,  
Weather very cold and a strong wind blowing favourably, sailing very fast,  
we got yesterdays log today, they killed the other bullock today, they had only two,  
Sailing Lat 44\_26 S, Long 76\_38 E,  
Course N80E, Distance 351½ miles.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June  
Weather squally, very wet and cold, in the evening a squall came on which nearly  
tore away the main top and the fore top sail but they got them in all right.  
Sailing Lat 44\_2S, Long 83\_43 E,  
Course N86E, Distance 309 miles

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June  
Weather squally in the morning we had snow and hail, there is a good sea running  
after us, if we had been going against it we would have shipped a lot of water, the  
propeller was very often out of the water when the stern of the ship was between the  
waves the engines stopped 1½ hours  
Sailing Lat 43\_53S, Long 90\_35E,  
Course N87E, Distance 299 miles

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June,  
Weather fine,  
Got fresh beef today for the first time  
Sailing Lat 44\_1S, Long 99\_35E,  
Course S89E, Distance 302 miles

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June,  
Weather in the morning we had a heavy shower of snow and hail which lay on the  
deck for some time, they did not get the sun today at noon so we did not get the log,  
cleared up a fine night.

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> June  
Weather fine, they are scrubbing the deck make it white before entering Melbourne in  
the afternoon there was 2 or 3 awful rolls of the ship that sent nearly every body  
sprawling me among the rest and a great many dishes were broken at the 2<sup>nd</sup> class,  
they came on so sudden.  
Sailing Lat 43\_51S, Long 109\_30E  
Distance for yesterday and today 516 miles, Distance to Cape Otway 1545 miles.

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
Weather very fine and not so cold the deck is much cleaner than it has been since  
we came on board, in the evening the children got an entertainment from the purser  
with a magic lantern and a tea after.  
Sailing Lat. 42\_56S, Long 115\_47E,  
Course N79E, Distance 280 miles.

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June  
Weather very fine till about 6P.M. when it got dull and then we got lightning and the  
wind rose to nearly a gale, it blew so hard at 8 oclock that both the main and fore

gapt snapped in two and the main sail tore in peices, it was very dark during the squall.

Sailing Lat 42\_23S, Long 121\_45E, Course N83E, Distance 266 miles  
Cape Otway 1005 miles

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June

Weather very squally had some heavy showers of rain and hail, in the afternoon the wind was so strong that they had to take in the fore sail and while doing so it tore in peices,

the engines stopped nearly an hour.

Sailing Lat 41\_95, Lon 128\_22E,  
Course N76S Distance 306 miles

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June

Weather moderate, we expect to see land tomorrow night, the first and second class had a concert tonight before parting

Sailing Lat. 39\_33S, Long 134\_19E,  
Course N71E, Distance 293 miles  
Cape Otway 425 miles

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June

Weather very fine,

Every one that is going to stay in Melbourne is busy packing and getting ready, most are for Melbourne in the afternoon the sailors got up all the thick ropes and got the anchor ready about a ¼ past 11PM when we were all singing and making ourselves cheery, toll went the bell, the signal of a light on the port bow, then we all made a push on deck to see it for we was just expecting it for we knew that we were not far from Cape Otway and it was just it some went to bed and some did not, Cape Otway is nearly 100 miles from Melbourne.

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June

Weather very fine, I did not sleep last night like many more, about 4AM they signalled for the pilot with blue lights, he came on board at 5-15AM it was fine moon light we got into harbour about 9 oclock AM and dropt anchor at 10-30.

As our luggage was not to be put ashore till tomorrow no time was lost by most of us to get ashore, and as we stood out in the bay we had to go in small boats, I put my foot in Victoria at 11-5 AM, as there was one with us that had been here before we kept by him (6 of us) we walked up through Sandridge, the Church bells ringing at the time it was noon when we got into Melbourne some of the chaps looked for lodgings for tomorrow we went into a hotel for dinner it was a very good one and plenty of it I thought I would have to pay 2/6 at the least but it was only 1/1 after dinner we had a walk through the town and our guide took us by way of Franklin St. but did not find my aunt at home but let me know where to go tomorrow,

I thought Melbourne a strange place at first sight the streets were very quiet being Sunday the Churches are in forenoon and evening no afternoon service after er had gone through most of the town it was beginning to get dark, being mid winter here, some of us went on board again others stayed ashore all night, I could scarcely believe that I was so far from home, it just seemed as if I were away for a few hollidays, we got on board again by 6PM, the ship seemed very quiet, just as if it had been a horse that done a lot of work and was now at rest.

Conclusion

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> June

Weather fine, in the morning preparations were made for getting up our luggage out of the hold and I saw one of my boxes for the first time since May 8<sup>th</sup>, the other I had in my cabin, a lighter came alongside to receive the luggage, and a tug for the passengers, H.M.S. Nelson fired a salute at noon, being coronation day, about 12-30 we left the noble S.S. St Osyth she was high above water mark when we left her, she starts for Sydney on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June, the tug took us and towed the luggage up the Yarra about 10 or 12 miles, it is a long narrow river which put me in mind of the Firth of Forth at home so many windings in it, when we got to the wharf we were handed bag and baggage, the luggage was taken into a shed where the customs officers were on duty some had to open there boxes and shew what they had, but I got passed without opening mine, I had nothing to pay duty for at any rate, another mate and me got a cab for he was going to a hotel near where I was going and drove to our repective places, I got to Aunts all right and was made welcome so ends my voyage for England to Australia per S S St. Osyth.

AE

P.S. (*Written in bold letters*)

I will just make a few remarks here which was not worth putting down every day namely our food, we had always plenty of it and it was very good, the first day or two we got at lot of bread, butter, tea & sugar to go round all, then we were put into messes 8 (?) in a mess every mess got its allowance served out every Saturday, we had tea or coffee every morning and evening and plenty of bread and biscuits, at dinner we had certain days either salt pork or fresh pork or preserved meat we had fresh potatoes every day we often had a little meat left for tea or breakfast. There was also good behaviour among both passengers and crew and taking everything into consideration we had a most pleasant passage.

Dear Brother & Sister,

I send you this paltry log according to promise, I know you will think very little of it, but there is no exaggeration in the at least and I daresay like myself you will be gald that nothing serious occurred and that I crossed the mighty deep in saftey, for it was not only man that brough the ship so quick and safe but Him whom we have to look to, to help us both on land and sea

I have very little to tell you about Melbourne more than it does look like a new country, in the town they have cabs, omnibuses, and railways but not street tramways, there are some fine buildings such as the Post Office, the Treasury, and the Museum where you see *madles* of the gold digging, I have not seen much myself yet as I had only a week before I got a situation, and I have reason to be thankful as everything was so dull that a lot of people were going idle at the time I landed here.

I will now close hoping you will accept this short account

I remain  
Your *Appl.* Brother

Alfred Elder (*Signature*)

*Following page- Dr. Jameson entry- address, medical certificate - written later, with page other way up*

**[NOTE: this is a literal transcription and therefore includes all spelling errors]**