

Glasgow to Brisbane 1911



Nathaniel and Mary Nisbet of Clydebank with, from left, Margaret, Mary, Nathaniel (jnr) and William on board the S.S. Cornwall, bound for Brisbane.

Nathaniel Nisbet sailed with his wife, Mary, and family of five children, to Brisbane, Australia, leaving from Liverpool on the S.S. Cornwall on March 29th, 1911. This diary was written by Nathaniel as a record of the journey. The original diary appears to have been addressed to Nathaniel's brother, John Nisbet, 9 Sydney Street, Glasgow, Scotland. It later came to Auntie Tot (little Mary). My cousin, Gloria, (now deceased) youngest daughter of Evangeline (Eva), typed it and gave copies to the family. She wrote, "The only change I have made is by leaving out the capital letters given to a lot of words e.g. home, docks, ships and others. As a matter of fact I wasn't sure myself just what deserved a capital letter and what word didn't. There were no spelling mistakes and this from somebody who left school at let us say about 12 years, is in my opinion something to boast about. As you will read, Grandfather was 35 years old when he wrote his diary. It was written in pencil."

S.S. CORNWALL - SHIPPING LIST 1911

S. S. Cornwall

NO.	SURNAMES	CHRISTIAN NAMES	AGE	SEXES		MARRIAGES	DEATHS	REMARKS
				MALE	FEMALE			
	Probit	Richard	39	1				Richard
		Rory	38		1			Richard
		William	14		1			Richard
		Marjaret	7		1			Richard
		William	6		1			Richard
		John	2		1			Richard
	William	Richard	17	1				Richard
	William	William	20	1				Richard
	Richard	George	22	1				Richard
		Mat	26	1				Richard
		George	25	1				Richard
		William	28	1				Richard
		Edward	22	1				Richard
		William	23	1				Richard
		Margaret	6		1			Richard
	Robt	John	2		1			Richard
		John	24	1				Richard
		George	28	1				Richard
		William	28	1				Richard
	Richard	John	27	1				Richard
	William	William	27	1				Richard
	Wright	William	27	1				Richard
		William	27	1				Richard
		William	27	1				Richard
		William	27	1				Richard
	Young	John	28	1				Richard
		Full Page						Richard

S. S. Cornwall

NO.	SURNAMES	CHRISTIAN NAMES	AGE	SEXES		MARRIAGES	DEATHS	REMARKS
				MALE	FEMALE			
		Richard	39	1				Richard
		Rory	38		1			Richard
		William	14		1			Richard
		Marjaret	7		1			Richard
		William	6		1			Richard
		John	2		1			Richard
	William	Richard	17	1				Richard
	William	William	20	1				Richard
	Richard	George	22	1				Richard
		Mat	26	1				Richard
		George	25	1				Richard
		William	28	1				Richard
		Edward	22	1				Richard
		William	23	1				Richard
		Margaret	6		1			Richard
	Robt	John	2		1			Richard
		John	24	1				Richard
		George	28	1				Richard
		William	28	1				Richard
	Richard	John	27	1				Richard
	William	William	27	1				Richard
	Wright	William	27	1				Richard
		William	27	1				Richard
		William	27	1				Richard
	Young	John	28	1				Richard
		Full Page						Richard

March 28th. Tuesday.

We left Suigu (*Singer?*) Station Clydebank at 9.00 p.m. amidst all the good wishes of many friends and relatives. Arriving at Queen Street Station we were met by more friends and accompanied them to St Enoch's Station.

At 11 p.m. on the same date we left the above station where we had many more friends and of course it was accompanied by good wishes.

March 29th. Wednesday.

Arriving at Liverpool we were met at the station by our nephew and niece who escorted us to Aunt Sarah's in Watton, Liverpool. After having a right good hearty breakfast, we had a wash up and then we went to Aunt Maggie's in Bootle, Liverpool.

Time was now up to go to the ship, so we got on to a cab, drove to the Princess Landing Stage where the tender was in waiting. We got on board the tender about 11 a.m. and sailed about 12 noon for the S.S. Cornwall which was lying up the river. During this time the wife and I passed through a terrible state of suspense owing to three of the young ones having the whooping cough, the fear of being ejected at the big ship.

Arriving at the S.S. Cornwall the wife and four of the family passed on board where the doctor was stationed at the gangway. He casually looked at two of the young ones but when I came on about 6 minutes later with little Mary and her whooping cough I passed on board unconscious of the fact that the man at the gangway was the Dr. as he never looked at us. We had not yet sailed, so all our suspense was not yet over. About 1 p.m. we sailed and shortly after we had dinner which the wife did not go to as she was too annoyed about the children as little Bobbie at this time was exceedingly ill. In fact we thought at this time we were going to lose him altogether.

After teatime we reported the matter about the children to the Doctor who ordered them (Robert and Mary) accompanied by the wife, into hospital.

March 30th. Thursday.

After a night's good rest we got up and the children being a little better but isolated from the other passengers. We have about 169 passengers mostly English. It is cold and wet today. The wife is sick but I think it is due to the confinement in the hospital with the two young ones. We have plenty of music on board. Some of the passengers engage in dancing. There is three families here from Clydebank, namely, Reid, Moreland and Nisbet, all from Radnor Park.

Day run 217 miles.

March 31st. Friday.

I am writing this a day late. We have all been sick. The wife and Willie being very bad indeed. We have all been in bed the whole day. This has been terrible. We don't care whether the ship goes down or not we are so sick. Willie and his mother took no food the whole day. Natty and Maggie and their father took a little dinner but it didn't stay long down, then we got back to bed. We were passing outside the Bay of Biscay, the ship rocking from one side to the other; then it would dip at the bow and then at the stern. I don't think we are going to go through the Bay of Biscay.

We have plenty of music on board, a piano, mandolins and fiddle and bagpipes. There was only about a third of the passengers able to sit down to their food today, all sick.

Day run 227 miles.

April 1st. Saturday. Ma Gouk

This morning opened with us all keeping a little better although Willie and his mother unable to take any breakfast. Maggie, Natty and father took a little. I should have said, the day previous that the water lashed across the decks soaking all the passengers who were there. I got a right Ma Gouk (*April Fool*) today. One of the stewards told me that we would be at Las Palmas at 12 o'clock and that I would be better to get my letters written. I went to do so when I discovered the joke that we would not be at Las Palmas for another four days. It is now 12 noon and mother and Willie have got up on deck as they are feeling a little better although none of them has taken any breakfast. Poor little Mary, the Doctor will not allow her out of hospital until her whooping cough is better, which means that some of us have to be continually with her. God knows we have had to suffer terribly owing to this horrible disease. The crew of this ship are a lot of peg-leggers. If you are smoking they ask you for a fag and when I go to the cook for warm water for the baby's bottle he asks me straight for a dram. I gave him two at the beginning but had to cut him off he was too cheeky. It makes you afraid to talk to any of them in case it costs you 1/- (one shilling). I gave the stewardess 2/- so she has been very kind to the wife during her illness. Poor little Bobbie has been very ill today. The Dr has given him some powders, one of the passengers (a Christian chap) put a nice prayer for my son. I do hope it will result in good. We are just afraid he may not last the night. This has been a beautiful day of sunshine with a nice breeze making it a pleasant day's sail.

Day run 212 miles.

April 2nd Sunday.

Little Bobbie slightly better thank God and we hope it continues. This is a beautiful Sunday morning the sun beaming down upon the waters, making it pleasant sailing. I think the wife will manage her breakfast this morning which will be her first meal for 3 days. Willie is all right now. We attended religious service today which was very nice and conducted by one of the passengers.

The ship is beginning to roll again making standing on your feet nearly impossible. The crockery and tins and all the cooking utensils, cabin trunks etc running all over the place owing to the rocking of the ship. Wee Bobbie very ill again. Wife very sick.

Days run 236 miles.

April 3rd. Monday.

We have just passed through a terrible night of rough sea. Little Bobbie very much worse but the wife and I sitting up all night with him. He is sinking fast and the wife very sick and straining to relieve the suffering of her child. A terrible plight to be in. Daylight and thank God we were pleased to see it. At 1.20 p.m. poor wee Bobbie slept away.

Death of my wee boy.

He was buried at 5 p.m. same day. They sewed him up in a canvas sheet wrapped in the Union Jack and carried him on deck and at a given point in the burial service (read by the Captain) he was hoisted over the side to a sailor's grave.

The funeral took place during the time the rest of the passengers were having their tea and they were unconscious of what was going on. The officers on the ship, one passenger was all that was at the funeral. So endeth the bleakest part of our voyage so far.

The ship is still rocking very badly. It was just off the Straights of Gibralta the funeral was.

Day run 247 miles.

April 4th. Tuesday.

This is a nicer day but the boat is still rocking, beautiful sunshine with a slight breeze. The food is very good on this ship and plentiful. Kitchen to every meal and always varying. I am writing up my letters with a view to having them posted at Las Palmas where we are expected to be by tomorrow night.

Days run 225 miles. First week.

April 5th. Wednesday.

This is a glorious day, very warm and little breeze. Passengers beginning to discard their heavy clothing. The wife is beginning to come to herself and taking her food a little better but poor little Mary is still confined to the hospital with her cough, which means that some of us have got to be confined with her. At 4 p.m. we sighted land. How happy we felt as it was the first time since leaving Liverpool a week ago. At last we arrive at Las Palmas. At 5.30 p.m. then there was a great kick-up, the Spaniards coming out in dozens to meet our ship. They came in small boats and threw ropes up at our ship then climbed up, they were hawking oranges, bananas, tobacco, post cards etc.

Their fruit was not very cheap but *bai jove* it was good. I never tasted oranges like them. The Captain tried to put them off the ship but it was no good they just came on at another part but the steward kept them from getting near the bunks as they would have stolen something. They stayed on for three or four hours. We paid 1/- (10 cents) for 25 oranges, 6d (5 cents) for 15 bananas. We did not get ashore as we only were to be here a few hours.

Days run 251 miles.

April 6th. Thursday.

Another fine morning and still little Mary confined in hospital. We sailed from Las Palmas at 3.30 a.m. Our next stop is to be Cape Town. The wife got to the breakfast table this morning for the first time and she enjoyed it as she had previously taken her food in the hospital with little Mary, Willie relieving her on this occasion. The women folk were supplied with beef tea every day (at 11.00 a.m.) for the first week. It was very good indeed. The day closed with the wife fretting on account of little Mary being confined to hospital but the Doctor has promised to let her up on Sunday and we earnestly hope so.

Days run 88 miles.

April 7th. Friday.

A beautiful morning with the sun shining brightly. I think it is going to be exceedingly warm today. The Pigfish or porpoise are following the ship in large numbers. They are 5 or 6 feet long. Springing up out of the water and gracefully diving back again. We are passing down the African coast, but we see no land and don't expect to do so for another 20 days.

Compliment to the wife.

The steward paid the wife a compliment today. He said her cabin was the cleanest he had to do with and also added that he believed it was the tidiest amongst the whole of the passengers. The day finished very warm and in the cool of the evening there was some dancing on board (by the "Scottish" section) in which the wife participated being a little cheerier now. The bagpipes supplying the music.

April 8th. Saturday.

This was another warm day. The passengers lolling about in the heat, being unable to move about much. We saw thousands of little fish swimming about just under the surface of the ocean.

Concert. In the evening we had a splendid concert. The captain was on the chair and the most of the officers and crew were present also.

Days run 248 miles. Little Mary on deck.

April 9th. Sunday.

Sunday morning and church service (English) which we did not attend as we had got permission to take little Mary on deck, which we at once availed ourselves of. The Captain conducted the service. This was

little Mary's first day on deck since we came on the ship 12 days ago. We kept her up the most of the day and she was much the better of it.

Days run 243 miles.

April 10th. Monday.

Another beautiful day. We are drawing nearer to the Equator, where we expect to be by Thursday, when we hope to cross the line between 12-2 p.m. More porpoises following the ship today.

Days run 241 miles.

April 11th. Tuesday. Flying fish.

Very hot today. Passengers going about with scarcely any clothes on them, some of them walking about in their bare feet. This is the warmest day we have had yet. We saw quite a lot of flying fish today. They were most interesting flying about just on top of the water and then disappearing under. They are very small fish with wings. A lot of passengers are sleeping on deck.

Days run 241 miles.

April 12th. Wednesday. Tropical storm. We had a great kick-up this morning at 2 a.m. The rain was coming down my ventilator and wetting my bed, so I went up on deck to turn it round a little when lo and behold what a turn-up was going on. A tropical storm had broken over the ship, the lightning flashing around us for miles and the rain coming down in torrents and the heat was oppressive. The rain came down so suddenly that the passengers who had been lying on deck got wet at once some were running about with nothing on them but a smile and others not even having a smile on being entirely nude. It was altogether an amusing sight at this early hour of the morning.

Another tropical storm. At 12 noon another tropical storm broke out and lasted for three or four hours, the rain coming down very heavily and the seas washing the decks. Quite a lot of passengers have gone sick again, the wife being again one of the victims. She vomited continually all the day until bed-time.

Day run 248 miles.

April 13th. Thursday. The wife keeping much better this morning. Several cases of measles have broke out this morning. We have been put out of hospital quarters this morning with little Mary as she is entirely better.

Southern Cross. In the evening we saw the first outlines of the Southern Cross depicted by the stars in the sky. Some of the male passengers were dancing the Highland Fling with their jackets tied round them for a kilt.

We crossed the line to-day (Equator) but I didn't hear what time. There is usually some horse-play on an occasion such as this (Father Neptune) but it was dispensed with owing to the Chief Officer being ill in bed.

Days run 273 miles.

April 14th Good Friday. It is still very hot, we are now longing for cold weather, it is almost unbearable the sweat running off us in all directions. We can't sleep at night for the heat. The most of the crew got a holiday today on account of Good Friday and the passengers got Hot Cross Buns to tea.

Days run 233 miles.

April 15th Saturday. Nat's birthday 6 years. Natty's birthday but we can't celebrate the event with a dumpling, the way we would have at home, so I suppose this day will pass over just like any other. In the evening the wife went through two or three dances of Quadrilles to the music of the bagpipes.

Days run 227 miles.

April 16th Sunday. Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday and no eggs for breakfast in fact we never saw any the whole day. The wife and I got an invitation down to see the engines which we accepted and it was most interesting. They were refrigerating engines and the engineer opened a door and ushered us into a compartment where there was 40 degrees of frost and snow clinging to the side of the door. He took us again to another compartment where we found 60 degrees of frost. This is what these engines were for, to freeze up the food stuffs and the frost was made from the same air we breathe.

Maggie's birthday, 10 years. This is Maggie's birthday but it just passed over as quiet as Natty's. In the afternoon I went as head of a Masonic deputation to the Captain on Masonic purposes where we were most cordially received.

Days run 232 miles.

April 17th Monday. Sports. The Captain sent for me this morning to come to his room, where we had a long talk together on Masonic and sewing machine matters. He is a very nice gentleman indeed and most unassuming. In the afternoon we had sports for the children Willie and Maggie doing exceedingly well and little Nat won a race too. He beat a little Englishman. The sports have to be continued tomorrow and Wednesday. I don't know what kind of prizes they will get, but they have got plenty of money to buy them, which they will do when they get to Cape Town. The Captain sent me to have a talk with the Chief Officer, which I did, and we spoke on similar line as the Captain and I had done formerly.

Days run 211 miles.

April 18th Tuesday. Sports. It is not just so hot now and we are better able to sleep. The sports are on again today, Willie and Maggie still doing well winning several events. We are beginning to get tired of the food, too much beef.

We get it to almost every meal with a slight variation of fish. It is not quite so hot now and the ship is still rolling a great deal and making the wife sick.

Days run 216 miles.

April 19th Wednesday. Third week. At bed time the previous night I left my porthole open a little, so about 12 midnight I awoke all of a sudden. A great big wave lashed up against the side of the ship and of course as my bunk was up against the port hole, the water rushed in on top of me and I wakened with a roar being wet through, bed and bed-clothes as well, but I soon put the matter right and went off to sleep again. In the evening I spent 1 hour and ½ with the chief Steward (Mr Denford) and this is not the first occasion, we were becoming fast friends. The sports were not finished today owing to the decks being repaired but they will probably be concluded tomorrow.

Days run 213 miles.

April 20th. Thursday. Inspection by the Captain. This is a much cooler morning but the ship is still rocking. We are pretty much fed up with the journey now. The Doctor is examining all the children's heads this morning for vermin, but fortunately he didn't find any in ours. Another matter which I have not previously mentioned and I think is most important is the fact that the Captain takes a walk along with the Dr., Second Mate and the Chief Steward round every part of the ship, examines all the cabins most carefully, to see that the stewards do not shirk their work, the result is the ship is kept in a fine state of cleanliness. This was another day of rough seas. The ship rolled terribly.

Days run 217 miles.

April 21st. Friday. This was a sickening day. The ship rolled terribly all day. In the evening I spent an hour with my Masonic Bretheren.

Days run 208 miles.

April 22nd. Saturday. Concert.) After a night of rolling sea and flashes of lightening the morning opened in the same way, although the sun broke through making it a little pleasanter. In the evening we had a splendid concert presided over by the Captain of the ship.

Days run 180 miles.)

April 23rd. Sunday. Divine service.) Every other Sunday we have boat drill by members of the crew so as to keep them ready for any emergency. In the evening we attend divine service.

Days run 167 miles.)

April 24th. Monday.) An uneventful day. We are just waiting in expectations of getting ashore at Cape Town in a day or so.

Days run 191 miles.)

April 25th. Tuesday. Accident on board.) The day was spent principally counting the hours until we would get to Cape Town. In the evening we saw the harbour lights and everybody got quite excited when lo and behold a scream, what could it be? Everyone rushed to claim their own, then it was discovered a poor lad in his excitement had inadvertently stepped on to the chain of the steering gear with the result he had his foot drawn in and practically mangled. It was fortunate that we were so near land as he was taken ashore in a motor launch and got immediate attention.

As it was after sunset when we arrived, we had to remain out in Table Bay until the morning. The lad was Willie's pal on the ship. He came from Tollcross. His father having been a contractor in the East End of Glasgow, by the name of Robb.

Days run 224 miles.)

April 26th. Wednesday.) Fourth week. Arrival at Cape Town.)

In the morning when we awoke we were along side of the harbour, with a beautiful view before us of Table Mountain. The Nisbet family got ashore about 9 a.m. and we had to be back by 5 p.m. We got onto a light railway from the dock to the town. This is a beautiful city. We spent a very pleasant day here. There was some beautiful buildings to be seen which we very much admired. There seemed to be a great lot of nationalities here. There were black, white, half caste and the dear knows what else. After spending a good few shillings (as things were very dear here) we returned to the ship at the hours stated. We learned on arrival at the ship that the lad who met with the accident would in all probability lose his foot above the ankle. At 6 p.m. we again set out on our journey to Adelaide, next stop where we hope to be in 23 days time. We had scarcely left Table Bay when the ship began to roll very badly, the sea being very rough, we expect to have a lively time tonight. So it proved to be as about 10 p.m. the trunks and boxes began to roam all over the place. They had to be tied up or they would have been knocked into match wood.

April 27th. Thursday. Accident to wife.) After a terrible rough night of it, none of us seemed to sleep a wink as we rolled about too much all night. The wife and I did not go to breakfast, I was too tired and the wife being too sick. The wife remained in bed most of the day, but I persuaded her to get up in the evening to have a walk around the ship, which we did and while in the act of doing so the ship gave a heavy roll and knocked both of us off our feet, the wife receiving a nasty bump as well as a cut on the back of her head and also bruised on the left side of her body. She was taken to the Dr. and got medically attended to.

Days run 148 miles.)

April 28th. Friday.) The wife had to remain in bed the most of this day on account of her accident, but she was somewhat better in the evening. The ship did not roll quite so much today as the weather was a little better.

Days run 208 miles.)

April 29th. Saturday.) Another beautiful morning, the weather being exceedingly fine, in fact it was even astonishing to the sailors who say that in all their travels round this way they never saw it so calm. This is considered to be the roughest part of the journey, from Cape Town to Adelaide. The sailors call it the running of the "Eastern Down" or in other words travelling eastwards. In the evening we had another concert and it helped to let us know it was Saturday.

Days run 242 miles.)

April 30th. Sunday. Willies Birthday. Complaints by the passengers.) After a quiet night we again welcomed a beautiful morning. This is Willie's birthday and at dinner time he celebrated it by eating two pieces of pudding for dessert. A number of passengers today got together and managed to work up some complaints (principally imaginary) about their food, dirty plates etc. The only regret about the matter was that the most of the complainers were Scotchmen, and fellows who never knew what it was to have a square meal at home. One man in particular worked at home going out for the honey at night, with a cart, earning up to 28/- a week and had 6 of a family to keep, so you can understand how well he could feed off that sum and yet he is continually grumbling, he is simply a disgrace to Scotland. In the evening we attended Divine Service.

Days run 223 miles.)

May 1st. Monday.) This morning opened up with us getting May dew from the sea, the wind blowing it up, but it was not rough. The Captain sent for me this morning again to have a talk with him, which I had for about an hour and a half. It is now very cold, people donning their overcoats.

Days run 230 miles.)

May 2nd. Tuesday.) I should have said previously that we got some first class passengers on at Cape Town. A gentleman, two ladies and two children. I was astonished when this gentleman came forward to me and asked if I was Mr Nisbet. It turned out that the Captain had sent him to me, as he was a Mason, so you readily understand we were soon good friends. He took me along to the saloon for a while and then came and visited me in the evening in my cabin. It was very cold and wet all day. The passengers preferring to stay downstairs rather than face the elements. About 8 p.m. three of the Engineers came downstairs and played a few games of cards with Willie and I.

Days run 231 miles.)

May 3rd. Wednesday. Fifth week. Capture of albatross.) This is another very cold day. The big birds have been following the ship since we left Cape Town, albatross they call them. One of them flew up against one of the ventilators of the ship and broke its wing. It was picked up by one of the crew and killed. Its wing measured from tip to tip 11 feet. In the afternoon some of the passengers threw out bait on a line to try and catch some but it did not work, although I understand it sometimes does. I had another game of cards in the evening with the engineers.

Days run 233 miles.)

May 4th. Thursday.) Uneventful day, only for the fact that the First Class passengers made toffee and gave every child on board a packet, which was very much appreciated.

Days run 245 miles.)

May 5th. Friday.) Wet and miserable day, we stayed downstairs the most of the time. Some of the passengers sitting up all night gambling at cards.

May 6th. Saturday.) still wet and miserable, the spray from the sea getting blown all over the deck, making it most uncomfortable. In the evening we had a splendid concert, again presided over by the Captain.
Days run 228 miles.)

May 7th. Sunday.) We attended Church Service in the morning and the Captain read his lesson on King Solomon's Temple. In the evening the wife and family attended Service again but I preferred spending a Masonic Hour with the first class passengers and two other gentlemen.
Days run 223 miles.)

May 8th. Monday.) This has been a very cold and wet day, the passengers being afraid to venture on deck. We remained downstairs nearly all day, but I managed upstairs for about 10 minutes in the morning and half an hour in the evening. It was very rough today, the sea crashing up against the side of the ship and running all over the decks. One of the engineers who has travelled this way for 20 years, said this was the smoothest passage he had ever had. I shouldn't like to have seen it any worse than today or I am afraid I would give myself up for lost.
Days run 230 miles.)

May 9th. Tuesday. Willie's dream a reality.) This is a better morning and looks like being a good day. We had a great adventure during the night. There was a tin of condensed milk lying at the foot of my bunk (opened) and about midnight the ship gave a terrible roll, sending everything that lay loose in all directions, so of course the tin of milk went too. About an hour afterwards, Willie wakened and told his mother about a dream he had, that he was working amongst a lot of jelly, so he put his hand up to his face as he felt something sticky, lo and behold the condensed milk had been dripping down upon him for more than an hour, so you can guess he was a beautiful picture with his head and face all covered. I think this must have been a night of dreams, as I had one myself and as it is a very superstitious one I think I will be better to write it down. I dreamt I felt one of my teeth and it was very slack and when I touched it, it came away in my hand. It is said that when such a thing happens you lose a dear friend, so I trust nothing has happened in the old Country. Some of the passengers are still sitting up all night gambling at cards (Nap) and sleeping through the day. While I am writing this a shout got up that there was a whale near the ship, so I rushed upstairs, but it was too far away as I could only see the spray from it spurting, however it may come in closer to the ship, and if it does I will catch it on a hook and send it home so that you all can have fish supper for the next twelve months.
Days run 217 miles.

May 10th. Wednesday. Sixth week. Steerage passengers entertained.) Very wet and cold this morning fortunately it cleared up in the afternoon as all the ladies and children in the steerage were entertained by the first class passengers. They were very well treated indeed getting tea, cakes, sweets and enjoying games and also getting the full run of the ship. The Captain was exceedingly kind in this matter, he having the upper deck, canvassed round, so that they would not get cold and having it furnished with beautiful flags. The gentleman passenger took good care that my wife and family were well satisfied with everything good, of course you will see by a previous note that he and I were friends. The passengers got onto the bridge also and had everything of note explained to them. There was a guessing competition also. One young lady won a gold bangle and another lady won a necklace. During the time all this was going on, poor old father and Willie spent a peaceful hour in bed sleeping. I might say here also that we did not allow

Willie to go to this as we thought he was too big to be numbered amongst the children, but if there happens to be one for the men, you can bet your boots I will have Willie with me then. Every evening passes with three of the engineers coming down to engage in a game of cards with me. They are very nice chaps and all Scotchmen.

Days run 232 miles.)

May 11th. Thursday.) This is a much better morning, the sun shining brightly but still cold. Little Maggie doesn't seem to take much food at all and we are very much worried about this.

Perhaps we have not left the old country none too soon for her sake. We have put out our sails today, so that with sails and steam power we will hurry along to Adelaide, which we are wearying very much for, as we are now 14 days since we left Cape Town and we have never seen a single vessel all the way.

Days run 248 miles.)

May 12th. Friday.) Sun shining bright, but very cold wind, making it too cold for much deck walking. In the evening something went wrong with the boilers with the result the ship was practically at a stand still for about 3 hours with the engineers working at it for all they were worth.

Days run 241 miles.)

May 13th. Saturday.) Another cold day with plenty of sunshine. The first class passengers gave little Maggie a bangle which is used by the Kaffirs in South Africa. In the evening we had our usual Saturday evening concert which will likely be our last until we get to Brisbane. The Captain called me up to his room in the afternoon and after an hours conversation he presented me with a box of cigarettes (100) Egyptian, and they were a treat. The wife was introduced to the ladies of the first class during the concert and remained with them during the first part of the programme, but felt that she was making some of the others jealous, so preferred her own company in the second part.

Days run 208 miles.)

May 14th. Sunday.) Sunday morning but there was no morning service. Still keeping very cold. The passengers got photographed today by the chief officer. They were taken in groups of about 50 at a time. In the evening we attended Divine Service, where little Maggie repeated from memory the whole of the 14th Chapter of John's Gospel (31 verses). The gentleman who looked after the service remarked during the meeting that he had heard many recitations during his work in the missions in Liverpool but never before had he heard a child do it so well as Maggie had done and these sentiments were expressed by all who were at the service.

Days run 221 miles.)

May 15th. Monday.) A little warmer today but very cold in the evening. We had an international whist match today. Scotland v England. Scotland won by about 20 points. Good old Scotland. Of course the result is easily accounted for. "I" remember capital "I" was playing for Scotland. The Chief Steward sent for me in the evening to spend a quiet hour in his cabin with him.

Days run 214 miles.)

May 16th. Tuesday.) Consumption.) The weather is very nice today, although everybody is sick of the journey, there was another whist match today. Scotland won by 14 points so they are the champions of the ship. Scotland was without their best player me. I was left out of the team because they could not get enough Irishmen.

We have two very bad cases of consumption on the ship. One man being a passenger, the other a member of the crew. The one who belonged to the crew was a pitiful sight to see, being just a walking shadow.

When we left Liverpool, in fact I felt quite sure we would bury him at sea, but no he is coming on alright, being somewhat brighter and better looking. He is nicknamed Goliath. The passenger referred to has got worse and I am just afraid he will do no good as he is getting worse looking every day. He hails from Baillieston district.

May 17th. Wednesday.) 7th week.) The weather clerk is still kind to us. There was a meeting of the passengers today to arrange about a subscription for the stewards. I was placed on the committee of management.

Days run 216 miles.)

May 18th. Thursday. Social event.) Weather still good. In the evening we had a great social event. It started about 7.30 p.m. and was continued until 1 a.m. the following morning. The first hour and a half was confined to childrens games after that there was dancing and singing. It was easy the best night we have had since we came aboard. The wife went through all the dances, never having any trouble to get plenty of partners. It looked like a regular ballroom. The ladies being exceedingly well dressed. I gave a recitation entitled "Peter at the Golden Gate" which was most enthusiastically received. I never did it before although I have had it in my possession for about 8 years. We had tea, coffee, cocoa, cakes and sandwiches and it only cost us a collection of about 3d. each male passenger. I was asked to propose a vote of thanks to the chairman and committee which I did as well as I could. Some of the men went up to the engineers cabin to continue their jollifications, which they did until about 5 a.m. I left them at 2 a.m. as I saw what was going to be and what it proved to be a right royal drunk for some of them.

Days run 231 miles.)

May 19th. Friday.) The sea is very smooth this morning, but the ship is rocking a great deal, I think it must be an undercurrent that is doing it. We are now in the Australian Bight where it is possible to get any kind of weather. The passengers are all very quiet today, some tired others with fat heads unable to get out of bed.

Days run 239 miles.)

May 20th. Saturday.) Weather still getting better, but the ship is rolling a little yet. In the evening we had another concert and dance, the wife taking part in all the dances, having for her partners, the different officers on board the ship, each one of them trying to cut one another out to get her. Although I say it myself, she was the best dancer among the ladies.

Days run 237 miles.)

May 21st. Sunday.) Doctor comes aboard.) A beautiful morning and oh how glorious, we can see land, just fancy, it is 25 days since we left Cape Town and we never saw a single ship all the way and no land either. The only thing we could see was water and the albatross which followed us since we left the Cape. In the evening we anchored outside of Port Adelaide, where the Dr. came on board. Everyone was told to line up and answer their names when called. There was nobody rejected, in fact, the consumptive passenger who looked so ill, which I have previously written about, passed the Dr. just as easy as they rest.

May 22nd. Monday.) We got into the port this morning and everybody was happy. The Nisbet family went for a walk and our first impressions of the place was a most disappointing one. In the evening the wife and I went down to the Semaphore, but it was dark and we could not see much. There was some men fishing catching fish on a line 2 feet 6 long. After this we had a (jigging) on the wharf alongside the ship to the tune of the bagpipes.

May 23rd. Tuesday.) This morning the Nisbet family set out to see Adelaide, which is about 7 miles from the port. We spent a very pleasant forenoon and coming back early, the wife and I returned to Adelaide in the afternoon (on our own) leaving the family about the ship. Some of the stewards (passage workers) who were with us, now started jumping the ship, getting jobs on some of the Australian boats. Six of them went and also some of the firemen. Most of the seamen and also some of the passengers got drunk making it somewhat lively on the ship. Adelaide is the finest city I have seen up till now.

May 24th. Wednesday.) 8th. Week.)

The family went down to the seaside (Semaphore) and we had a good time there. It was very nice indeed. The kiddies going out to paddle in the water. Maggie and little Mary went out so far that we had to take the bloomers off them as they were wet up over the behind and wee Nat did likewise, coming out of the water ringing wet up to the waist. The father and mother sat spooning by the sad sea waves. We then sent the children home by tram, which I should have said run through the middle of the street, but the streets are much wider than at home. The wife and I then went to a district called Peterhead, to visit an aunt of a neighbor of ours in Clydebank, name Henderson. After some considerable trouble we found them out and when I explained who sent us she almost pulled us into her house, she was so pleased to see us. After talking over matters for a time principally about Glasgow she hurried to make us tea and then her daughter came in and she introduced us to her. Her daughter is a school teacher earning 2 pounds a week. They have a beautiful home, growing plenty of grapes, more than they can dispose of, as they make them up in a tub and give them to the coves. When we were leaving she gave us a big bottle of home made tomato sauce and a bag of fruit. We took them down to have a look round the ship. The wife and I then went for a mid-night ramble returning home about 11.30p.m. The lady above referred to came to Adelaide 32 years ago when she was 13 years old accompanied by her sister 15 years of age. They came out on a sailing ship which took 110 days to do the journey. They had 14 deaths and 7 births during the voyage. The mileage has not been made known since May 20th.

May 25th. Thursday.) We set out today at 7p.m. for Melbourne where we hope to be in two days time. The sailing is now quite enjoyable as we can see land all the way.

May 26th. Friday.) Beautiful day but we are all very tired after all the abuse we gave ourselves in Adelaide. The Captain sent for me in the evening to have a quiet talk. He asked how I liked Adelaide and then said he was going to make a present to the wife of the flag that was wrapped round little Bobbie when he was carried on deck to be buried.

May 27th. Saturday.) Still beautiful land on both sides of us. We are now nearing Melbourne. At 2.30 pm we got tied up at the Melbourne docks. The wife and I went up into town in the evening, but we had to do a mile walk before we got there. The shops were nearly all closed, but lit up as they observe Saturday as the half holiday here. They keep the sops open lots on the Friday evenings. Oh! What swells I never in all my life saw ladies parade with such fine dresses on. There is no barefooted children neither here nor Adelaide. The news boys wearing collars and ties and we are not troubled with the beggars but we saw plenty in Cape Town.

May 28th. Sunday.) We took Willie and Maggie out for a walk to the town this morning they enjoyed it very much. The evening was very wet so we did not get off the ship again today.

May 29th. Monday.) Father's birthday, just 35 years. Very wet this morning, passengers remaining on the ship. The wife and I had another walk round the town, it was showery but we enjoyed it all the same. It was very cold and wet in the evening. The Captain presented us with the Union Jack that was wrapped

round little Bobbie when he was carried on deck to be buried. I need scarcely say that this is a gift which we very much prize indeed.

May 30th. Tuesday.) Still showery and cold. I had to go down with the ships carpenter into the second hold to get him to nail up my two packing cases as they had got smashed in. I will not know until we arrive if there is any damage done or not. The Chief Steward took little Mary along to his cabin in the afternoon to have tea with him. He gave her toast and tea and chocolate. She put her arms around his neck and said she loved him and then she sang two songs, Hi, Hi, Mr McKay and The Dear Homeland. The wife and I spent the afternoon in town. The children got their prizes for the sports. Every child on board got a prize, Willie got a puzzle purse valued 3/6 Maggie a bag purse same value, Natty got a ball and little Mary a box of blocks. The greeting (*grumbling?*) faced Scotchman that I have previously written about, gave nothing towards the prizes but sent his 5 kids to get their share of what was going, with the result they got about 14/- worth dividend amongst them. We bade goodbye to one of three sailor friends tonight, he was jumping the ship, but before doing so he wanted to shake hands with us. He has given me his address to write to him. He is going back to Adelaide to join the Fire Brigade. I should have said that before little Mary left the Chief Steward, she asked him to give her a piece for Natty. It was very thoughtful of her.

May 31st. Wednesday. 9th. Week.) A very quiet day. The wife and I did not go to town until evening, when we had a quiet stroll together.

June 1st Thursday.) Willie and I went up to town and had a walk through the Art Galleries. I had to get Willies boots and my own soled and healed today, paying 7/- for the two pair. I went back up to town in the evening. The sailors are still jumping the ship, three of them are going tonight one of them came and bid us good-bye.

June 2nd. Friday.) We sailed today at 4p.m. for Sydney, e got very short notice about the matter with the result that one of the passengers got left, but we expect the Shipping Company will send him up by train. We spent 6 days in Melbourne and everybody glad to get away.

June 3rd. Saturday.) Very quiet day, passengers passed the fed up stage, although, since we came to Adelaide we have never lost sight of land. The wife and I spent this evening as we had spent many more, in the Engineers Cabin laughing and joking.

June 4th Sunday.) Still very quiet, with the exception of seeing several porpoises and sharks flying through the water. We are now patiently waiting to get into Sydney as we expect to be there by mid-night tonight. The Australian coast is very nice indeed.

June 5th. Monday.) Midnight, arrived at Sydney after passing up the finest harbor in the world although we did not see much of it, as it was dark. During the afternoon previous there was no less than 4 Clydebank families waiting our arrival, although only one of them waited it out, he wanting us to come right away to his home, but we preferred waiting until the morning. In the morning we were visited by the whole four of them and we went and spent the rest of the day with a Mr Cameron. In the evening we visited Peter Mungle.

June 6th. Tuesday. June 7th. Wednesday. June 8th. Thursday.) We spent the rest of the time seeing all the sights of Sydney by tram and otherwise, but I must say I was a little disappointed with Sydney, not that it is not a nice place but I was expecting more. The folks who entertained us here were all from Clydebank and members of the Barns-O-Clyde, namely Cameron, Mungle, Cooper and Mcllwain.

June 9th. Friday.) Notice was posted up today to sail at 5p.m., so I did not have an opportunity to bid good-bye to all my friends as we left here without any of them knowing as we thought we would not sail until Saturday. So this finished our stay in Sydney, which lasted 5 days.

June 10th. Saturday.) Very nice sailing with beautiful scenery, we were able to see land mostly all the way.

June 11th. Sunday.) Still very quiet, although we are all getting anxious as we are almost at our destination. We anchored at the mouth of the river at 5 p.m. as we were not going up to Brisbane until the morning. A notice was posted up in the ship that we were all to be up the following morning at 5.30 a.m. to be inspected by the Doctor.

June 12th. Monday.) Hurrah! Brisbane at last, we got tied up at about 10 a.m. The Emigration officers came on board and every one of us had to answer our names and pass on, nothing more. The Dr. came on board but never looked at us, simply confining himself to a baby that was sick on the ship. Down the gangway we went, where we were met by Mr and Mrs Brand of Clydebank who were most hospitable to us and with whom we will likely stay for a few days. So ended our journey from Clydebank to Brisbane, occupying as it did almost 11 weeks. As this is only a diary of events of this voyage anything I have got to say about the country will be explained in my letters.

Note: Entries such as date, days run miles and special events marked with “)” at end were margin notes in the original document and are so marked for convenience sake only in typing this record.

Jocelyn Morgan - President of Caloundra Family History Research, Queensland.

<mailto:jocmorgan@iprimus.com.au>

Editor – special thanks to member 5488 Brian Watson whose wife is a distant relative of this family who liaised with Jocelyn to put this together.

brian.watson@fastmail.fm