

# Diary of Morton Frederick (Fred) Eden, April – September 1890

NLA MS 9936

## Item 1

Diary kept by Fred Eden (1865-1948), an English traveller and prodigious walker, on his journeys in South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania, 14 April – 25 September 1890.

The diary is pocket-sized and most of the entries are written in pencil, but the final section, recording Eden's work as a strike-breaker in the great 1890 maritime strike, is in ink. It contains a few pencil and ink sketches.

For information about Eden's years in Australia, see Graeme Powell. Fred Eden: the compulsive bushwalker, *National Library of Australia Magazine*, vol. 8(2), June 2016, pp. 26-29.

## Explanatory note

This transcription is a copy of the diary, not a facsimile, and certain elements of the original have not been reproduced in exactly the same form. Eden's page headings, paragraphs, form of dates and punctuation have been retained. His capitalisation, or lack of capitalisation, has generally been retained, but capital letters have sometimes been added to provide greater clarity. The transcript reproduces Eden's at times idiosyncratic spelling, often followed by [sic], but obscure place names have been corrected. When a word is consistently misspelt, such as 'warf' instead of 'wharf' or 'payed' instead of 'paid', it has been corrected. Eden occasionally enclosed a word or words in round brackets and they have been reproduced. In the transcript words or question marks that are enclosed in square brackets have been inserted by the transcriber, either to clarify or to indicate some uncertainty about Eden's meaning.

The diary has page numbers, written in very faint pencil, but they cease well before the end of the text. To indicate the location of each page within the original diary, the unique url number has been included. It contains the obj number, which appears at the top of the digitised image of the page. The url is in the format: <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683213/view>

## The Transcript

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683213/view>]

[Monday 14 April 1890]

Having determined to make an excursion to Morgan on the Murray I left Adelaide on Monday evening at about 7.30 with the train [tram] for Payneham taking with me only my blanket & a tin mug. I walked on for 3 miles & camped at Paradice [Paradise] Bridge.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup>

I started before sunrise and walked up into the hills following the high road through Houghton, Millbrook, Gumeracha, which I had often traversed before and reached Blumberg [later re-named Birdwood] about 2 o'clock. In the afternoon I went on to Mt Pleasant a few miles beyond which I camped in a hollow tree.

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>

Followed the high road to Eden Valley then cut across country to get on the Sedan road which I reached in about 1 hour. This

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683347/view>]

road ascended for some time to comparatively barren hills thinly dotted with small trees & scrub. After continuing for a short space along the top the road began to descend, but I, before doing so rested awhile in order to admire the extensive view which is here to be seen. Coming from Adelaide one ascends the hills leaving the plain behind one which is soon lost sight of completely. Before doing so however a fine view of Adelaide, the bay & the coast of Yorks [Yorke] Peninsula beyond may be obtained on a clear day: after that until you get to these plains which are now extended before me it is all hilly country with fine timber, rising & falling but you never descend

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683472/view>]

very far: I imagine the lowest valleys one passes through are still a considerable height above sea-level. This country is comparatively densely populated & strewed with fine villages. But now at my feet extends a vast area of level country through which the Murray flows which however I could not distinguish from here. As I passed through a part of this country tomorrow I may as well describe it at once. Although it appears quite level from here it is in reality not as flat as a looking glass, nor as level as some of those plains in Northern Victoria. The soil is light sandy and covered more or less densely with scrub & small trees none much over 20 or thirty feet high. The ground is covered with under-

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683607/view>

growth which in parts is pretty dense. When I entered the country it appeared to me that I was leaving civilization & coming into a wilder region. But this is not altogether the case. Lots of people hire tracts of country from the crown at about 1d an acre (lease of 20 years I believe) cut down the trees & plow [sic] the land just as it is without taking out any stump & then sow wheat: if the seasons are good a small fortune may be made this way in a few years. The price of clearing an acre thus is now only about 5/- and I was told a good man can clear an acre a day in parts where the scrub is not too thick. I saw large pieces under cultivation this way. There appeared to me to be no drainage or water courses, but that

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683730/view>]

the water settled on the lowest parts after rain, forming pools or good sized lakes according to the amount of rain which in the course of the summer evaporate and disappear. From the point where I am only one village is to be distinguished situated about a mile from the foot of the ranges. It is Sedan. In some directions the country stretches away as far as the eye can reach. Having enjoyed

the view I began the descent & was soon at the bottom of the hills & on the plain where there were a few houses & a school. I had 3 more miles to walk to Sedan where I arrived at 5.30 & stopped at the hotel. Sedan seems a regular German village. I only heard German spoken between the inhabitants all the time I was there. The hotel was pretty good.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683869/view>]

Thursday 17

Left Sedan at about 8 o'clock. The fine roads which you admire in the hills round Adelaide are not met with here where there are only tracks: one of them I followed for about 12 miles when I struck the road which follows the telegraph line to Blanchtown & Wentworth, this road I was to follow till I got to Blanchtown 18 miles from where I am, on the River Murray. There is a wine shop at this juncture where I had a good drink & then lay in the shade until about 3. I had brought some biscuits with me but they were full of weavils [sic] so that I could not eat them. I only passed one house between the wine shanty & Blanchetown and there was no land under cultivation. I was

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561683990/view>]

getting very tired for it had been dark for some time when I saw a light & heard the snorting & thumping of a steamer. I knew then that I was not far to go from my destination & in fact a few 100 yards further on I came to a large stone building & saw the Murray waters gleam through the darkness up the river whence a large steamer was toiling. Passing round this building I came to the door where I distinguished standing in the faint light a sort of curly headed giant on wooden legs. He immediately asked me a dozen questions as to where I was going & where I came from, something like a continental gendarme questioning a foot traveller; having answered those as I thought proper he said that if I wished to save a shilling I might camp in the building

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684121/view>]

which was the post & telegraph office & he the master. He then asked me to come in & gave me some tea, but kept talking & asking questions all the time. I soon guessed about what sort of man he was: the sort of man I do not like. He informed me at once that he was a tea-totaler [sic] & asked me if I drank beer. I told him that I did & that my opinion was that there was no harm in drinking alcoholic liquor if you did not drink too much but that tea totallers were certainly on the safe side. Our conversation then turned upon women & he informed me that neither his late nor his present wife would live with him. I thought that not at all improbable

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684253/view>]

or to be wondered at, but I expressed to him my astonishment at such behaviour. In short seeing that though he could talk of a great many things yet he was by no means a clever or even well informed man the conversation lost all real interest to me & I regretted that I had not gone to the hotel. I may appear ungrateful, it is true he gave me some supper & showed me to the lobby of the telegraph office to sleep in & shoved me a mug of water & two apples through the pigeon hole afterwards, but I did not believe that his motives for doing so were genuine benevolence or charity but the desire to have someone to talk to and prattle with in the large & lonely station building whence his

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684385/view>]

temperament had driven his wives & probably anyone who may have attempted to live with him.

Friday 18<sup>th</sup>.

Was up at sun rise and started northwards towards Morgan. This is a lonely track. The distance being about 24 miles. One follows up the course of the Murray northwards but in reality sees almost nothing of the river as one cuts off all the bends and never comes within  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile of the river. I however descended twice to its banks. The plain over which I have passed is considerably higher than the bed of the Murray and is only as above mentioned, covered with scrub & small trees, whilst on the banks of the Murray are covered with fine timber. Walking along the plain towards the Murray, a little

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684516/view>]

above Blanchetown, I suddenly came to the edge of high cliffs below which was a considerable area of flats covered with pools & lakes of water & large trees, the highest of which however did not reach more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way up the cliffs. Through these flats the Murray flowed, on the other side were the same cliffs, more or less steep. The pools above mentioned were side waters of the Murray. Some were good sized lakes, half a mile across & covered with wild ducks. Finding a spot where it was practicable I descended these cliffs & went to rest awhile on the banks of the river. The flats are certainly worth visiting. The large quiet pools of still water, from which some ducks flew screaming disturbed by my approach, reflected the large trees

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684640/view>]

which grew around overshadowed by the frowning cliffs, the ground was partly covered with green grass & through the midst the river was silently flowing. Having reascended to the plain I continued on my way but felt very lazy & preferred sitting on the ground & playing with ants & grasshoppers to walking. I thus wasted a good part of the day until being overtaken by a boy on horseback who told me that it was half past two I hurried on in order to reach Morgan before dark. The sun was already setting & I thinking of giving up my attempt to reach Morgan that day, of camping out with an empty stomach when I beheld among the trees the first habitation of man which I had seen since leaving Blanchtown. It was a pretty house situated all alone on the flats close

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684772>]

to the river; I immediately went up to the house & was glad to hear I was only 3 miles from Morgan. I therefore mended my pace in order to profit by the twilight as long as possible. A little beyond the house I passed, under the shade of the large trees, a small enclosure which contained the graves of the family. On a white marble slab was written In sad memory of Luisa von Rieben'. It was a quiet out of the way place to live in & a quiet place to repose in after death with the river silently & steadily flowing by. Soon I saw the lights of Morgan & arrived at the same time as the train from Adelaide and put up at the Hotel, of which there are 2 at Morgan.

Saturday 19

Strolled about all morning. There is a fine wharf here for loading the steamers which go up the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561684901/view>]

Murray & Darling for hundreds of miles. There are 2 hotels & several stores & churches. It is here that the Murray, coming from the East, bends round and flows southward into the sea. In the afternoon I went down to the Murray. Right on the banks some aboriginals had built their dwellings of old rags & tins & bits of canvas, just as some bird makes its nest to live in. Before the white man came they made their huts of bark I believe which certainly must have looked less disreputable than those rag heaps [?] do which they inhabit at present. I believe they spend their time mostly fishing on the river. Their camp was surrounded by dogs who barked fiercely at my approach. What strikes me at once in these

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685030/view>]

black fellows is that they mostly have fine beards & whiskers. The bodies of some are also remarkably hairy. I returned to my hotel again as the train came rushing in from Adelaide. As I was standing outside in the dark before entering it seemed strange to think that only about 30 or 40 years ago this country was only inhabited by such black fellows as I had just seen down by the river, the only buildings being those rude bark tents. Now lights gleamed through the windows of solid stone houses, the bars of the hotels & the shop windows were lighted up, people were bustling about at the station where the train had just arrived & the wistle (sic) of a steamer coming up the river might be heard reaching through the woods whilst the lights of another appeared

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685160/view>]

moored under the wharf. But what is this compared with San Francisco and Melbourne? The rapid growth of the first is known to most people, but people standing in Bourke St Melbourne at the present day would scarcely believe that only 50 years ago there was nothing on the spot where they now stand to be seen but trees & a few native huts. Now it is one of the finest cities in the world. The contrast is particularly striking, because these cities have all modern improvements imaginable more so than most towns in the old world. A heavy traffic, cable trams, railways, electric light, large steamers, fine shops, broad streets, well paved streets are all to be seen in San Francisco and Melbourne.

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>

Went down to the river & had a bathe. After supper started

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685297/view>]

in the direction of Eudunda & walked for several miles along the line then camped.

Monday 21

Started at sunrise & reached Mount Mary at about 9, bought some provisions & went on. Scrubby

country. Fire wood is cut here for Adelaide. Passed another small place Sutherland about 10 miles from Eudunda where there were a few houses & a store or two. Along the road there are several large wheat growing farms but the houses are mostly miserable & small, as though only built for temporary use. On the whole the country is very thinly settled. Arrived at Eudunda at 6 (36 miles from Morgan) had supper in the Hotel & camped out. Here the hills begin again.

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>

Walked to Kapunda a distance of only about 16 miles. Kapunda

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685420/view>]

April [1890]

is a good sized place. In the neighbourhood are the celebrated copper mines. There are also marble quarries, but I did not visit them. It is from here that the marble came used in building the parliament house at Adelaide, which will be a fine building when completed. The marble employed [?] there is of a bluish colour. Stopped at Kapunda for the night.

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup>

Strolled about the town all the morning and started off again at about 1 o'clock towards Adelaide. Cut across country until it got dark when seeing some lights I made for them. Never however trust to lights in the distance at night, they may be 20 miles off or only ½ mile, yet you can see no difference. I walked & walked but got no nearer. Eventually I arrived at a public house where

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685559/view>]

April [1890]

they informed me that I was within 3 miles of Gawler, but it was a wretched place & they had nothing to eat. Camped in a field close by where there were plenty of ants.

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>

Walked into Gawler which is about the same size as Kapunda, these being the two 2<sup>nd</sup> largest towns in S. Australia. There is a large factory and foundry here where only a few days ago they turned out the first locomotive made in the colony on which event there was much rejoicing & feasting etc. Today also the town is very lively it being election day. In the afternoon I continued towards Adelaide & then slept in the long grass of a field.

Friday 25<sup>th</sup>

The country from here to Adelaide is pretty flat. Passed through Salisbury & arrived at

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685689/view>]

Adelaide shortly before dark. I have read in books that people who have been sleeping on the ground for a long time were uncomfortable & could not sleep on beds which on again reaching

civilization were supplied them. There is not the least exaggeration in this. I have now experienced it myself several times. Rolled up in blankets on the ground I have always slept soundly. This night in Adelaide where I of course had a bed I could not sleep at all for a long time, in fact slept very little the whole night. And since then, after having camped out for any length of time I have found that when returning to bed I have slept badly the first night. The next couple of weeks I spent in

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685814/view>]

May [1890]

Adelaide on very short allowances of food. At first 2 meals a day, then only one, then only a loaf of bread & then nothing at all for a day when to be sure I got very hungry which drove [me] to selling and pawning all my available belongings which were very little, only enough to keep me for a few days. During this time I came to the conclusion that I could live for a week or so on a 2d. loaf a day. That I could live here easily for 6d. a day. Also that if I could get 1 meal a day it would be sufficient, but that nothing at all to eat was very unpleasant. I soon gave up the idea I had entertained, of trying to fast for a week or so as Dr Tanner & Succi had performed. Charles XII of Sweden they say, fasted for 5 days by way of a joke

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561685941/view>]

May [1890]

without any preparation or anything & then rode over to his cousin to breakfast. To do this requires an iron will & body. Most of my time I spent in the public library having thus plenty of food for the mind, but none for the body, so that I got at last rather sick of the former & the most enticing works of any favourite author could scarcely tempt me. If man cannot live by bread alone I found the opposite to be at least equally true. At last a draft arrived from Cox & Co. & then there was feasting for several days to make up for lost time. As I shall soon be leaving the colony I wish to make a small tour before doing so in order to see as much as I can before doing so. Left Adelaide therefore on Friday

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686071/view>]

May [1890]

& walked to the Port which is 8 miles distant & connected with Adelaide by rail as well as by a good road. The town of Port Adelaide is situated as before mentioned on a narrow arm of the sea; it is not a large place, yet has more good sized buildings & on the whole looks older than most Australian towns. Spent part of the evening in the public reading room where there are a lot of different newspapers.

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup>

Went on board the 'Warooka', a small coasting steamer bound for Edithburgh & Kangaroo Island. Would have gone to the latter place were it not for the fare which is too high (30 shillings). It is a large island at the entrance of Gulf St Vincent and it was on this island that the first settlement

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686204/view>]

in South Australia was established. Not being well able to afford my fare to the island & back I gave up the idea of going & took a ticket to Edithburgh (7/6) situated on the south east corner of York's Peninsula. Neither whilst crossing the Atlantic or the Pacific nor since have I ever been the least sea-sick but during this short voyage of scarcely 5 hours I soon began to feel remarkably queer & I believe I might have been sick had the voyages lasted a few hours longer. We left the Port at 9.30 and arrived at Edithburgh at 2 o'clock. The passage was not rough, there was a bit of a breeze, that's all. The weather was cold & rainy and altogether I was glad to get ashore and have dinner at the hotel of

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686330/view>]

which there are two in Edithburgh, with a few more houses & stores, but it is not a large place. The coast here is stony & rises about 20 ft. above the water so that the water is deeper and ships can come in closer & it is altogether more convenient than the flat shore along the Adelaide side. The country on the peninsular is flat or wavy [?] never rising to any considerable height, none of the hollows deserve the name of valley but some of the elevations might be called hills; but the ground always rises very gradually, it would be a fine country for bicycling but there are few good roads as yet. After a pleasant walk of nine miles I

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686468/view>]

arrived at Yorktown at nightfall. This is one of the chief places on the Peninsula and is a good sized village with 2 hotels, several stores etc. There is also a skating rink I believe, these institutions seem to be gaining favour with the Australians & are now to be found in many out of the way places. There was one at Swan Hill.

Sunday 18

Started to walk up the Peninsula northwards. It is splendid weather now, not too hot nor too cold, just right for walking. On the whole I should imagine the peninsula to be healthy, there generally being a cool breeze from the sea, they therefore do not suffer from hot nights in summer. The country seems to be settled everywhere as far as I went, although in some places rather thinly. It is

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686598/view>]

a wheat growing district, mostly. I heard say it was going backwards, that it is no longer what it used to be when first opened out. One man stated that this was usually the case with wheat growing countries, a statement which astonished me. He said that when the peninsula was first opened trade & everything was more lively than now, there were more people. The ground was poor and when used up the farmers went away selling their land to those who remained who in their turn when they got possession thus of a few 1000 acres turned it into sheep runs. Then only a few men would be employed on the same land where treble the number or more were necessary when planted in wheat. If the density of the population

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686728/view>]



causes the prosperity of a district & the above mentioned process be taking place on the peninsula, then it is clear that it is going backward. These are only opinions that I heard stated, I could not judge myself having never been there before. Only that the public houses, which certainly are a sign of prosperity, only pay about half the rent that they used to & I saw one which had been given up altogether as it did not pay; whilst in the beginning the situation was considered so good that the man who had the licence spent all he had & more building a fine hotel; now he is ruined & had to leave.

After having walked a few miles I gained a fine view of Spencers

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686856/view>]

Gulf to the westward & of Hardwicks Bay in particular. 18 miles from York Town I arrived at the village of Minlaton. Houses are mostly solid stone buildings, as are most of those I saw on the peninsula. There was a little girl in the Hotel here about 12 or 13 years old who sang beautifully to the piano, one would have thought it to be the singing of a grown woman, she never made the least slip or mistake; indeed I have often thought that the South Australians have [a] love & talent for music & I think they will become a musical nation like the Italians. I do not know whether the climate has anything to do with it.

Monday 19.

Started at about 9 o'clock & walked 10 miles along a good road

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561686980/view>]

until I came to a solitary hotel & house. This is the hotel mentioned above, that ruined the man who built it. It has no licence belonging to it now & only temperance drinks are sold, the old man in it told me that sometimes nobody enters there for days. I now left the main road for the road going NW to Wauraltee, called also Port Victoria where I arrived at 5 o'clock. There is a jetty here & steamers call occasionally. Several miles out in the Gulf is a large island which appears to be the continuation of a long headland which runs out to sea on the northern & bending southward ends about opposite to the village. The island I am told is uninhabited. For anybody who would like to play

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687111/view>]

May [1890]

at Robinson Crusoe for a time this would be a suitable place. The evening was cold & I was not sorry to spend it in doors by the fire, or playing the piano, which is becoming quite an ordinary bit of furniture in Australia & I believe will soon be found in nearly every house. The land lady who was not a bad looking young woman played wholly & only by ear, a sign of a musical disposition, & if I played a tune she could play it to a certain degree although in a different key. The Australians are decidedly musical.

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>.

Started at about 10am & am going to follow the coast up to Moonta; there is no road & no houses I do not believe for about 20 miles. After having walked for

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687249/view>]

5 or 6 miles passed the Aboriginal Mission station, consisting of several large buildings a mile or more on my right hand. Then I came to some wells & had a drink. Then straight across country again until I came to the coast again & stood for some time watching the sea whose waves were breaking on the beach about 40 feet below at my feet. It was very windy all day. When it got dark I sought a sheltered spot under some bushes & made a good fire before which I lay for a good time. I had some biscuits & a little cheese. Then I rolled myself in my blanket to sleep. It

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687372/view>]

May [1890]

rained a lot so that I got rather wet.

Wednesday 21.

Got up late having dried myself at the fire. I went on. It was a fine day. I kept too much to my left I thus ran out on a sort of promontory called Cape Elizabeth. I did not notice my mistake until I had gone a good bit out of my way. Then made for some wells quite close to the sea shore & had a drink. Round about the wells were lots of fine sheep with their lambs, the latter quite small, only a few days old I should think lots of these had lost their mothers & being alone were quite tame so that I could catch them & play with them. I do not think the lambs know much of their mothers, but the sheep know their lambs, more by the smell I should

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687507/view>]

say than by anything else. Two lambs will stick to one sheep for some times, she will then smell them both & then butt one away or knock it down & let the other suck. But I don't think the lambs know much because if you take one & hold it in your arms some time and stroke it, when you go away it will follow you no doubt thinking you are some relation & it will try to stick with you and ba ba pitifully when it cannot follow you. I now followed the beach for some time, which is covered with 1000s of small shells, quite composed of them alone in some places. I also picked up some sponges, the first I had found in their natural state. After a time I made off inland & before dark saw chimneys indicating the direction

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687635/view>]

May [1890]

of Moonta, in the distance. I arrived at this place about 1 hour after dark very hungry having had scarcely anything to eat all day. On account of my elegant appearance no doubt, I was thought too good for the common dining room of the Hotel I went to, & had the honour of having tea with the hostler, waiter & house maids in a room adjoining the kitchen. Moonta is a good sized place owing its size & existence to the copper mines of which there are several round about. But on account of

the low price of copper at the present people here complain & say that things are not as lively as they ought to be, however the Salvation Army make plenty of noise going round during the evening, I thought.

Thursday 22.

Walked to Wallaroo

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687761/view>]

a distance of twelve miles. This is the port of Moonta, & they are connected by rail; also a tramcar drawn by horse runs between the two places along the railway line when no trains are going. Wallaroo is connected by rail with Adelaide, narrow gauge as far as Hamley however. There were 3 good sized barques moored alongside the wharf when I was there, but the harbour struck me as very open, I don't know what they do when it blows. The town covers a considerable extent of ground & there are a good many churches. Altogether the place impressed me favourably although as usual the inhabitants complain of it being very quiet, but they do that everywhere I have been in S. Aust.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561687892/view>]

After dinner continued up northwards along the coast a pretty good road which rose very gradually most of the way to Tickera 10 or 11 miles from Wallaroo so that when catching a glimpse of the sea on arriving at that place I found it a good way below me. This Tickera is an out of the way place, there are farms about here & I believe a lot of firewood is cut for Wallaroo or some other towns. Rainy weather so one is glad to have a roof overhead.

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Continues wet so I stopped at the inn where I spent the night until past 12. Then I made a start for Port Broughton about 22 miles distant. Passed one or two farms but there were few houses on the whole. The country is scrubby. Weather continues raining & night came on whilst I was still

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688027/view>]

6 miles from the port. Soon after dark a heavy shower came on wetting me to the skin, the roads & fields round about were all covered with water & thus for a considerable time I splashed & floundered on through mud & water at the risk of losing my way. At last I arrived at Port Broughton at about 8 o'clock & dried myself in front of a good fire.

Saturday 24

After breakfast I started for Port Pirie at about 9.30. Port Broughton is a small place situated on a pretty little arm of the sea where there is a sort of a bridge or a jetty running across. Large vessels I believe cannot come alongside however but have to be loaded by means of small craft. A horse tramway runs from the jetty for about 10 miles inland. From this place to Port Pirie there are

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688151/view>]

two ways of going. One by a good road inland passing several villages; the other going direct

without passing through any place worthy of being called a village & passing through the swamps. I had heard a good bit about these swamps from a man the previous evening, so that I thought [?] wonders of them & of their large extent & mysterious depth, but when I came to them I would not have known them to be swamps at all, had I not been told of them. At places they were slippery & disagreeable to walk on & that was all, they were not half as wet as the places I had passed through on the evening before. The water on them is salt & they are covered with one [?] small bush from 2 to 4 feet high growing at intervals & between these there are often large spaces of shining slimy mud over

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688283/view>]

which however you could walk without sinking in more than an inch or two. I always had a sort of liking for large swamps, there appears to me to be something wild, mysterious, romantic about them, but this one was rather a fraud. I shall never forget looking down on those Pontine Marshes from a parapet of Velletri, those marshes bordered by the sea on one side & the mountains on the other. What a lot of wonderful thoughts & pictures did they suggest to my mind & often have I thought of them since and wished to see them once more. Well do I remember how I left Rome at night, walking through the dreary campagna to the old town of Albana where I arrived before dawn, then continuing through Civita la Vigna & other beautiful spots to Velletri where I spent the night.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688419/view>]

Happy days were those, yet I remember I had only 5 fr. to take me to Naples. However they sufficed me. I passed on through Valmontone & up the valley, looking up & wondering at the towns built on tops of the hills, wondering about the people that lived & spent their lives in them & at the scenes that had taken place there in bygone times. One might spend happy days in one of these old fortress towns far up on the hill, gleaming white in the setting sun against the purple mountains with a dark romagnole maiden by one's side to while away the gliding hours with, days would rapidly pass away into months, perhaps years & for a while one might forget the world outside. I passed through Cesana [?] the frontier town & entered the kingdom of Naples, then alas kingdom

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688548/view>]

no more, but part of the united Italy. Here you could get good wine at 3d. a quart. On & on I marched with very little money left now to be sure, only 5d. & was very hungry, but there in the distance is Monte Cassino where the hospitable monks receive & entertain every traveller for a day. On I toiled up the steep hill & at last as the sun set behind the mountain I knocked at the door & was admitted. The good meals that I got there & the little room to which I was then shown along with a travelling friar, well do I remember them, & the little window in the thick walls looking out into the dark shadow of the cold & silent hills. And then in the morning how a German [?] brother showed me over the convent, the valuable library, the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688676/view>]

beautiful church, the printing press, the scholars refectory, the order of silence that reigned in the large solid compartments & vaulted passages & stone stairs. And the tame ravens in the courtyard that hopped about & came when the monk called them, and talked. And the beautiful view on the

terrace with the rich valley below, how the monk told me that all one could see once belonged to the convent, but that most of it had been taken from them. I felt sympathy for them & do so now. And the garden outside where the monks grew some vegetables & the high barren mountains around, all this I remember so well. After dinner in the afternoon I descended to the little town at the foot of the mountain where the abbot lived in a pretty house & walked on

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688801/view>]

down the valley feeling real gratitude in my heart towards these monks & never will I forget their kindness & hospitality. Much more could I write of these scenes, never to be forgotten, oh! when will the time come which shall take me back to them once more.

Having passed these so called swamps I came to a more fruitful country where there were some large wheat-growing farms & at dusk arrived at a small stream called the Broughton River. I have often read in descriptions of Australia that here in the antipodes lots of things are contrary to what they are in the old world. Thus the trees shed their bark instead of their leaves, the pears hang on the trees by the big end, the wild dogs cannot bark whilst in Europe the wilder the dogs the more they bark, and that the longer the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561688933/view>]

rivers get & the nearer the sea the smaller they grow. Well, this so called Broughton River which is here a wretched little stream I crossed again about 40 miles further up at Jacka, & although at this time there was not much water in the river bed, yet this river bed was at Jacka by far bigger than down here, in fact it was the bed of a large torrent spanned by a good sized bridge of several arches, whilst here within 10 miles of the sea, no bridge was necessary at all only a board or a trunk of a tree for people on foot to walk over, the horses & carriages could pass through the bed which was paved a bit. The road on the other side was very muddy & slippery & it soon got dark. But I was determined to reach Port

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689064/view>]

Pirrie that night, I therefore hurried on as quick as I could over the slippery mud and soon the lights of the port appeared, although it took me still 2 hours to reach it. At last I arrived there, a pretty busy place it seemed, smelting works, chimneys, railway station & large fires glaring round about you. Went to a boarding house where there was plenty of Irish.

Sunday 25

Port Pirie is considered the chief town of the north, although it appears to me that when Eyre's Peninsula gets populated Port Augusta will be the chief town. Having never been to Port Augusta I know little about that place, but I have an idea that it will become an important place, i.e. if the harbour is good.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689197/view>]

May [1890]

It is the most centrally situated port of all Australia, but as yet the land to the west is only partially explored & it is not yet opened to commercial enterprise. Port Pirie I think owes everything to the Barrier silver mines it being the nearest port to Broken Hill with which it is connected by a narrow gauge railroad. A large part of the ore from the above mine is smelted here & the silver refined & separated from the lead. The situation here is remarkably similar to that of Port Adelaide. The same marshy land round about, the same narrow inlet from the sea, the same range of mountains arising inland, only here higher & closer than at Adelaide. There are

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689321/view>]

6 Hotels & nearly ½ mile of wharves along side of which there were a number of ships, large & small, steamers & sailing vessels. I don't believe there is a single gentleman in Port Pirie (in fact to tell the truth I have thought this is the case in most Australian towns) but there are a fine lot of whisky drinking working men. The wages are generally pretty good, about 9/- a day, so they are pretty well off. The salvation army seems to prosper here, as indeed it ought to for it is only with the vulgar that it can gain ground & drink no doubt does a deal of harm here, so that the S. Army might do some good after all, & no doubt they do. Monday was

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689453/view>]

kept as the Queen birthday, although her birthday was on Saturday. There was a football match & La Crosse match & a lot of excursionists from Port Augusta. I saw lacrosse played for the first time & it pleased me, it seems a very lively game. Any amount of drunken people about today, but on the whole no one could complain of disorderly conduct at all. I was amused by several young urchins (from 6-14) who had been spending their money about town & stopped in front of a confectioners discussing what they would buy now, when one of them called out, Come on we'll have some raspberry vinegar that'll do fine on top of the oysters & in they went. It is very fine to watch the hills of

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689580/view>]

May [1890]

an evening & they attract me more & more so that I have determined to make an excursion to them. I have spent nearly all my money & have only about 7/- to take me to Adelaide, so that I can ill afford to waste any time, but into the hills I went never the less & did not regret it. On Wednesday 28 after noon I left Port Pirie & walked straight inland towards what appeared to be the highest part of the range to the westward [eastward ?] & camped out in the open.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup>.

Nothing to eat but a little salt pork until the evening. Walked on towards the hills intending to cross them to Laura. The ground rose gradually until I got to the foot of the real range, when the ascent was pretty steep. The

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689711/view>]

May [1890]

hills were thickly wooded (i.e. for Australia) but not inhabited for after leaving the last farm on the Port Adelaide side I saw no house or anything until arriving on the other side, a distance of about 5 miles. After rising for some short time the views became fine, & on my right & left were deep & picturesque valleys & gorges. At last I gained the summit & sat down to enjoy the view which is the finest I have yet seen in Australia. The hill I was on was situated just about between Port Pirie & Wirrabara. To the north the range extended as far as I could see & some of the hills there were higher than the one I was on. Between them & Spencer

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689848/view>]

Gulf was some flat country & then the Gulf gleamed in the moonlight looking like a large lake & getting narrower & narrower as far as one could see until lost in the distance towards Port Augusta. On the opposite side of the gulf was shut [?] in by the ranges of Eyres Peninsula. To the south one looked out to sea & the eye could follow the coast line from Port Pirie a long way south, the coast along which I had travelled many days last week. Port Pirie lay at my feet & the inlet & ships & the shallow Germein Bay with the jetty of Port Germein. To the west [east ?] there were hills & then a large extend of undulating country then hills again. In short in every direction one could see a long

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561689971/view>]

May [1890]

way & the weather was beautiful, the only drawback were the trees which prevented one enjoying the whole panorama at one time & in one place, one had to move about in order to see in different directions. For a long time I remained up there, I was all alone with no one to disturb me & I was happy. Then I began the descent & bounded down over the rocks & between the trees disturbing some kangaroos until I arrived at the bottom of a deep ravine where I found some cool water to drink. The kangaroos are certainly very graceful animals, how quickly softly & smoothly they flew over the rough ground. At last all of a sudden at the bottom of a valley in the midst of the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690106/view>]

forest I came upon an orange grove, the golden fruit shining among the dark foliage, then an extensive fruit garden & a house. Here on enquiring I found that I was not on my way to Laura at all, but to Wirrabara, so I kept on towards the latter place, there being no other road & passed several houses on my way down & a fine plantation of firs. I wonder how these trees will do in this climate, at present they seem to be doing very well. Towards evening I arrived at Wirrabara, a nice looking village situated among the wooded hills. Here I bought a loaf & having walked on about five miles towards Laura camped by the roadside under a large tree

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690230/view>]

May [1890] (Laura)

where I made a fire. Soon a man came out from a neighbouring farm house & sat down by the fire to have a talk. The country folk of Australia as far as I have seen as yet, have a good deal of merit, but it is those confounded democratic newspaper[s] & those damnable men à la Sime [David Syme]

of Melbourne that do their best to spoil them. The public as a rule, who know very little, are eager to learn & are glad to listen to anybody who will instruct them & are I am afraid too ready to believe. It is a pity therefore to see them imposed upon by such people as Henry George & such newspapers as the Sidney [sic] Star & Telegraph appear to be. However the leading Adelaide newspapers treated this Henry George

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690367/view>]

May [1890]

in a sensible way on the whole. There is a man who writes dialogues in one of these papers & signs himself Diogenes who seems to be a very sensible man, as far as politics go. I will not say this as regards his religious views of which I know little. Well after talking by the fire for a time I rolled myself up in my blanket & went to sleep.

Friday 30<sup>th</sup>

Walked on to Laura a good sized village & railway terminus. People appear comfortable & prosperous. I must say that the weather at this season in South Australia is delightful when it does not rain. Fine clear days, fresh, but not too cool, beautiful sky & splendid sunsets & sunrises. Nothing hardly could be more

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690494/view>]

May [1890] (Gladstone-Georgetown)

pleasant for walking. After Laura the road kept close along the railway line (a narrow gauge) until Gladstone a small town where the railway meets the main line from Port Pirie to [left blank]

From Gladstone I followed the main road to Adelaide & camped out on a field before getting to Georgetown. Splendid moonlight.

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>

After a cool night continued my journey. After passing through Georgetown the country is rather dreary, the hills are barren with only a few trees along the crests, the farm houses are far apart, but a good lot of land was ploughed for wheat. Between Georgetown & Jacka a distance of [left blank] miles there is no village, only a store. The country is elevated & hilly.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690624/view>]

May-June [1890]

At last I descended to Jacka which is situated in a sort of valley on the Broughton River (mentioned above). There was not much water at this time in the river but a broad bed of pebbles & the high crumbling banks announced that at times heavy torrents descended through its bed. Some not inconsiderable amount of money had been spent in bridging it & bringing the road down to the bridge. Jacka is a small place where I bought some bread & a tin of jam & then camped out ½ mile beyond in the scrub which begins again after Jacka.



Sunday June 1<sup>st</sup> [1890]

The first thing was to throw some dry leaves & branches on the still glowing embers of last night's fire so as to

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690757/view>]

June [1890] Jacka

have a good blaze. What is the pleasure of life? The pleasure of life is living. I will explain what I mean. Fancy yourself a candle; when you are burning well & brightly you enjoy yourself, when in a suffocating atmosphere you flicker & grow dim. When exposed to drafts you flare up & then almost go out & then flare up again; the grease runs down & is wasted. Thus also in life. For instance a young man in a large town enjoys himself & lives fast for a time wastes his energy & money, then follows despondency, then comes a respite again, some times he gets very low, is as it were nearly blown out, sometimes he is blown out altogether or blows his brains out & there is an end, or

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561690884/view>]

June [1890]

the Almighty or his friends place him in a quiet atmosphere snuff him & put the whick [wick] straight & he will in time burn straight & steady again. The pleasures of civilization are not those that one really enjoys, they are generally only a momentary excitement of the nerves; but the gentleman who takes his morning ride, the savage who having gorged himself lies basking in the sun, they are enjoying themselves, the candle is burning nicely & brightly, they enjoy the act of living. These were the ideas that suggested themselves to me this quiet Sunday morning in the scrub by Jacka as I warmed myself by the fire & ate bread & jam. I remained for several hours, I

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691012/view>]

June [1890] Jacka

thought of Italy & many things & I enjoyed myself until aroused by the sound of voices & looking up saw 3 men with bundles approaching who came & sat down by the fire & put their pot on to boil. They were going the same way as I was but preferring to be alone I started off soon after their arrival following the telegraph line to Clare, the main Road going round a long way to the right. It was a very pleasant walk. The track ascended & ascended until a fair view was obtained of the surrounding country & to the west I could see the Hindmarsh Ranges which border Spencer's Gulf. Leaving Jacka I left the cultivated land behind me, & until near Clare it

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691142/view>]

South Australia

is all or nearly all pasture land, i.e. sheep stations. Passed Anama St[ation] & soon after came on

the main road again in the vicinity of Rochester. Along the main road I continued, on each side were sheep pastures where the sheep were quietly grazing. The country was now timbered but not densely, somewhat resembling an English park. I now began to look out for Bungaree Station which I intended to pass the night, & which I knew could not be far distant & by dusk I came in view of the building which appeared fine & extensive. I went first to the manager's home & he told me to go to the kitchen. I accordingly went & helped myself there eating & drinking as much as I could for I was very hungry. This is what I call real hospitality, but the table was covered with

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691272/view>]

June [1890] Bungaree Station (Clare)

pounds of boiled meat, bread, pudding sugar & cake & on the floor was a 3 or 4 gallon tin tea pot; and with all these things I was left alone. In the evening the cook showed me where to sleep which was a large room full of bunks one above the other. It was a splendid moonlight evening & I sat outside some time before going to sleep.

Monday June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Bungaree is a fine station. I do not know how much land belongs to it, but there is a fine house for the master with a nice garden, a church & extensive buildings besides, all well built in solid masonry. To possess an estate like this is a fine thing, say 50,000 acres, on which you can build your home & plant trees round it, plant an avenue if you like a mile or more in length, have a pretty drive up to the front of your house

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691406/view>]

South Australia

also a fine garden. Then you can have a school & a church of your own for yourself & your menials & when you look out of your window in the morning you can say all of this is mine, I am master of it all.

At 7 o'clock I had a good breakfast & then after being provided with plenty of bread & meat to carry away by the cook I started to go to Clare. It was a cold foggy morning but by the time I had got to Clare 8 miles distant, it had cleared up. Clare lies in a hollow surrounded by wooded hills & is a small town. It has in fact one real street full of shops, stores & public houses & appeared to me to look older than many Australian towns do. I had a glass of beer in one of the hotels & then walked on. The country was much more densely

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691530/view>]

populated than the other side of Clare, for I now passed through village upon village, & they all looked pretty & comfortable amongst wooded hills & gardens. When I got very hungry I entered a field where there was some water & ate what I had got along with me, then I went on to Auburn, situated on a small stream. Here one road goes to Saddleworth where there is the railway, but I continued straight on towards Rhymie & Tarlee. Before I got to Rhymie however it got dark & after having had some trouble in finding water I camped in a ruined hut without a roof but the night was fine.

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Soon got to Rhymie where I had a glass of beer & looking over some newspaper read an article which I cut out relating to a Mr G.J. Eden whose name I had already noticed

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691660/view>]

South Australia

at the Adelaide Post office some months before & had thought to myself what a confounded lot of common rascals there appear to be who call themselves Eden & was rather displeased, why I cannot say. But it now appears that this Eden was a gentleman after all so I was mistaken. Having bought a loaf of bread & a tin of jam I went & ate them in the bush where feeling very lazy I remained a long time; at last I started off again & walked till close to Tarlee where seeing an empty hut alone in a field I entered it and passed a pleasant night having a roof over my head this time.

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>

Upon waking up this morning I noticed there were a quantity of mice who inhabited the hut & they ran all about the place

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691797/view>]

June [1890] (Tarlee – Gawler)

and occasionally over me. As long as I kept quiet they were not at all shy. They would pop out of the cracks of the wall, and then walk out and run across the floor and after a time return into the wall again. I ate a small piece of bread and then started and crossed the line at Tarlee and continued on towards Gawler. I got very hungry before I got there which was not till nearly 5 o'clock and besides I met a man shortly before getting there who would come along with me. What a bother it sometimes is to get rid of a person who will come along with you and whom you don't want. At Gawler I bought some provisions of which I gave him part and left him talking to another man. I hurried on now towards Adelaide and enjoyed a most beautiful sunset, one side of the sky was blazing in most splendid colours gold, yellow, then

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561691921/view>]

orange, green purple & blue. The other side to the east was dark and gloomy, the sky black, whilst all objects appeared nevertheless most distinctly in their natural colours. To the north was Gawler and the houses and trees were clearly seen in that particular light which I cannot describe, the sun was down and yet it was all lighted up. It had been dark for some time and I was still walking and thinking of the last time I had crossed this country a few weeks ago on my way back from Morgan. But being tired I looked about for a place to camp and seeing a house in the moonlight I crept up to it and slept in a sort of room where there were some chaff husks & where the roof was off. Oh how pleasant it was to wake up towards morning and see the moon shining brightly on the white ruined walls, I felt quiet & happy and the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692052/view>]

June [1890] (Gawler - Adelaide)

remembrance of former day[s] affected my brain more forcibly & vividly than had been the case for a long time. Then the thought, that some of those that I then knew, were now no more on this world, caused me sorrow, far deeper sorrow than when I first received the news of their death[s]; it seemed that I grieved for them now for the first time.

Thursday [5 June]

I was up early this morning and passing through Salisbury arrived at Adelaide early in the afternoon. Here for a week I lived on very scanty fare, sometimes one 6d. meal a day and several nights I walked out of town and camped under a bush returning again in the morning and spending all day in the public library. On going to the Post Office I found a letter awaiting me from that very Mr G.J. Eden of whose appointment to the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692186/view>]

South Australia

Hindmarsh Library I had read in the paper at Rhymie & who it appears had also noticed my name, these were the contents (letter which I still keep). I wrote to him before leaving Adelaide telling him that I would be very happy to meet him but putting it off until I should return to Adelaide some other time. I had intended to walk all the way to Melbourne but as I had to wait longer than I expected for a check [cheque] I was only able to walk part of the way. During the time I was in Adelaide I was, as mentioned above, very hard up & besides I could not sleep out of doors as it was too cold & wet, one would therefore suppose that I was not very likely to commit any excesses during this time. Such was the case nevertheless. Foolish are those parents who suppose that by withholding any money

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692317/view>]

June [1890] (Adelaide)

from their children they keep them out of mischief. I had just realised a shilling or two by pawning some things & was strolling down Hindley St. one morning intending to spend the day at the library when I saw in a side lane the figure of a man I had seen before. He was a Belgian sailor, and a ruffian & thief and a drunkard into the bargain. I had met him at Port Pirie where he had no money & a broken head and where he was endeavouring to squeeze a few shillings out of the Salvation army by pretending to be a penitent sinner wishing to reform; And often was I amused to see his manoeuvres; he would sit on a form in their chapel or barracks as they call it, for an hour or more without moving, only occasionally rolling his eyes, and with an expression

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692445/view>]

on his face which he no doubt intended to be a penitent one. Some women would then come up to him & try and persuade him to be saved as they call it and he would pretend to be much affected. Well, on seeing him here I hesitated wether [sic] I would speak to him or not but he noticed me and

came up & asked me to come along with him. Come, I will show you where you can get a pint of beer for 2d." he said and off we went. The place we entered was crowded with men, all more or less in rags and several drunk. We had two pints each for which he paid & then he went to a place where he begged some old clothes which he went and sold immediately and spent the money in drink. After that I went to an Italian and had some wine and then went back to

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692579/view>]

June [1890] (Mount Barker to the Murray)

the twopenny shop and had some more beer & the mixture did not do me good.

At last I was able to start for Melbourne, part of my things I sent by rail and only took what was necessary along with me. I was glad to be away and was soon walking up the hills behind Glen Osmond and at the top looked back for the last time on the plains & bay & the town below me. The first night I stopped at Mt Barker in the same hotel I had stopped at before when trading with pictures. I then continued towards the Murray and arrived in Murray Bridge in the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. There are several houses and a store or two & two hotels (one a temperance hotel). Here I remained a whole day not starting until the afternoon of the day after I arrived. I was in a bad humour some-

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692702/view>]

South Australia

how or other. Towards evening I descended towards the river to camp. It was a beautiful spot, the grass was green & the ground rose from the river forming a sort of amphitheatre covered here & there with trees & shrubs of different sizes like an English nobleman's park, in front there was a large sheet of water stretching away to the right and left and partially covered with reeds & inhabited by various aquatic birds. But it was the silence and solitude that reigned around, that affected and pleased me most. I made a fire and cooked some victuals and slept under a large tree not starting until late on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> [June] morning.

After a time I arrived at Talem [Tailem] Bend and from here I followed the line until I got to Cooks Plains by which time it was

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692835/view>]

June [1890]

dark and I was glad to find shelter in a farm house as the night was wet.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> [June]

Having bought some provisions I started again along the line. There are several farms about here, but they are the last until you get on the other side of what is called the desert, which in fact is not a desert but a sandy country covered with scrub, in some parts only a few feet high, at others far higher than a man. Walking through this country has a certain charm if the weather be not too hot. In this season the weather is very pleasant, the scrub looks green & fresh and extends as far as you

can see on all sides, probably for hundreds of miles. Every 7 or 8 miles there are a couple of dwellings inhabited by men who work on the line and keep everything in order. You also very frequently meet them inspecting their

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561692967>]

South Australia

track, mending the line and running along on their tricycles. [small drawing] Monday night I camped in a sort of old arbour made of boughs by the side of the line and read Vanity Fair by the light of the fire.

The next day I only did about 16 miles and camped in one of the sheds where tools etc. are kept by the workmen. As I wished to be at Melbourne by the end of the month I determined now to take the train at least part of the way.

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> [June] I arrived at the station at Coonalpin [Coonalpyn] a little after midday and here I took a ticket for Ballarat. The train soon carried me through the desert, where in no part is entirely destitute of vegetation. It was night before we got to Bordertown. Here the country is again inhabited by farmers etc. At

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693096/view>]

June [1890] Victoria

Serviceton, the first station in Victoria the train stopped. I might have gone on with the express, but I preferred travelling by daylight so I waited in the waiting room all night. I was very much plagued by toothache. On drinking cold water it abated for a few minutes and then returned again. The night was very cold. Every 5 or 7 minutes I went out and filled my mouth with cold water then returned into the waiting room where there was a roaring fire, after a few minutes the toothache would return with great violence, I would then go out again, and repeat the same process over & over again. Thus a part of the night passed away, towards morning the pain left me and at 7 o'clock on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> [June] morning the train started. Large portions of the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693224/view>]

country round about were flooded and in many places the trees appeared to be growing out of a lake. It strikes me at once how much more densely Victoria is populated than South Australia. We passed through several good sized places at one of which I bought a bottle of wine, some sausages and biscuits. I saw the Grampians in the distance they look nice mountains and are about 2600 feet high. Close to Ararat we passed through the Great Western vineyards which I should think are the largest vineyards in Australia. It was late when I arrived at Ballarat which appears to be a very important busy town, bigger than Sandhurst [Bendigo] and there appeared to be more life & traffic here than at Adelaide. I stopped at a place called Cohen's

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693354/view>]

June [1890]

Hotel where I got a bed for a shilling & very good meals for 6d. far better than you get at Adelaide for the same price.

Friday 27 [June] afternoon.

I left Ballarat on foot for Melbourne, a distance of about 75 miles. Shortly before Bungaree came up with an Irishman and then we camped together in an old hut where there were two other poor devils.

Saturday 28 [June]

Walked towards Ballen [Ballan] taking the directest route. I ought not to have come to Bungaree at all but to have kept to the main road. The weather was cold and foggy. Country heavily timbered. I intended to pass the night at Ingliston station. It was dark when I got there and the cook told me they were not allowed to keep any travellers for the night now, but seeing that I

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693485/view>]

June [1890]

could not go anywhere else at this time of night he gave me some bread and meat and I crept into the wool shed and started the next morning (Sunday 29) early. Passed through rather pretty country. The new line through here has just been opened and the trains go now direct from Melbourne to Ballarat, instead of round by Geelong as they used to. It must have been rather difficult to build the line through here. The country was all considerably elevated until now, but just before Bacchus' Marsh the road descended abruptly, leaving the line to the right. Bacchus Marsh is a good sized place, but I did not enter the town but kept to the right along the railway which after a few miles I also left to the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693615/view>]

June-July [1890]

left and kept on until I arrived at Werribee creek several miles beyond which I camped in an old stone hut. Here I had to content myself with a supper of a few spoonfuls of oatmeal & a little cheese and I did not get anything until 2 o'clock next afternoon when I arrived at Footscray from whence I took the train to Melbourne.

Now I had again to live for about a fortnight on little more than a shilling & 6d. a day. However I managed it. I went to what is called the model lodging house where I got a bed for 6d. and then with 3 6d. meals and latterly only two I managed pretty well. A nice lot of lazy rascals I met in this model lodging house, I can tell you. It is worth while saying a word about this establishment. There are two I

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693742/view>]

July [1890]

believe at Melbourne and belong to a company. The one I stopped at was a large brick building in Little Bourke St. 4 stories high, in the interior were two yards. One part of the building was reserved for the better sort of people who payed [sic] a shilling a night or who hired rooms by the week. The cheapest was 5/- for a single-bed room. The other side of the building was for the common rabble, to which I belonged for the time being. Here you could have beds for 9d. or 6d. a night. The dormitories were large and at this season (winter) all the beds were occupied. Adjoining the dormitories there was a lavatory and closets on each floor, also one on the ground floor accessible all day. Besides that there was a reading room with daily newspapers & some books heated by an iron stove and a large kitchen with a large

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561693872/view>]

Melbourne

open double chimney where anybody could make a fire & cook their meals & 3 times a day was crowded with men frying steaks or sausages & boiling water for tea. I leave it to be imagined however that in a place of this description one is liable to come into contact with a certain little creature whose first acquaintance I made in the French grammar, an exception to some rule, many years ago. Here I was forced to remain inactive until the 15<sup>th</sup> when the arrival of a cheque relieved me out of durance vile, very vile indeed. I then changed my quarters to an Italian in Lonsdale St. the same place I had stopped at when I first came to the colony & whom I still owed a few shillings which I paid him. Here I remained until the beginning of August, not exactly

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694007/view>]

August [1890]

leading the life of a saint but I may yet say that excesses begin to occur more rarely with me now than once, I see the folly of the thing. One learns in time that virtue is a pleasant thing and vice is a disagreeable one. Having nothing better to do I determined to make an excursion to Tasmania as the fare was only 10/-.

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> I took a ticket for Launceston at the office of the Tasmanian Steam Navigation Co. and at 5 o'clock the 'Flinders' steamed down the Yarra and soon after we had tea. We had a pleasant passage on the whole, lots of half drunken people singing and making a noise, the night was rather cold but the weather was fine.

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> [August]

Found it rather cold on deck. The first land I saw was on the starboard bow and ahead, what appeared to be islands, rocky and broken. At

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694135/view>]

August [1890] Tasmania

about 1 o'clock in the afternoon we made the heads and entered the mouth of the Tamar a fine stream, or rather an arm of the sea up which the tide flows as far as Launceston about 4 [40] miles inland. The passage up the river is interesting, now you are in broad expanses of water, then again



the shores approach closer together. The country is hilly and thickly timbered, small portions being cleared in the neighbourhood of farm houses. On one of these a woman was ploughing all alone with several horses. Occasionally the snowy tops of some inland mountains appear in the distance. A few miles below Launceston we got stuck, the tide being now down and had to wait a couple of hours for it to come up again when we got off and cautiously steamed up to the town it being now quite

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694269/view>]

August [1890]

dark. The boat was moored alongside the warf [sic] and I went ashore and walked into the town and having deposited my bundle in an hotel I strolled about the town in the dark for some time before going to bed.

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> [August]

Launceston is prettily situated & very much scattered. In the public garden there is a heavy gun with the doubleheaded Russian eagle on it, it was probably taken in the siege of Sevastapol [sic], but it seemed strange to encounter this trophy in such a quiet remote little place. I went to the public reading room or Mechanics Institute as it is called where there is a good sized library besides papers and a great variety of the latest English magazines & journals. Thursday passed in the same way walking about town and reading in the reading room.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694392/view>]

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> [August]

Launceston – Epping forest

Left Launceston about 10 o'clock in order to walk to Hobart. There is a good high road all the way, built by convicts in the earlier days. The road appears now rather neglected and probably little has been spent repairing it since the railway was built. The road ascends gradually nearly all the way until the highest point is reached. A few miles beyond Launceston I came onto a stretch of comparatively level country with mountains in the distance and passed through a village called Perth. It appeared to me that about here very little land was under cultivation, it being mostly pasturage with more or less bush. At 28 miles from Launceston I stopped at a place called Epping Forest.

Saturday 16 [August]

After walking several miles came to a little village called Cleveland. Having had as yet nothing to eat I determined

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694523/view>]

August [1890]

to get something here, but I passed through nearly all the village without seeing an Hotel. Just

before getting to the last house which turned out to be the Inn I was met by two old men, half drunk and one told me to come along with him and have a drink. As I could not get rid of the fellows I had to put up with them and we entered an old hut close to the inn where one gave me a drink of tea and some bread. Shortly after the other came in with a quart bottle of gin which we all partook out of a tin mug. The two men were dilapidated specimens of humanity and what you would term vagabonds or vagrants in Europe and I began to think liquor was much cheaper in Tasmania than Australia, but afterwards it turned out that he had paid 8/- for the bottle, so you can see that high prices & heavy duties on spirits will not prevent a drunkard from

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694658/view>]

having what he wants. Had the stuff cost £1 a bottle, men of this stamp would have bought it just the same as if it only cost 1/- as it does on the continent of Europe. I only stopped a short time and before I left the bottle was more than half finished. A deaf and dumb lad came in and watched us. One old fellow was sitting on the floor the other standing with the bottle and tin in his hand and both were slobbering and trying to sing in a most ridiculous manner and looking more like a couple of lunatics than anything else, whilst the dumb fellow was making signs to show us that too much drink makes one ill by making a piteous face, pretending to be sick & sleepy & so on. Having witnessed this sad comedy long enough I started again and shortly after 12 arrived at Campbelltown where I had dinner. I had come 14 miles this morning and wished to do 16 more before night. It must have been 5 when I arrived at Ross a good sized village on the [Macquarie River]

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694787>]

August [1890]

which was at this time much swollen by the rain so that part of the road was flooded. The river is spanned by a good stone bridge on which was engraved 'Captain Turner 50<sup>th</sup> or Queen's Own Regt. Superintendent' and I must say that he and his convicts managed to erect a nicer looking bridge than any built by the Government in Victoria or South Australia that I have seen as yet. From here I had still 9 miles to go to Tunbridge and in less than an hour the sun would be down so I hurried on as fast as possible. A little beyond Ross I passed a fine brick building which is a college and I consider the situation a very good one. Eventually I arrived at Tunbridge and had to cross a small river called the Blackman and for some time I stood on the bridge looking down at the black & gurgling waters whilst

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561694918/view>]

from a short distance there gleamed the lights of a few houses. Some people might have felt glad and happy to be able now to join in company with other men & women and so pass the evening pleasantly, but I did not and would have been happier here in the dusk on the bridge but hunger and the want of shelter forced me to enter an hotel. The hotels in Tasmania are much nicer than they are on the continent of Australia where one would think the chief object of an hotel was to supply people with drink which ought not to be the case, their chief object ought to be to afford accommodation to strangers. I hate those polished up bars like chemists shops where people stand and swallow their drink like medicine and these sort of institutions must promote drunkenness. Here

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695042/view>]

August [1890]

in Tasmania there is generally one or even two rooms with a good fire & sofa & chairs into which the public enter and where they are supplied with anything they want. Altogether I liked the look of the public houses in Tasmania much better than in the rest of Australia.

Sunday 17 [August]

Tunbridge is a very little place with very few houses a church & two public houses. I started today after dinner at about 2 o'clock & walked on towards some hills through which it was evident I should have to pass. After a few miles the road began to rise up into what I believe is called the pass, but there was no considerable ascent to be made but the road rose gradually into the hills, in fact it has been rising ever since I left Launceston.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695172>]

I passed an Inn called the Halfway House and here crossed the railway and after a little while entered a sort of narrow valley or gorge the sides of which were once thickly wooded but now a part had been ringed & stood stretching their dead bare limbs toward the sky. The soil at the bottom in some parts was quite black. I passed a nice looking house built of stone with a low stone wall round it & surrounded by European trees whose leaves lay scattered on the ground. Australian trees retain their verdure all the year round & are if anything more green than ever in winter. It was quite dark when I got to Oatlands which is a small town situated a considerable height above the sea level. Here I slept in a hotel.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695302/view>]

August [1890] Tasmania

Monday 18<sup>th</sup>

Started rather late. It is about 20 miles to the next hotel so I bought some biscuits & dates. To the right of me I saw a large valley with a flat topped hill some distance away, all thickly covered with forest. The road turned about a good deal winding up & down the hills. Then there was a considerable ascent winding round the top of a sort of picturesque [hill? or Harlpufel?] as the Germans call it passing close to a large farm house in a big ploughed field the view changed the road descending down the other side for a good way where there was also a fine country house & some cultivated land surrounded by rabbit proof fences & beyond could be seen large hills or mountains everywhere covered by dark forests. It appeared that the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695435/view>]

country before me was more rugged than that through which I had passed. From this point it was nearly all down hill more or less until I got to Bridgewater on the Derwent, from there it is level to Hobart town. I passed an Inn called Melton Mowbray where a road & telegraph branches off to the west & at about 4 in the afternoon I arrived at Greenponds where I remained for an hour. This village is situated in a valley & beyond it the road rises again for some distance and then descends

towards Brighton. There is a railway going up a little further than Melton Mowbray but not quite finished as yet. About 5 miles further down than Green Ponds there is an Hotel in which I stopped.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> [August]

This day I intended to get to Hobart town. After walking a few miles I came up with a black haired

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695561/view>]

brown eyed & skinned boy carrying a box, he was a Syrian hawker. I found him rather an intelligent sort of fellow. He had a notebook full of notes in arabic and told me he had a couple of sisters at home & some brothers in Australia. The country round about here is pretty well cultivated and settled. Brighton is a small village on the Jordan river over which there is a good bridge. Before entering Brighton I stopped for a few moments on an elevation over which the road passed. Here was situated a pretty chapel built of white stone & one could see in various directions up different valleys. It was a pretty spot. After a good walk I got to Bridgewater where I was surprised to see what appeared to be a goodsized lake surrounded by wooded mountains &

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695692/view>]

crossed by a causeway & dam of considerable length both for railways & carriages. This is the river Derwent which forms a sort of estuary influenced by the tides, somewhat like the Tamar. The road follows its banks more or less all the way to Hobart 12 miles from here and it is a very pretty walk the river looking like a pretty lake with bays & (sometimes small islands) inlets & so on. At some parts it is broad at others narrow. Just before getting to Hobart it gets quite narrow & then opens out larger than ever & you can look out to sea. Lots of nice houses & some gardens are situated on its banks. Before getting to Hobart I passed through New Town where there are lots of comfortable-looking cottages and a nice church. It appears to me that the Tasmanians have had

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695825/view>]

more taste in laying out their buildings etc. than the other Australians, I have seen country houses here which look much nicer than many I have seen in Australia although evidently smaller & less costly. Mount Wellington now appeared to view, it is not a peak but a sort of broad-topped mountain covered mostly with forests excepting the top which appears stony & bare. On arriving at the top of a hill one looks down on Hobart with the Harbour & ships forming altogether a very pretty picture. Hobart is a very nice town, rather quiet but older looking & more like an English town than most Australian towns. The buildings are not very high the streets are mostly straight. Down by the harbour are lots of stone storehouses & some old fashioned looking inns. I went to a boarding-

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561695954/view>]

Hobart

house close to the wharf and had some tea. The place was full of working men sitting round a good fire in the sitting-room. In the night I heard an awful noise. In the next bed to me was an old fellow roaring & screaming like a mad man until he was taken down stairs. He was not awake and did not

know himself that he was making a noise & could not help it. It was the effect of drink.

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> was a splendid day, the sun was shining nicely & I went down to the wharf & looked at the bay which was bright & sparkling & blue, the opposite shores were green & there appeared the houses of Bellerive & beyond the wooded hills, several steamers & sailing-boats were cruising on the water, some close by, others a long way off. Then I went up into

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696087/view>]

August [1890]

the public gardens which are a little above the wharves situated between the Post Office & the public Library, two fine stone buildings. In the midst of this garden which is small and covered with trees & different kinds of shrubs & flowers there is a small basin of water in the midst of which arises a stony island covered with creepers & plants and bearing a pedestal surmounted by a statue. On the water three black swans were lazily swimming about. The sun was very pleasant at this season & I stretched myself out on a seat in its rays. A young cat came & perched on my shoulder & remained there purring, and so I remained for a time with my eyes closed & half asleep, then a change seemed to take place & on looking again it

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696213/view>]

Hobart

seemed as though we were in an atmosphere of liquid blue through which loomed the statue, in which the palms on the island waved like aquatic plants, & the birds floated silently through it. Further beyond were the silver waters of the bay & then the blue mountains. I remained for a long time thus; watching the black swans which seemed to be gliding through the blue air whilst the kitten lazily purred in my ear. How sweet it is to do nothing. Then the statue before me seemed to grow distincter & distincter the blue haze around thinner & thinner, it assumed the form of a large man with compressed lips & frowning brow whose features expressed great energy & action, and below the pedestal I read these words: This statue of

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696347/view>]

August [1890] Tasmania

the great navigator Rear Admiral Sir John Franklin K.C.H., K.R., D.C.L., F.R.S. who lost his life accomplishing the discovery of the north west passage. Erected by the colonists of Tasmania in affectionate remembrance of their former Governor. Born 16 April 1786 Died 11 June 1847.

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> and all the rest of the week I remained in Hobart & the more I saw of the place the more I was pleased. I visited the library & museum & one morning started after breakfast for Mount Wellington. I shall always remember that day with pleasure for the beautiful scenes I beheld were far beyond what I had expected. For a time I followed a good road which rose pretty gradually among the hills south of the town

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696472/view>]

## Mt Wellington

then seeing a footpath leading off to the right & guessing it led up to the mountain I followed it. This path was cut through the splendid forest of fine trees, some of enormous size & at places the undergrowth so thick that it would have been almost impossible to traverse it for only a short distance without cutting a path or rather a tunnel through it. I was astonished to find a good path & sign posts all the way to the summit of the mountain the making of which must have cost much labour & money & one feels at once well disposed towards a government that undertakes & executes works of this kind. Now the path descended again into a dark sort of gorge where there was a small stream. The undergrowth

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696607/view>]

was astonishingly thick consisting partly of fern trees. Indeed it is difficult to describe the beauty of this forest & it were worthwhile travelling a long way to see it. Coming to where the path separated I took the one to the right & ascended for a considerable way. It soon got lighter in the forest and suddenly, for I had seen nothing but green trees since I had left the road, suddenly in a frame of dark green I beheld the most beautiful little miniature painting imaginable, the colours were so soft & clear. It was a little landscape which appeared in a gap of the now dense forest just visible through the branches & leaves representing a small portion of the blue & distant

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696730/view>]

bay with an island or two & the distant hills arising out of the sea surmounted by a little blue sky with some white clouds. Soon I beheld glimpses of greater extent & then getting clear of the forest the whole beautiful landscape appeared before me at my feet and although little more than half way up the mountain the view was already remarkably fine. I now arrived at the Springs where there is a house & where refreshments can be obtained. You now leave the real forest behind you, above there are still trees but not big ones, neither are they very dense. Soon patches of snow appeared on the path & after passing the ruins of an old ice house which is just below what is called the 'plowed fields' the mountain was almost covered with

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696869/view>]

snow over which I had to walk. You have to walk for a considerable distance along the crest of the mountain which is comparatively level, before the cairn is reached. The cairn is situated on the highest part of Mt Wellington & walking over the snow & rocks to reach it I was reminded by the surroundings of former days & of other mountains in a country now very distant. The view from the summit is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. The mountain it is true is only about 4000 ft. high but it must be remembered that it rises directly out of the sea whose blue waters glitter far below you. The one drawback is that close by to the west there is another broad mountain appearing a little higher than Mt Wellington, also lots of other mountains far to the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561696990/view>]

westward are considerably higher. But never in the world have I seen such a beautiful view of the sea with bays inlets islands & peninsulars innumerable, the water winds in and about the coast in a

most remarkable manner, what appears perhaps at first as an island may be a peninsular, what as a lake an arm of the sea. To understand this just look at a map of this coast, and from here all appears like a most beautiful relief map, towns villages roads woods & fields all clear & distinct. All the coast is more or less mountainous, there being little flat country. Some large peninsulars are only connected by very narrow strips of land. There was a strong wind blowing & it was rather cold, nevertheless I remained on the summit for a considerable time. I will not attempt to describe the view

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697125/view>]

which is one of the most remarkable I have ever seen. There is a great contrast between the view to the S & E and that to the North & the west. Looking in the former direction you see Hobart the harbour & ships, other towns, villages & bays & islands, the river Derwent also green meadows & considerable extents of cultivated land. Looking to the northwest & west what a contrast! A dark mountainous country before you, rugged & wild, the sombre valleys thickly timbered & the barren mountain tops covered with snow. In the far distance you can distinguish characteristic mountain ranges & peaks more elevated than the one on which you stand. Having begun the descent I soon arrived at the 'springs' & from here followed a very pretty path

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697255/view>]

Mt Wellington

which runs horizontally along the mountain side towards the south through the thick timber having on one side a clear mountain stream of water. The path which is a very good one & quite level leads to the waterfalls, but these being still several miles distant I did not go to them but returned and descended [to] the ferntree Inn, passing through, on my way down, the most magnificent & dense forest the undergrowth consisting partly of beautiful fern-trees. At the ferntrees inn you have a good carriage road which I followed on for a short distance towards Hobart and then turned to the right following the aqueduct which conveys water to the reservoir. It is a fine aqueduct well & solidly made & the splendid new reservoir into which

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697381/view>]

August [1890] Hobart

the water flows is a very pretty sight hidden away as it is in the hills. All the works are constructed in good material & in the most solid manner. In the middle of the reservoir is a fountain. I was back in Hobart before dark, very hungry but having spent a very pleasant day.

[Small sketch of the reservoir]

It was just a short time now that the great shipping strike had commenced in Australia. The trade unions having become disgustingly conceited & arrogant & led by three charlatans who were at their head (Hancock, Trenwith & Murphy by name) thought they could do as they liked & treat the owners as they pleased. Being opposed they therefore entered blindly upon a great strike against all the principles of

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697515/view>]

## Beginning of Great Australian strike

right & sense, the working men being foolish enough to believe all their leaders assured them. A more disgusting mean & ridiculous part than that played by the 3 above mentioned mountebanks all through the strike is scarcely imaginable. Tasmania as an island depends wholly on the shipping for a great many things. Already the price of meat & other articles had risen considerably & the passenger fares to the continent had in some cases been doubled whilst it was feared that all steamer[s] running between here & Melbourne would soon be laid up. I had but little money left & fearing to be blocked in the island & not to be able to get away I took the first opportunity to return to Melbourne which presented itself. Having inquired at the shipping offices I took a ticket for Melbourne by the 'Monowai' of the Union S.S. Co. of New Zealand for 30/- and on

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697646/view>]

August [1890]

Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> at about 10 o'clock we steamed out of the harbour.

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>

The Monowai is a splendid boat, quite new. She was built on the Clyde & the steerage accommodation was excellent, better than 1<sup>st</sup> cabin on some other boats. When I went on deck in the morning we were steaming along the East coast of Tasmania the weather being fine & the sea smooth. The coast was mostly hilly & covered with woods & on the whole it was a wild looking country. We were all the time a good way off so that one could not see very much and I saw but few traces of man although this coast is partly inhabited. In the afternoon we passed the light house on Swan island a small island close to the NE corner of

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697771/view>]

## Flinders island

Tasmania. The Flinders group of islands were now in view which interested me considerably; I could not distinguish any signs of inhabitants on them although I believe there are some. They are mostly mountainous & appear rather barren. Flinders island is the biggest and is about 40 miles long & 15' wide. These islands were at first inhabited when Tasmania was first colonized, by sealers who were mostly run away sailor[s] and a wild rough set as may be imagined. They have always interested me although I know so little about them. They appear to have been Europeans who had returned to a certain degree to savage life. They stole women from the blacks or got them by other means & by them had a good many children whose descendants I believe still exist to this day and if I am not mistaken are still on the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561697904/view>]

islands. These sealers, the original ones, were not only on these islands but I believe spread over to the then unknown coast of Victoria. I have heard of them being in Kangaroo Island in S. Australia & I believe they also inhabited some islands farther west. They lived by catching seals which were



then plentiful & also on the various sea birds, chiefly mutton birds & their eggs.

When the last remnant of the aboriginal Tasmanians were captured the government decided to send them to Flinders island & keep them there. This was done, a settlement formed & huts erected. An old sergeant was at the head of this small colony which existed for some time. But the poor aboriginals did not prosper. In the distance

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698035/view>]

they beheld the blue coast of Tasmania with its mountains & woods & longed to reach it again but could not. Many of them therefore died of the strange malady of nostalgia or homesickness so that but few were left. What would the English people say and think if a nation so far ahead of them in civilization knowledge & science as they were ahead of the Tasmanians; and such a race is imaginable although it does not exist on this earth; if such a race were to treat them as these blacks were treated. It is to be supposed that but a little advance in civilization were necessary to make such treatment impossible & I believe that since then this advance has been made by the English nation. Close to Flinders I. is Goose island a very small island on which there is a Light House. We passed

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698168/view>]

August [1890]

within full view of these islands the sea being calm as a small pond & the weather splendid. After tea I witnessed a splendid sunset, the colours were beautiful & as the bright colours deepened into grey the light on distant Goose island shone out getting brighter & brighter as the surrounding grew darker & darker.

*[At this point Eden stopped using a pencil and the rest of the entries in the volume are written in ink. From internal evidence, including the lack of dates after 7 September 1890, it seems probable that this part of the diary was written retrospectively.]*

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup>

This morning we passed the heads & then steamed up to Williamstown alongside a steamer of the anchor Line. Here some cargo was taken out & then we steamed to Sandridge [Port Melbourne] where the vessel remained for some time before proceeding to Melbourne. Accordingly I went ashore & took the cable-tram to Melbourne & went and stopped at the German Hotel in Little Lonsdale Street. The strike was now beginning to look serious. The crews were being called out of their

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698290/view>]

ships by the leaders of the trade unions. The gas-stokers had been called out because some of the coal out of which they were to make gas had been handled by non-union lumpers. People were therefore afraid that the town would be in darkness at night-time and therefore be to a certain extent

at the mercy of the criminal classes who are I have heard rather numerous in these colonies. It was feared that these [?] would seize the opportunity to commit crimes & rob & even plunder shops or houses. Consequently the government very wisely sent for troops & police from the country. These reinforcements consisted [of] cavalry & infantry. There was a detachment of the permanent Victorian artillery, which is garrison artillery and very much like the English. The infantry & cavalry were I believe a sort of militia who are paid

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698429/view>]

& well paid too by the government as long as they are on service. They would no doubt make good soldiers if sufficiently drilled as most Australian country bred men ought to, accustomed as they are to exercise, camping out, walking & riding & exposure to the weather. I fancy some fine material could be found in these colonies, especially for service in hot countries & for mounted infantry. If taken young they might be subjected to a more severe discipline than could be the case with the older colonists. The uniform of the militia, volunteers & mounted rifles is usually a sort of brownish drab with felt hats, serviceable looking on the whole. Besides these forces there was a considerable body of mounted police drawn from the country [to] protect the metropolis. They were a fine body of men & well mounted.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698550/view>]

They wore jackets of the same cloth as the ordinary police & similar black leather helmets, had yellow corderoi [sic] breeches & boots up the calf like hussar boots with spurs trapped on. They were armed with swords & revolvers but seldom wore the former. They used to parade the streets in couples & prevent people from forming crowds.

The gas-strikers & firemen having all struck work the company was offering £1 a day for competent gas-stokers & 10 shilling for anybody who would go & work at the gas-works besides finding [?] them in everything. I determined to try it & did so for two reasons. First because I wanted the trade unions to lose & to finish the strike, and because I consider the capitalists were in the right, and secondly because I wanted the money which I thus could earn, besides the amusement and novelty of the work.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698687/view>]

August [1890]

I agreed with a long-legged German, who, when reproved for working at the gasworks by some trade union idiots, said [German phrase] and twirled his moustache. But the difficulty was to get to work. The placards were up offering the wages, but when I went to the gas company's office in Little Flinders Street I found the street in front quite crowded with men whilst innumerable police were walking about. The entry was blocked by these men mostly unionists & their sympathisers. I thought it therefore prudent to remain outside & pretend to be one of them. The police were of no help at all for they would not help you to get inside. I believe they were rather afraid or glad to be left alone. This was wrong of them, they ought to have exerted themselves to & encouraged people to engage themselves at

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698818/view>]

the office so as to avoid the town being left in darkness at night. I expect also they were afraid of rendering themselves unpopular. A bad sign for a police force to be thus.

Saturday 30

Everything was much the same as yesterday. Gas companies office surrounded by a crowd of unionist [sic] many of the gas-stokers getting paid. Town patrolled by police. A proclamation issued by the governor recommending the people to be quiet & orderly & to assist the police. A cab full of free labourers (as all non-union men are called) going to work at the gas-factories were upset by unionists & some of the men ill-treated. The labour leaders are boasting what they will do, calling out the wharf labourers & stevedores & all the union crews of the ships as they come in, say they will stop all manufacture & trade in the colonies and force

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561698949/view>]

the capitalist to surrender to their terms in a very short time. Miners have been called out at Newcastle N.S.W. where the coal mines are, so that there will soon be no coal available. Men are afraid to go and work against the unionists on account of ill treatment. Strolled down to the gas works in the evening, they are all surrounded by union men and guarded by police. One fellow came up to me and said, 'You are not thinking of going in there I hope'. I answered that that was not what I had come down for, in fact I had only gone there to see what things looked like. Then he began a long rigmarole about the folly of working against the unions using their favourite saying: you are only cutting your own throat. I only said that everybody had their own opinion and tried their best to gain their object

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699072/view>]

Melbourne. Great Strike

& succeed in their undertakings. That was what he was doing, I was doing the same also. I did not say that our objects & opinions were opposed to one another though. I must say this: that this man was very civil. He offered me money asking if I was hard up. Probably he wanted me to join the union. I told him I had plenty of money & walked home again.

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>

There was a mass meeting of unionists & their friends but all sorts of people were present, the biggest meeting ever assembled in the southern Hemisphere as one of [the] orators said. Various men were standing on temporary stages and speechifying [sic], talking a lot of foolish rot calculated only to produce momentary applause of the vulgar. The only man who talked more sensibly was a certain Mr Champion, who had only just arrived from England. I have heard that he was once in the Royal Regiment of Artillery.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699206/view>]

Although I did not at all agree with what he said I must yet admit that his utterances were more rational & prudent than those of any other speaker on the ground. He warned the unions against striking & told them that if they did they would lose. Although the people on the ground listened to him & applauded him continually his advice did not deter the unions from continuing their aggressive conduct & when later the whole strike collapsed their leaders tried to put the blame on Champion although their own arrogance & folly were the real causes. Whilst standing in this thick crowd I was suddenly seized hold of by a vehement gesticulating individual who grinned at me & shook my hands & began talking away in French like a steam engine. At first I did not recognise the man but I soon remembered who he was. It was the French man whom I had met at Adelaide when I first

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699334/view>]

arrived there & who had left alone with a small blanket to cross the desert to Victoria. Although a man debauched by wine & without any social backbone I liked him on account of his energy & the talent he had of always falling on his feet. He was also a rather amusing liar. Besides he would undertake anything & was sure to agree with any proposals I might make. Whether it was to take part in a good dinner with plenty of wine, to go out into the country harvesting, or a plan to go to Timbuctoo & become prime minister he would join in with enthusiasm & without hesitation, & although there was a tremendous lot of talk & jabber with him nevertheless there was a good deal of action also & if the undertaking was at all practicable he would carry it out or go far in doing so. If not after talking about castles in the air for a time some new undertaking would attract his attention & forgetting all about the old one

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699463/view>]

would occupy himself solely with the new scheme. He had the gift of the gab & forced people to listen to his views & opinions & somehow or other he was thought a good deal of by his new acquaintances & made friends as quickly as mushrooms spring up. It is a funny thing that the vulgar will generally listen to believe in a bold charlatan far easier than in a serious man who speaks the truth.

We agreed to remain together & see what could be done on the morrow. I had already determined to help the capitalists as I have an instinctive hatred of trade unions & he was as usual hovering about like a vulture ready to swoop down on anything that would afford him a feast i.e. fill his empty pockets with money. I proposed to him to go to the gas-works where 10/- a day & all free was offered for anybody who would go as fire-man or stoker.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699594/view>]

September [1890]

We agreed to meet on the morrow & see what was to be done.

Monday September 1<sup>st</sup>

Having met the French man at the appointed place we went to the Gas Company's office in Little Flinders St to reconnoitre. The Frenchman was rather timid & feared getting ill treated whilst we both had our misgivings as to whether we should be able to do the work if we once got into the factory, as neither of us had ever done any stoking or firing before & it was well known to be very hard & hot work. We gradually edged our way into the office where there were a lot of other men having the same intentions as us. As there were many weak & dissipated looking men amongst them we gained courage for what they could do we were sure we could. Accordingly we went up to a desk, stated our intention & were at once supplied with tickets & told to go & present ourselves at the gasworks on the banks of the Yarra with

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699721/view>]

as little delay as possible. My companion went home & took a small bundle of thing[s] & having had a glass of beer or two we cautiously descended the Yarra along the wharves &, arriving at the Gasworks where there were a good many people & police, we quietly popped into the gates showing our tickets in doing so. The whole works are surrounded by walls, some high others low, the latter being guarded by constables, who also patrolled all round the outside in numbers. Inside were a considerable number of men of all descriptions – strong hard working men, clerks, young men of good family, drunkards & loafers who never worked if they could help it & only came to [blank] Frenchmen, Canadians, Greeks, Italians, Germans, Austrians, Swiss, Arabs & run-away sailors of various nationalities. When once within the works you had to remain there. A large provisional

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699855/view>]

kitchen was erected in the yard where food was cooked for all the men & as soon as one batch was finished, another entered. This went on day & night. In the workshops & in every available shelter were straw mattresses & blankets for the men to sleep on. He who could procure them however was lucky for many had to sleep without. Others again had more than they wanted & those who left their bedding when they went to work often found it gone on returning. Inside the yard was an office in front of which all new-comers were told to stand in line. After a time a foreman or boss came & selected a number from us who were to work together in a gang & away they went to start at once. The Frenchman was amongst them & soon I saw him hard at work & perspiring copiously. The West Melbourne gas works are large & extensive. There are several sheds in the middle of which are the retorts.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561699981/view>]

[Small drawing of retorts, fireman, train carrying coal]

Seven retorts are round one fire. The retorts go right through from one passage to the other. When I say 7 retorts are round one fire I mean one fire at each end. These retorts are loaded & emptied on

each side by separate gangs. When the coal has been sufficiently long on the retorts & all the gas is burnt out the white hot coaks [cokes] which remain are withdrawn from each end of the retorts by long iron scoops & cold water is thrown on them to extinguish them. Part of them are carted away on trucks & sold & part are left to keep up the fires which are kept up with coke alone. When the retorts are empty a large iron scoop is filled with the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561700114/view>]

fine coal which is heaped along each side of the shed & run into the retorts, turned round & withdrawn. The retorts loaded they are closed & left again for a specified time. The flashing up of the gas when the retorts are opened with a loud report, the white hot coke lying about, the glowing furnaces, the hissing of the water thrown on the coke, the clank of iron tools, the grimy half-naked men whose perspiring faces reflect the light of the fires, the noise, heat, glare & activity all combine to form a striking picture, especially at night. The French man appeared to be getting on pretty well, hopping about & talking & laughing when he had time. At 6 in the morning I went on a gang who were to work till two. In this gang there was an Italian, Swiss, a little Greek & a young fellow who appeared to belong to the well-to-do classes unaccustomed to manual labour but being

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561700247/view>]

pretty strong & active he got on very well. After a lot of sitting about and talking our boss, who was a professional fireman & engineer, came & we set to in order to load the retorts. I went as stoker & helped to lift in the long schoop [sic]. It was

[Small drawing of stoking]

very hard work whilst you were at it but this first night we had plenty of time to rest now & then. When the retorts were loaded I helped to shove out the truck of coke which we had withdrawn from them. At about 12 o'clock we went & had something to eat at the kitchen. A little after 2 we were relieved having

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561700377/view>]

now earned 10/- for our 8 hours work. Going up into the big workshop I shared a blanket with the Swiss fellow & being pretty tired soon fell asleep in spite of the cold & noise. The next morning I got up at about 8, & after a good breakfast went & found the Frenchman sitting in yard smoking in the sun. He was to go on again at 12 o'clock. He with his habitual activity had secured a empty room for himself & his gang & they had plenty of bedding between them, he therefore asked me to come & sleep there that night showing me the place. Going to the store we got some tobacco, towels & caps, for every necessary thing was supplied by the company free of cost, also beer in reasonable quantities. Even good new boots & clothes were given to some of the men who required them. I determined not to work any more at night if I could help it but did not succeed in doing so. For every shift of eight hours

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561700557/view>]

10/- were booked to your account. A good many men used to work two shifts every day & some three running thus making more than a pound a day, but I was quite contented with one. I used to eat four or five meals in the 24 hours & to tell the truth you required a lot of food for doing this sort of hard work. At night I repaired to where the Frenchman was & found them all lying comfortably on the floor. He had secured blankets for me & I made myself comfortable alongside of him. In the next room were some fellows making a tremendous noise. This exasperated ourselves who were tired & wished to sleep. Up jumped the Frenchman & in his bad English proposed to chuck them out. With a big man belonging to his gang they groped through the darkness to where the noise came from & seizing upon somebody pitched him bodily out into

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561700863/view>]

the yard. Of course he protested that it was not him who made the noise, that he had been asleep. The Frenchman was jabbering away in his bad English, the man was cursing the rest laughing, at last a watchman came & restored order. The example had a good effect for the remainder of the night was pretty quiet. We remained in here all the week. For a change I worked a couple of times out in the yard pushing the trucks of coke up an encline [sic] & then riding down on the empty ones. The third day [we] changed our sleeping places up into the workshop, the Frenchman having contrived to procure a chest with lock & key where he locked up our bedding in when we were at work. Thus we always had bedding whilst many other poor chaps wandered about in the cold trying to procure some. Gradually things got into a better order, regular gangs were formed who were always to work together

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701008/view>]

September [1890]

the lazy & useless men got weeded out, the [blank space] were getting filled with gas & in town gas could be burned at half pressure. The company was evidently gaining the day. Unfortunately on Friday night the schoop [sic], which is greased to make it slip into the retorts & which gets very hot when used, slid up against my right wrist & immediately the skin was frizzled off & the flesh a little burnt. As my arm swelled & got painful over night I determined to rest it until Monday & drawing a pound I decided to go into town for Sunday. It was considered dangerous to go out of the works as some men had been ill-treated, but I slipped out unobserved & went to the German hotel in Little Lonsdale Street.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>

In the evening I returned to the gasworks taking a tall lanky Prussian with me who was anxious to get some work.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701137/view>]

I arrived safely inside with a small bottle of spirits for the Frenchman who by the way was called

Peter. Cries of Peter were constantly being heard at all times of the day & night, for anybody who wanted bedding or anything went to him. On Monday Peter burnt his hand rather badly & as my arm was still painful & being both tired of being shut up we decided to go out on the morrow at least for a couple of days & to return again if expedient, later on. Besides we both had money now, which we had not had when we entered the works a week ago. On Tuesday accordingly we left the works & went & drew our money at the office in town. All the stevedores & wharf labourers had struck now & refused to unload the vessels consequently the ship owners & the stevedoring company were offering high wages for anybody who would work for them. We decided to try our hand a[t] this game now & having engaged ourselves

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701266/view>]

went one morning down to the wharf where the 'Aramac' a fine steamer belonging to the United S.N.C. [Steam Navigation Company] of Australasia, was lying. In the goods shed a number of other men of all descriptions were also waiting. When all was ready we were told to go on board and began handing the deck cargo, consisting of fruit-cases on shore. This was easy, pleasant work & when done I & several others were sent down into the hold where the chief part of the cargo was sugar in small bags. An officer came down & showed us how to arrange the slings & we soon got along splendidly sending up the full slings as quick as the hook came down to fetch them. The Frenchman had remained in the shed to stack up the cargo coming out of the hold. At noon we had an hour for dinner & went across the street to have a glass of beer & at one o'clock started again fast unloading some

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701399/view>]

timber that was on deck & after that I descended into the after hold & helped to unload the sugar there. At 6 o'clock we left off work having worked first 8 hours for which we were to receive 10/- & one hour overtime reckoned at half as much again as day work namely 1/10½; 11/10½ in all, a very good day's work & we decided to having more to do with the gas-works but to remain & work the ships by doing which we could earn more money & do far more agreeable work than at the gas-works. The next day we took our dinners with us & ate them quietly on board, this day we finished unloading the steamer & began putting a general cargo on board her consisting chiefly of tea in the after hold. This was easy work, we often could sit down & wait for 10 or 20 minutes doing nothing until the next sling came down. On the third day we finished loading & were paid off but on leaving

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701527/view>]

the wharf I engaged myself again for the morrow to a man who was looking for people to unload the mail steamers at Williamstown. He took my name & gave me a piece of paper with 'Cuzco' written on it telling me to be on the railway pier W. Town on the morrow at 8 o'clock. The Frenchman was to come also, but he was a terrible drunkard when he had any money & when we went home late at night he had drunk far more wine than he could carry comfortably so that when I went & called him the next morning at 6 o'clock telling him to be quick & run down to the station he was too late to catch the train & I went off without him. A[n] agent of the station had paid our fare to Williamstown & we soon arrived at that port which is situated on Hobsons bay opposite Port



Melbourne or Sandridge. It is here that all the Royal Mail steamers lie beside

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701654/view>]

a good many other steamers & sailing ships. I had taken the long-legged German with me for he had left the gas works also as he said he could not stand the night work. We were to load the Cuzco with wool & the greater part of the fore-noon was spent standing about waiting for the wool to arrive. Food was provided for us on board where we also slept until the steamer was loaded. The wool is pressed in good sized bales which are as much as two men can lift & they have to be stowed very carefully, especially on these mail-steamers where space is so valuable. This wool stowing is about the hardest work imaginable, but as there were four old stevedores who did all the hardest part of the work we only rolled the bales up to them & did what they told us. They were all large powerful men & worked like oxen, exerting their great muscular powers to ram the bales in between one another & seldom using the

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701780/view>]

screw jacks. I believe that these four men did more work than twenty of us others. The ships officers also worked very hard. I got on here very well also, although I think it requires a heavier man than me to handle the wool bales effectively. Some of the men who had come to work were useless old idiots. One especially was always in the way. I was rolling a bale along with him & he getting his hook caught in it could not let it go & just at that moment I gave it a strong push so that he got pulled right head over heels over the bale & it rolled on the top of him after. He never did much work but was always fussing about pretending to do something. Once we were on the lowest hold stowing away tin & this man was standing just under the hatch when the signal was given to heave up the hook with the empty sling on it. He was

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561701917/view>]

[Small drawing of a man suspended from a hook]

standing unawares in the loose noose which of course tightened round his ankle as it ascended & before he could open his mouth or wink his eye he was shot up about twenty feet & then remained dangling in the air for, the hatch man on the deck had noticed something were wrong & stopped the donkey engine. I shall never forget his comical [face?] when he got thus suddenly elevated. It would have been no loss if they had hoisted him right out & landed him on shore for the man was only in the way. On Saturday the vessel was to sail & before doing so one of the stevedoring Company who had superintended the loading came to us & asked if any would go with the ship to Port Adelaide, finish

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702040/view>]

loading her there, go then on board the Oroya which was to arrive before the Cuzco left, unload the Adelaide cargo of the former, & then return with her to Melbourne. Thinking that I might thus

combine business with pleasure, have a trip to Adelaide & be paid for so doing, I accepted the offer together with about a dozen others & we were soon steaming down the bay. We had the steerage allotted to us which on the homeward passage in this instance was partly filled with cargo & was to be entirely filled at Port Adelaide. Food & blankets were supplied to us & we were pretty comfortable in the beginning. Sunday I spent most of the day sleeping. We were coasting along the shore which was at first visible. The ship rolled heavily the weather being pretty cool. At night I began to suffer from toothache which prevented me from sleeping. It got worse & worse for I had a regular cold in the head. The next

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702173/view>]

morning I felt completely out of trim & when we arrived at Adelaide I was more fit to lie down in a hospital than to work at stowing wool. This time we had no experienced stevedores to help us, there were less of us & we had to do all ourselves. The weather was very hot the difference in temperature between here & Melbourne being great. We were anchored opposite the semaphore & lighters full of wool & lead from the Barrier [Broken Hill] were towed alongside of us. In the forenoon I was sent to the hold of a lighter to lay the lead on a chain sling ready to be hoisted on board. The bars were very heavy, the hook had to be kept going, the powerful rays of the sun beat down into the open hold of the lighter where we were standing & this combined with the swinging & rolling of the nearly empty hulk made me feel about as miserable as I have ever felt in my life. Pain & suffering had made me

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702305/view>]

quite crazy. I did not take the trouble to wash myself in the morning or at night. I ate, not because I was hungry but because I forced myself to do so knowing that it alone would prevent me from collapsing entirely. The night before the Cuzco was to sail we worked very hard getting in the last bales of wool & were not done till past midnight. Tired out I hoped at least to get a quiet sleep but in this I was also disappointed, we could not go below & on the deck it was cold & raining. I therefore crept on to the lighter & lay down at her bows, but found it impossible to sleep for she, being empty danced about on top of the small waves like a cork whilst the howser [hawser] with which she was moored to the steamer, kept on straining & jerking. Besides this it was cold & windy. I therefore crept aft & in the dark found a ladder descending somewhere. I felt my way along in the dark & came into a narrow passage at

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702438/view>]

the end of which there was a door which I opened. There was evidently somebody in the place I entered for he woke up & began swearing, but I was too tired to care. I lay down on what appeared to be a sort of sofa & on which I luckily found an old coat with which I covered myself. But even here I could not get to sleep for a very long time, the motion of the old hulk was violent & jerky & close to me the rudder chains passed & just overhead was the wheel, which had not been secured & kept banging about & making a tremendous noise all night. When I awoke in the morning daylight was entering by the small ports & lighting up the interior of the old-fashioned looking stern-cabin in which I lay. It had evidently once been luxuriously fitted up but the ornaments & wood carvings were now covered with dirt & partly broken whilst the plate glass mirrors were cracked & dingy.

The sight of this old cabin impressed me curiously.

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702597/view>]

Now all was dusty & decayed. But years ago this had been a fine ship sailing merrily over the blue sea in the days when Australia was but little known. Many a time had the captain sat at the table before me & dined with his officers or studied the chart on it. I could almost think I saw him there now, yes there he was, a thickset old fashioned man & further off were the officers handsome young men with sun-burnt faces & blue coats on. The captain was smoking a long-stemmed clay pipe whilst a glass of liquor lay in front of him on the polished table. Through the stern window now appearing suddenly bright & clean, I saw a calm blue sea, out of which rose high, curiously shaped Islands covered with palms & tropical trees whilst boats with big, wing-like sails were gliding o'er the surface. Ah! how beautiful, I moved to look better on the scene & this

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702730/view>]

attracted the captain's attention, he directed his eyes towards me, taking the pipe out of his mouth which remained open. Then he looked at his officers & they all three commenced staring at me whilst a curious smile began to play on their features. The officer who stood by the door opened it & in poured all the crew one after the other & began crowding around me & looking at me, the cabin gradually got quite full & the noise increased, there were fine broad shouldered men with old fashioned clothes on, young boys & one or two niggers. With a louder bang than usual the rudder moved around & all dispersed the cabin was dirty & empty, the glass dingy & cracked, but there were voices & stamping on the deck above me. I jumped up, rubbed my eyes & ascended & found the men getting the lighter ready to be cast off & towed to the Oroya which was steaming up the bay in the distance. When the Oroya

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702869/view>]

which had just arrived from England was anchored we were taken in tow by a small steamer & towed alongside the newly arrived Mail steamer which was crowded with passengers who must have read all the news about the strike for when we came alongside they set up howling & jeering & making a noise like a menagerie about dinnertime. The steerage passengers were union sympathisers, there was no doubt of that. Up amongst this stupid crowd I jumped with several others & descended into the fore-hold of the vessel & began breaking out the cargo which consisted mostly of boxes of currants. The steerage passengers gathered round the hatchway & continued howling until an officer came forward & told them as long as they remained on board they must do what they were told & that was to be quiet & keep out of the way. After this their demonstrations ceased. We continued

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561702990/view>]

taking out the Adelaide cargo all day. In the afternoon I had the good luck to be placed on the deck of the lighter where I had nothing to do but see that all went properly & calling out when they were

to heave up or slack down. But when night came on it got cold & it seemed as though we should never get done with unloading. At length when past midnight the last lot came over the side & we scrambled up the side of the steamer. Now, I thought, I shall have a good sleep & will then be all right in the morning. We had some supper & remained waiting to be shown where to go & sleep, but nobody came. We went forward & sat down & waited. It was cold & windy. At length the anchor was got up & the ship steamed away. On she steamed through the darkness, & yet nobody came. Some of us had given up the hope of getting a cabin to sleep in & lay down on the bare deck. At last an officer came & said that

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561703124/view>]

we were to go into the bandsmen's cabin. The steward was asleep & had to be woke up. This we succeeded in doing. The cabin was full of bales of calico he said, it would take the whole night to get them out, but we might try. He led us down to a narrow stuffy passage & opened a door. It was dark & hot inside & no place could be found level enough to lie on. Most of the men scrambled in however. I tried to do so but found that wherever I put my foot somebody was lying who commenced swearing energetically at once. It was too cold to lie down, my face was painful & beginning to swell. A quarter-master or somebody with a lantern came across me as I was walking up & down & I told him how matters were. He looked at me & then telling me to follow him led me

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561703250/view>]

to the wheel-room. Here there was a dim light & it was warm. I lay down right off & managed to cover myself a bit with some coarse matting. Anyhow I slept & remained where I was until nearly dinner-time next day. Then I went & had something to eat. After this the tooth ache I was suffering from became worse & worse. I went & hid myself in the wheel-house & lay there for hours, I could not sleep although I was quite exhausted. I gazed on the machinery & gear around me & through the little port & saw the water rushing below me, churned white & foaming by the powerful screw. I was so exhausted by pain & fatigue that everything now appeared to me in a different light. Life at least was not to last for ever & I felt as though there was consolation in that. And yet there is pleasure in life, I said, oh if I was only well, what pleasure I should find in examining the machinery which

[<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-561703384/view>]

works so beautifully all around me, in admiring the order about me, for the wheel-room of a large steamer like this is an interesting sight. I could then gaze contentedly for hours down into the cold deep water over which we are rushing so fast & so steadily. The Oroya seemed to me more like a train than a ship so steady was her motion. I would have remained where I was much longer, had not a quarter master come & told me I had to go below where there was plenty of room now, for the wheel room of a steamer is a sanctuary where nobody is allowed to enter excepting on duty. Going below I found that the men had cleared out a lot of the calico & got to the bunks, in one of which I stretched myself. We had no covering but it was warm down here. A bandsman or somebody had left a pot of vaseline down here which I took & smeared over my face & it did me much good I believe

[*The R.M.S. Oroya left Adelaide to sail to Melbourne on 25 September 1890.*]