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London Sept 23<sup>rd</sup> 1894

We got on board all right at the Royal Albert Docks at 2pm and you may imagine all the commotion which took place friends parting as for myself there was none to say as much as goodbye to except some clerks & Dalgetty's manager from Lombard St & my employers & I may say they are exceedingly nice gents as yet, they are following after in the course of 6 weeks or so. However we got down the Channel all right but the sea being extremely rough nearly all on board were quite sick & I am sure I enjoyed it. I was quite busy trying to cheer them up especially the pretty ones. We had a lot more passengers come on at Plymouth & posted our letters for the last time with English stamps. Nothing of any importance to say only trying to pass the time the best way we can & nothing to be seen but sea all round. However one evening about a week after leaving England I noticed a round lump of something passing to the west of us which I found upon closer inspection to be the island of Madeira. Got the use of a glass but saw no signs of it being inhabited except by wild birds. I may mention the shape of it was like a round loaf sitting on the table or exactly like Ailsa Craig. As to the life on board it's very nice composed of all sorts & conditions of men Scotch English Irish Welsh German Italian Dutch Swedes & a great many New Zealanders going back after having a look at their native country. Composed I may say of the above mentioned nationalities the number of passengers are 248 & 115 of hands. I am pretty well acquainted with all of them. Considering me being concerned in the Company I have the whole run of the ship & you may be sure I enjoy myself. Now we are seeing something again on the horizon just in front of us which appears like a rising cloud but on inquiry I find it's Tenerife island a Spanish possession if you remember. The only place Lord Nelson tried but could not conquer. We arrived in the harbour at 10pm just dark & you may be sure we longed for daylight so that we would get ashore for the first time on a foreign soil.

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Now I must describe the island as it appeared on our approaching it. Well if you would stand at Angus McKenzie's ? & look over towards Dunie (old Dunie) but limiting your view to Gledfield march on the east & Amat or Garbalt on the west & you will see an exact picture of the island of Tenerife. There is just a hill rising in the centre exactly like Cairn bran but all the trees are fruit trees. Now the name of the town is Santa Cruz. As the ship dropped anchor hundreds of natives came on board selling tobacco cigars fruit wine & brandy. Tobacco 1/3d cigars 2/- the hundred & fruit almost for the taking. You would enjoy yourself if you were here among the Canary Islands such funny people. Nearly all of us went ashore but I cannot say that I saw a European in all the town, the policemen small dry looking fellows wearing a uniform of white trousers & a broad red stripe down the side blue coat cheese cutter cap & a sword, yourself would tie 20 of them in a rope & run a mile with them. If we went into a shop to buy anything there was about a dozen tumblers put on the counter with different wines & brandies for you to drink I suppose with a view to purchase some of it. However we left Vere de Cruz nothing more but sea until we come to the Cape of Good Hope but after leaving Tenerife now for the concerts & balls. There are concerts & balls on every second night & sports games of all kinds. Just as you have on shore football cricket running jumping the heavy & light stone & various games. As for dancing singing playing draughts cards etc that is continually on the go. I am sounding among them. Now I am looking out for the coast of Africa on the left but at last I can make out something like land & very glad too. But shortly after I notice a straight line crossing in front of us. On inquiry I find it is Table Mountain just above Cape Town & here I may say the ship is surrounded with various kinds of birds particularly the Cape pigeons very pretty kind of birds. I forgot to say anything of the noted Bay of Biscay. When we came through it was just like going round the coast of Scotland in storm.

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Well we arrived at Cape Town at 2pm & got ashore in a tender & I can tell you we were glad to set our feet on firm soil. The first thing that surprised me was the small white Handsom cabs driven by Blacks, Kaffirs for most. It is a most pretty place exceedingly nice houses. I had a look round the Government houses & offices but I think the prettiest buildings & grounds I ever saw was the Houses of Parliament it is a magnificent building. I got some Scotch pounds for another party to change & ? foreign money but I

got only 18/- for the Scotch pound. So of course I had a mate an Edinburgh gentleman a retired grocer. We are chums since coming on board & shortly after landing we found the Post Office & as I was looking where to get stamps one of our ship chums called me over & there to find stamps & letters at one end of the counter & beer & whiskey at the other so we had a bottle of Dickey Beer only 3d the Black Bottle! Things are very dear there 6d for a dozen boxes of matches clothes 3 & 4 pound the suit whiskey 6d per glass & brandy 2/- the bottle. However setting all prices aside we were 3 sheets in the wind before leaving but one other item I must not let pass that is you would think yourself in Edinburgh with the great number of kilted soldiers to be seen. It is wonderful the advanced state of things far in advance of England. The tram cars running just like an English town. There were some nice cows grazing along the road side outside the town very much like Ayrshire cows & also some goats in the same field. I didn't see much of the coast only about 50 miles of it but could not see anything in the way of cultivation. Butter is 1/9d & 2/- per pound but fowls & eggs are nearly for nothing. There is no public houses all beautiful hotels except a few back street dirty shanties! I forgot to mention something of the climate crossing the line we had only 3 hot days but strange to say not in succession. I did not think anything of the heat in comparison to what I expected. I think I felt it as hot the day I was cutting Alick McKenzie's hay but it was hot both day & night but not so bad at night. About 36 & 7° south latitude we had plenty of showers of hail & snow & piercing cold. It's even cold now like a March day cold frosty wind & showers of hail. We are running now at the rate of 335 miles in 24 hours.

I must now say something of Hobart Tasmania well when I got up on the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nov

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I found the ship laying along side the dock of Hobart & such a pretty place I never imagined it to be. Of all the places you could dream of it would almost be impossible to imagine the fine scenery & beautiful towns of Tasmania. We were there from 4am on 1<sup>st</sup> until 4.30am 2<sup>nd</sup> of Nov so we had a long stay. Another two gents from Edinburgh & myself spent a fine day & night there. The climate is splendid & soil deep & rich. It is impossible for me to describe Tasmania only any person who could afford it ought to see it. Me being in charge of the sheep I wanted some fresh grass so on looking round I saw some & enquired who was the owner & found it to be a publican. Went to see him & he told me it was the Lord Mayor's so off I went to see His Lordship had a long chat with him but he sent me to the Town Clerk. I went & seen him & had a long chat again & of course the sheep were my own so I got as much grass for nothing only I gave a couple of shillings to the man that cut it & brought it on board the ship for me. These big men don't look to their position as they do in the old country. I got an invitation to call & see them if at any time I should be that way again! There's a ? brewery outside the town so I thought I should like to go & see it but I would require a ticket at their Town Office so me being foreman in all things during voyage I went & got a ticket to admit Mr Ross & friends & of course I may as well draw the curtain here for the rest will be better imagined than described. However before I left Hobart I made friends with a great many people & felt very sorry leaving it. However we had only 5 days sail to New Zealand & they passed very quickly so on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Nov I got a note sent me saying that a few ladies were wishing to have my company to supper on the night of the 5<sup>th</sup> so off I went & it was a grand night. Of course they were select like my honourable self. We had plenty of everything & finished up with desert to make things complete. I may say that voyage will never pass from my memory. I made the acquaintance of an old Scotchman who has been here for 40 years. Himself wife & daughter is here. The old man & wife was home for a tour to settle up the affairs of a wealthy sister of the old man's & all was left to his daughter. She brought her piano with her. She played on the ship's piano just like Miss Mary. Scotch Stile of Rules. I promised to go & see the old man to Otago. Him & I was like brothers I was very sorry parting with him but I must keep eye on the daughter a very nice girl. There's no use me writing any more I could write for 5 years & not be finished.