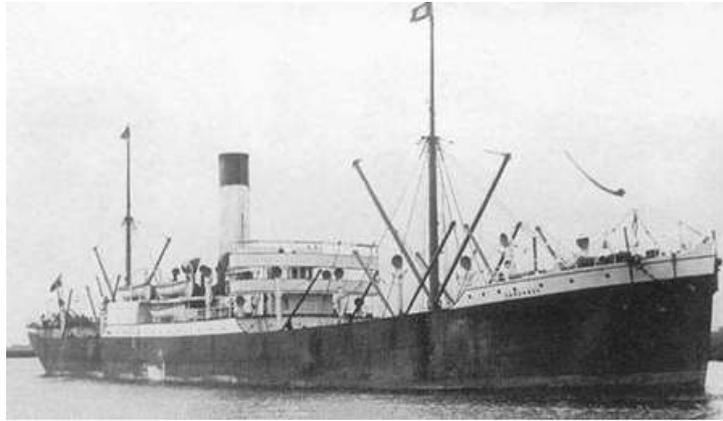


## 1903 Diary of a Ship's Doctor aboard Blue Funnel Cargo ship, the SS Dardanus

compiled by Dr Frederick Henry Douglas Flack ("Harry")  
with commentary by his grandson Dr Edmund Douglas Hayward Flack ("Ted")



SS Dardanus built in 1895 by Scott & Co. Greenock

### 1. Introduction

Dr Frederick Henry Douglas Flack was born on 5 February 1878 at Burnley, Lancashire, the second son of William Henry Douglas Flack (b. 26 January 1852, in Limerick, Ireland) and Eliza Alice Parker (born October Quarter 1853, Burnley, Lancashire).

Dr Flack had graduated from Owens College Manchester University M.B., Ch.B in 1894. In the 1901 Census, he was listed in the Institution Return (Reference RG 13/3916) in respect of Blackburn and East Lancashire Infirmary as "Frederick H Flack, Surgeon, Single, 28 years, Medical Practitioner Surgeon, born Lancs. Burnley".

The family oral history suggests that Dr Harry Flack signed as a ships surgeon as a means of completing his "internship". (See also details of [Dr Flack's](#) subsequent military service.)

In compiling Dr Flack's diary, no attempt has been made to edit his hand-written text, although commentaries in text boxes, illustrations, footnotes and links have been added for interest. The original diary entries are shown in italics.

### 2. The start of the journey

*1903 October 24<sup>th</sup>. Left Dock (Egerton) at 10.30am arrived in river at 11.30am. Stopped and cast anchor at 12.30pm on a/c of pump not working satisfactorily. Having A1 time. 3<sup>rd</sup> Engineer injured finger during repairs.*

Egerton Dock, is a dock at Birkenhead (Opposite Liverpool), Wirral Peninsula, England. Named after Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton who laid the foundation stone in October 1844, the dock was completed in 1847. This was just prior to a suspension of the dock scheme, due to a financial crisis affecting the Birkenhead Dock Company.

Alfred Holt and Company, trading as the Blue Funnel Line, was founded by Alfred Holt on 16 January 1866.[1] The main operating subsidiary was the Ocean Steam Ship Company, which owned and operated the majority of the company's vessels.

A Dutch subsidiary, the Nederlandsche Stoomvaart Maatschappij Oceaan, was founded in 1891, as was the East India Ocean Steam Ship Company, operated from Singapore. This latter was sold in 1899 to Norddeutscher Lloyd. The company acquired the competing China Mutual Steam Navigation Company in 1902, keeping it on the books as a separate company but operating it as part of the Blue Funnel Line.

Ships of the Blue Funnel fleet all had names from classical Greek legend or history. The majority were cargo ships, but most of the Ocean SS Co cargo ships also had capacity for a few passengers. The line also had a small number of purely passenger vessels.

The Blue Funnel Line came to an end in 1988 when Ocean Group withdrew from the Barber Blue Sea Service, its last shipping line. The Merseyside Maritime Museum Archive and Library holds the company archive.

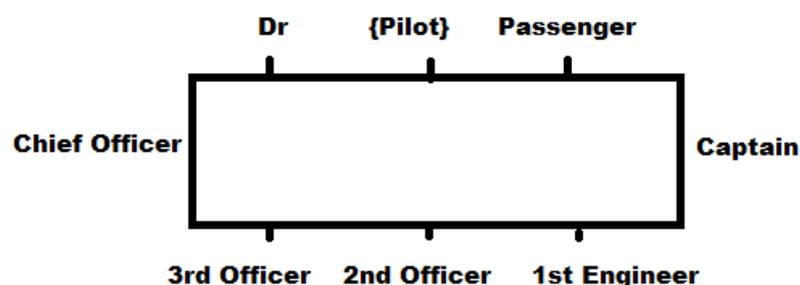
*Engines were restarted at 10.30pm after I had gone to bed. Pilot was dropped at Liverpool Bar lightship 17 miles from the landing stage. I slept well and next morning (25 October) we were in Cardigan Bay when I woke. [Bardsey Island](#) was in sight.*

*Chief Officer described the weather as a moderate gale and although I felt squeamish was able to take all my meals.*

*Tea and toast brought to my cabin by steward.*

*Breakfast 8.30 consists of Porridge syrup and milk, fish, mutton chops, beefsteak c hot potatoes. Ham and eggs, marmalade preserves toast and coffee or tea.*

The following is a reproduction of the hand drawn illustration appearing in the text:



*Spent morning on deck. Very cold and showery. Dinner 12.30. Soup Fish Entrée Joints. Goose Curry. Puddings. Pastry Cheese Coffee.*

*Spent afternoon in oiling instruments etc*

*Tea at 6.30. Afternoon tea and toast about 4pm. Tea:- fish, 2 hot dishes etc.*

*Spent evening singing coon songs c bango*

*Bed at 8.30 after sighting [Smalls Light off Pembrokeshire](#).*

*Oct 26<sup>th</sup>.*

*Passed Scillies though not in sight and entered Bay of Biscay. Very rough; described as heavy swell c heavy squalls. SW*

*Examined O.Seaman who was seasick.*

*Self fairly well, eating well but not exactly comfortable. Owing to rough sea we are only making 8 or 9 Knots Knot = 1 mile & 1/8 miles ∴ 8 Knots = 9 miles.*

*OS who is stick has been a seaman on the Snowdon Llandudno boat for sometime.*

*Looked round the crew's quarters. English and Chinese. The latter had Gin-Gin burning in No1 Joss House. Here they offer papers & burn them to their deity. There was "plenty stinky" in addition.*

*Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.*

*Beautiful morning quite warm and cloudless. Sat on deck smoking for a time. Inspected quarters etc. Went aft and saw fowls and sheep etc. for grub and also the vegetable store and galleys.*

*Afternoon turned out very wet so spent time in 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer's room with banjo. Later went into 3<sup>rd</sup> Engineer's room and examined picture p.cards, Burma cigars, foreign coins etc.*

*Night comes on with very heavy weather. Ship rolls heavily and ships water fore and aft. Roll = 20°. Feeling very well and talking so well that Captain Till: remarked that it would be necessary to dock my screw.*

*After dinner (i.e. tea) sat in cabin c 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer who sings coon songs excellently and plays banjo. From 8-10 pm on bridge. I have now learned to steer, how to estimate position i.e. by sun.*

*After turning in I was awakened by seas washing over the roof of my cabin. One of the boat covers on my roof was broken and washed away.*

*During the night the glare (not the light) of Finisterre was visible. The Company order that none of their boats shall go within 35 miles of this light. The Company is the best mercantile marine company in the world and are now building special fast boats to take Australian mails.*

*Mr Holt the owner began life in the office in a very junior post and is now the owner of the fleet and has bought up the China Mutual Fleet.*

Oct 28<sup>th</sup>.

Examined quarters c Chief Officer. Spent the rest of the morning in chair on deck. No coat required as the weather excellent and as good as an English summer.

Now off the coast of Portugal. I have put 8 plates in the camera.

Afternoon showery. Spent c officers of the duty yarning. Passed Portugal trading vessel. Long convers with 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer. Evening in cabin for half an hour. Later on deck foan hour. Retiring to bed at 10pm.

We expect to sign Cape de Roca about 4pm tomorrow. All off9icers consider this to be the finest trip in the world and think the Dardanus the happiest ship in the Company's fleet. All officers hold Masters Certificate This ids the sina qua non for all officers on this line. Officers only kept on one ship for 3 or 4 voyages.

Captain £600 per year

Chief Officer £14 per month

2<sup>nd</sup> Officer £11 per month

3<sup>rd</sup> Officer £7 per month

Chief Engineer £19 per month

2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer £15 per month

3<sup>rd</sup> Engineer £11 per month

4<sup>th</sup> Engineer £7 per month

Fireman £1 per month

out of which they have to pay No.1 the greater part for engaging them ion such a good job.

The Chinese play fan-tan ie. beans in a box odd or even. No. 1 lends money for the [fan-tan](#) for which they also pay him an extortionate rate of interest.

Tonight is so beautiful I'm loth to go to bed. I now feel quite at home – sea legs etc. – so at this stage I left off and went on deck for an hour or so before going to bed.

Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>

Today we passed Cape Roca and steered for Cape St Vincent. Raced with City of Calcutta and finally passed her about 9pm.



The City Of Calcutta was built for George Smith & Sons, a Glasgow-based shipping company with trading connections throughout the Empire and launched in 1881

*Captain caught me on the bridge and reminded me that this was contrary to Co regulations. Later I went c Captain to his private cabin and spent an hour with him smoking. Bed at 10.30pm. Broke my watch when winding it up.*

*Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>*

*Awoke at 7.30 and went on deck to find that Gibraltar was just coming into view. Saw North African coast on the Starboard. Gib on Port. [Cape Spartel](#) African Point c Tangiers just near and in sight. Tarifa in Spain was clearly seen – buildings fortifications. Took views of (1) ship passing and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Gibraltar as we approached. Saw the bays on each side of the Gib. The two town Military and Naval. In Africa good view of Apes Hill and centra. After passing Gib 4 miles on Part side – saw hills of South Spain including snow-capped Sierra Navadas.*

*Passed Malaga and saw shoals of porpoises. Captain signalled Gibraltar when passing.*

*It is now considered probable that we shall call at Algiers to make good our coal supply which is running short due to the rough passage.*

*T° on leaving Liverpool was 52°. Since then has gradually risen and is now 75° in the shade. Cloudless sky and boiling sun. Canvas arranged round and over the deck to keep off the glare. Captain asks “what would Burnley think of this?” Happier every day. Have still got on all winter togs but shall shortly be compelled to drop some of them.*

*Passed Almeria also. Sunset due at 5.20pm. We are now doing 14 Knots per hour. These ships run to scheduled time and have ∴ to keep time and have to keep good speed throughout. We have plenty of Coal to reach Port Said but not at top speed ∴ we will call at Algiers for coal. Straits of Gib = 16 miles.*

*Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> Saturday. Pencil marks another slazy stage off Morocco and Algeria. By night began to get rough. Squally at night Sea rough all day.*

*Sunday Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*Roughest day so far. Cold and wet. Calmed down somewhat towards night. Last night unable to sleep for the wind and rolling of the ship. During this day I was 3 times knocked off my feet and rolled about the deck beyond the bumping I took no harm.*

*Monday Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>*

*Better day. Passed through Lembra and Lembretta Islands. In the afternoon passed [Pantelleria](#) an island used by the Italians as a convict settlement in the past. It is now noted for its pretty girls – so say the officers. Late afternoon we pass [Cape Bon](#).*

*Tues Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>*

*During the early morning we passed Malta. The lighthouse was visible but I was asleep.*

*Cat in passengers cabin. Douglas Swanson and I attempt to dislodge him. We have again run into beautiful weather and have had a grand day. It has been decided to keep right on for Port Said and coal there but speed is reduced to economise coal. Now doing 11 knots per hour and at this rate should bring us into P. Said about 4pm on Friday. T° in now 72° in the shade.*

*Work for me continues to be slack. I have had only four cases:*

*1 crushed figure*

*1 Mal de Mer*

*1 Paralysis in a fireman due to Beri Beri*

*1 Abscess groin.*

*It seems a long time since I left home and letters and papers would be very acceptable. When was I ever a fortnight behind time in knowing what's on.*

*Tonight the Captain asked me into his cabin for a game of Californian Jack. I won the game and had a bottle of beer with him. Stayed until 10.15pm and then off to bed.*

*Wednesday, Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>*

*Another beautiful day. Spent on deck in the morning, afternoon on forecastle head with Douglas the 4<sup>th</sup> Engineer.*

*Towards evening a storm sprung up and there was heavy rain with lightning and thunder. It passed in an hour and later it was a grand night.*

*Thursday*

*Weather all that could be desired do not remember a better day ever. Saw no land yesterday or today but saw two or three steamers in the distance.*

*We expect to reach Port Said about 3pm tomorrow and if possible I shall enjoy a run ashore. This morning I was up at 6.30am had shower bath with salt water and have since spent most of the day on deck.*

*No fresh cases crop up for me. Examined passenger's legs and gave him a prescription for mint. pills and ointment. Passed the SS Ping Suez, a ship belonging to the China Mutual White Funnel. Previously we had passed the Mennon & Glaucus O.S.S Cos boats.*



**SS Memnon**



**SS Glaucus**

*When we meet we hoist flags spelling out the ship's name, also the ensign aft is dipped.*

*Tonight I have been better writing for quite a long time. People who told me the letter writing would be quite a treat on board ship must be misinformed.*

The following notes in the diary are written in Pitman Shorthand:

*The Captain is a man very like Dr Martin. Family matters seem not to be of great interest as they do to all of us.*

The diary then continues:

*Cannot stand anyone to disagree with him in an argument or else he gets quite shirty.*

and then again in shorthand:

*Passenger leaves us tomorrow but I wish it weren't so.*

Normal diary entries continue:

*T°=73° and I must soon wear lighter clothing. The nights are just fine as fine as the days. The moon is about the full and so everything is very bright so much so that I think I could read on the deck if the print were good.*

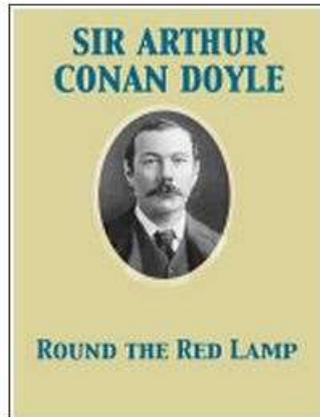
*The "blue waters of the Mediterranean" is no fiction for they are as blue as Dolly blue.*

*Each 12 hours is divided into 3 watches and each watch into 8 bells or half hours.*

*These boats and China Mutual boats carried the Russian troops for the China war and the officers here all say that the privates and officers were a very blackguardly crowd and a fighting force of the very meanest variety. Still in case of a Russo Japanese war they like to see Russia win for they say that since the China Japan war the Japs have been so cocky as to be unbearable. Also the Japs the English "we your brothers" and this, the English very much resent. The Officers say Chinese are much better people than the Japs.*

*Tomorrow we shall know if Russia and Japan are at war as seemed very likely to be the case when we left Liverpool. Personally it will be war, though if England be dragged into it would likely prove to be awkward for the ship.*

*Distance from Port Said to Liverpool = 3,200 miles.*



*During the day I have read Conan Doyle's book "Round the Red Lamp" and think it is all shop.*

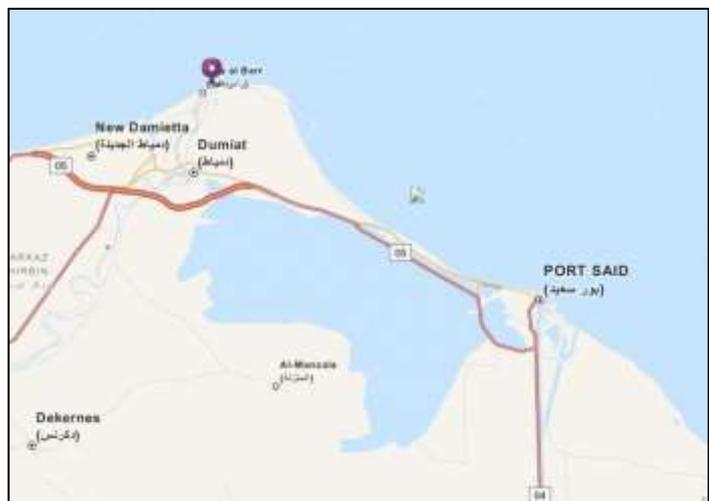
*This ship continues to travel at 11 Knots per hour. Yesterday I looked around the farm yard where there were 6 sheep. Fowls and ducks galore. All our grub up to the present is from the ice chest and very good it is. It is unfortunate that the beer is 5 pence per bottle though they are all pint bottles. Whiskey 5 pence, soda Apollinaris, or lemon 4 pence.*

*The Chinese and Buddhists are always willing to sell any of their Gods for a sufficient price (on the quiet of course) to English sightseers. Have more letters to write so must leave this alone for to-night.*

*Chinese firemen work better than Englishmen and are more temperate. English firemen in the East get £4-10-0 per month. Chinese firemen £1 or £1-5-0. We carry 30 firemen or so. Voyage lasts 4-5 months ∴ saving to Co by employing Chinese is about £400 per trip. These men are very clean and civil. After 4 hours work they always have a bath. It is funny to see them cleaning their teeth before and after each meal with toothbrushes.*

*Friday Nov 6<sup>th</sup> Port Said.*

*About 11.30am we sight the lighthouse at Damietta W of Port Said.*



*The land is so low that it is not visible for 30 or 40 minutes after we sight the lighthouse and pull up outside PS. Pilot comes aboard and takes us to an anchorage. He goes ashore immediately. As we pass in we see the breakwater which runs N from PS to protect the harbour from the Westerly gales which sweep the Mediterranean.*

*8 lighters containing 800 tons of coal are brought alongside and the coal is carried Arabs with wicker baskets into the ship. Arabs number 400. Our coal supply is reduced to 35 tons on arrival.*

*The agents come aboard with letters and instructions. The Port Medical officer comes on at 3.30pm. I give him some bills of health from Swansea and Liverpool and fill up a Port Said paper for him, a Frenchman.*

*There are also dozens of hawkers with Post-cards, cigarettes, stamps, photographs etc. V. enclosed cards. Among these Arabs is one John Ferguson.*

*The 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer and I ask permission to go ashore and the Captain says certainly. Be back in time. We go in Ferguson's boat free of charge and smoke his cigarettes and have a cup of strong black coffee free of charge. Buy cigarettes and Turkish delight, post cards, toothpaste. Call at Chemists and buy photographic materials at outrageous prices, 500% above home price.*

*Benedictine and bottle of Bass cost 1s-4d and poor Bass at that. We go to look around town. Ferguson's brother follows us to watch over us as he tells us we are not safe alone. We dismiss him but he puts a crippled Arab with crutches to spy on us. The cripple says he is "a Scotchman from Aberdeen" and offers to act as our guide and show us wonderful sights, but we do not catch on. Finally to get rid of him we run down back streets and get lost but the cripple turns up smiling and we give up attempts to get rid of him. We call at other shops, inspect picture pcs and photographs.*

*Streets seem full of Police, Turks, Greeks, French, Germans but we see no English except our own Captain who has come ashore to call at the Agent's Office. Every person in the streets seems to have entered into a completion to see who can make the most noise. Single horse trams are running in the street. Houses are very jerry and few buildings seem worth anything at all. Best building is the jail.*

*Called at the Stationers for papers. Papers were dated Oct 31<sup>st</sup>. Price was 3d each. PS papers printed in French. Looked the papers through and walked out without buying.*

*The Dr being a stranger is considered the goat of the ship and open for anyone to fleece. Hawkiers all look for him. Children in the street pick me out and say "Blue funnel Dr buy cigarettes?" After a good look around we return with Ferguson to the ship. He brings our parcels. We also bought 100 oranges each, green ones to ripen on the journey. Climb rope ladder into the ship in time for tea and 6 O'clock. Coaling finishes about 6.30pm in the light of flares, coal dust floating around in great quantities. Auxiliary rudder and search light having been fixed we begin journey through the canal to Suez about 7.30pm. Search lamp and other lights run from*

*ship's dynamo.  $T^{\circ}= 82^{\circ}$  and the heat is intense. I sit on deck and watch the passage through the canal for about an hour and clear off to bed before 9pm. We have now got a 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot on board who is to take us through to Ismailia. He works by the search light man picking out the buoys with the light.*

*At Port Said saw many fine ships eg. French mails. Brindisi P&O Anchor, City lines etc. Large numbers of coal laden ships etc.*

*Saturday Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>                      Suez Canal 87 miles*

*Awake at 5.30am. Coffee and toast bath etc. We have done 40 miles of the canal when I awake. Sit on deck and watch the canal banks as we pass. The canal is 30 yards wide at its narrowest part and certainly not more. It is cut right through the desert and the banks consist of loose sand. We are allowed to only travel very slowly, otherwise the ship's wake causes the sand banks to wash in. Ships are only allowed to pass in the wider parts of the canal and even then one has to tie up to the side.*

*About 6.15 we reach Ismailia standing on a lake. Lake Tim. through which the canal runs. Just near is the hospital with Sudanese troops guarding. We pass the French Mail Boat going home. Along the canal are seen dredgers. Stations or gardes(f). Attempts are made to grow shrubs or bushes to keep sand firm and prevent it going into the canal. For miles and miles around one sees nothing but golden yellowish sand, the sky is clear bright blue and the water in the canal a light green. Occasionally we come across Arab encampments or Arabs with their camels journeying through the desert. We tie up many times to allow boats to pass eg German North Deutche Lloyd, Austrian LLOYDs, British Indian, etc. Ismailia looks to be a very beautiful town though apparently very small. There we dropped our 1<sup>st</sup> Pilot and take on a second.*

*From PS to Suez we carry 3 Arabs with their boat to row to the bank and fix tow-ropes. Half way through we run across the Bitter Lakes. Canal is tidal up to the Bitter Lakes and tidal from the Red Sea to the Bitter Lakes.*

*At Suez agent comes aboard with letters from home. Engineers require an hour for tightening up certain parts of machinery. When they finish we leave Suez passing the Newport Rock Lighthouse and when I feel ready for bed we are passing through the Gulf of Suez.*

*Sunday Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>*

*The first part of the Gulf is where the Children of Israel crossed the Red Sea. Here it is about 10 miles wide and very shallow. On the Right as we sail down the Gulf is the Wilderness of the Wandering. Mount Sinai 7,500 feet is very distinct though by no means is it the largest peak among the mountain ranges viable. At Night about 6pm a storm commenced. The lightening was fine. A flash followed flash with such rapidity that often 4 or 5 distinct flashes were visible at the same time in different directions. The night was bright with lightening and very rarely was it dark even for one second. This not an exaggeration. This continued until 11pm when I went to bed*

*and the officers on watch say that it continued until daylight. Heavy rain all this time till 12 Midnight. At midnight the officer on watch called me on the deck. It had stopped raining, the moon was shining and the lightening was still as rapid and looked very fine by the moonlight. The lightening had fallen on the ship and blue streaks of lightening were viable at the mast heads.*

*Monday Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>*

*During the night the breeze increased and we are now sailing with a head wind and a sea. The wind is the trade wind and being a head wind tempers the heat splendidly. Before the days of electric fans, passenger ships with an aft-wind have found it necessary to turn right around in order to find some breeze in order to receive children and old people prostrated by the heat. Even with our breeze everyone seems to be clad in white cotton suits and most of the crew are wearing what they call their summer socks, i.e. none at all. At night I play cards with the Captain and subsequently sign a chit for beer and apollinaris. This is my first chit on the wine bill.*

The following line is written in Pitman shorthand:

*Captain keeps his own whiskey and wants me to pay for whiskey for doctors, so I may not have any.*

The diary then continues.

*Tuesday Nov. 10<sup>th</sup> Trade wind continues. We pass many islands in the Red Sea. Very fine day though too hot to be pleasant. Cards at night with the Captain.*

The following note is written in Pitman shorthand:

*Pays for drinks.*

The diary then continues.

*I find Burmese Ring Worm is very common on the ship among the officers since they called at Basse in Burmah last voyage. It is a great rice growing district. Probably I shall get ring worm from them. The last Dr got it. I have two officers under treatment for it now.*

*This afternoon the ship was stopped for 25 minutes for to engine repairs. A nut bearing was broken. The log was taken in whilst we were stationary but immediately on starting again it was cast adrift. When the log reached the water it was attacked without success by a very large shark. Every day we see swarms of flying fish. Today also a swarm of locusts came aboard in a squall and several were caught. In rough weather the waves lift flying fish onto the deck where they are easily caught. We played cards again at night. It seems to be quite an institution now.*

*Wednesday Nov 11<sup>th</sup>*

*No land in sight until 11pm. Then after cards I went on deck and saw some the Islands known as the 12 Apostles but there was no light about any of them. During the night we pass*

through the Pass of Abu-el, 2 miles wide. Although the Red Sea is so broad there is only a channel about 10 miles wide which is safely navigable. Among the Islands we have passed are The Brothers.

Thursday Nov 12<sup>th</sup>.

The breeze has increased to a moderate gale and there can be no doubt in future for me as to the existence of the Trade Winds. As Mr Shack, the 3<sup>rd</sup> went on deck this morning the wind carried away his sea-cap & badge, etc.

More islands are in view and at 11am as I write this we are passing [Mocha](#) (of coffee fame) on the Arabian Coast. The Light House and the houses are quite distinct and can be almost counted. At 3pm we expect to reach [Perim](#) where we shall signal no doubt.

Later about 2pm we enter the Straits of Babel Mandeb otherwise known as Hell's Gates because they are the Eastern entrance of the Red Sea. We are leaving Hell. In the Strait is the island of Perim. British. There is a good cooling station and Coast Guard Stations. We signal.



Perim Harbour in 1910

In the Strait we meet the Idomeneus Blue Funnel ship homeward bound from Singapore.

We pass within 50 yards of each other. On board the Idomeneus are pilgrims for Mecca. They are estimated at over 1000. The return fare from China to Jeddah is £12 or so. Many die on the way. They save for a lifetime for this pilgrimage. They have their taxes reduced by half. After the second journey they pay no taxes. After a third, they do not work but are kept by their other brethren who have not made the pilgrimage.



SS Idomeneus 1899

*They are quarantined at Kamaran for 5 days and if no disease breaks out or as long as may be necessary. Then the ship continues the voyage to Jeddah. From Jeddah to Mecca is 60 miles or more. The Turkish Government who control Arabia pay a subsidy to the Bedouins or to the Sheiks to refrain from robbing the pilgrims. If the money is not paid immediately it is due, these Bedouin Arabs attack parties of pilgrims on the road and take all they have.*

*After passing Perim we see Cape Babel Mandeb with its high peak of the same name. Leaving the Strait we commence the journey through the Gulf of Aden (Indian Ocean). (Ships carrying pilgrims pay their Chief officer and Surgeon special bonus per head of pilgrims. Smallpox, typhoid and cholera are great scourges to pilgrims.)*

*Friday Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> Off Somali-land. We pass [Berbera](#) the base of the Somali campaign.*

*In the afternoon the engines stopped for two hours because two nuts have broken and it is decided to drill them out and replace with stronger nuts. In hope of seeing sharks I post myself at the stern for the stationary ship is a great attraction for fish. In an hour after stopping the fish rapidly gather. 1<sup>st</sup> the skip jacks which are about a foot in length and flop about on the surface. 2<sup>nd</sup> sharks and dolphins Benita and smaller fish. Sharks number 8-12 of various sizes. We bait a large hook and sharks are smelling round it when the screw begins to turn putting an end to our chances of landing a fish. Many shoals of smaller fish were also seen. The shores about this district are inhabited by Cannibals, and ships which are wrecked on these coasts are stripped of all cargo by the natives who then eat the survivors. Very pretty?*

*Play cards in the evening with the Captain. Afterwards half an hour on deck bed about 10.30.*

*Saturday Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>*

*At 7am the Chief Officer sends word from the bridge to my cabin that whales are in sight; so I turn out to have a look at them. They are sprouting at about a mile away and I get occasional glimpses of their bodies before they go down again. During the morning many more were seen also numbers of grampus. From the forecastle I see razor fish about 12-18in long. They rise from the water and shoot along by springs from the water.*

*We pass a headland known as the Wandering Elephant from its fanciful shape. Next we pass about 3 miles N of [C.Gardafui](#) and steer in a line to the South of [Socotra](#) which we shall reach about midnight. No lighthouses in these parts for the natives have not a great liking for the attendants. At 4.15pm the ship is stopped for the 1<sup>st</sup> Boat Drill. We take up our positions by the life-boats to which we belong/ The boats are swung on the davits over the water but are not actually launched. Journey resumed in about 20 minutes.*

*Sunday Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>*

*On rising about 7am I was able to see Socotra in the distance behind us. After breakfast Captain., Chief officer and I adjourned to the afterdeck for target practice with a small rifle. This is a Sunday morning institution. After 1 and half hours shooting I took out my revolver and fired a few shots. Spent afternoon on deck with the Captain. In the evening I went to his room and we waded carefully through Chamberlain's Liverpool speeches and found ourselves in complete agreement with all he said. These speeches were read by everyone on the ship. I*

*understand that almost all the sailors are conservative, but the Engineers are largely Radicals. Our Chief Engineer is an Irishman from County Cork and is an extremely well-read man. He suffers somewhat from indigestion and never sleeps till after midnight. So he spends all of his evenings reading in his cabin. There seems to be little that he does not know.*

*Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>.*

*We shall see no more land till we reach [Minikoi](#) a small island West of Ceylon. Consequently there is little to write down. Morning on the fcsle, afternoon on the deck. Reading Valentine Fox but find it rather monotonous, ie. the book, not the trip which I like as well as ever. The weather continues quite perfect. I understand that we shall take on a few hundred Chinese coolies at Singapore for Hong Kong. Thank Goodness that is only a 6 day trip for I am not altogether in love with Chinese. About 4.30pm we passed the Orotava.*

*Minikoi=British Island of coral with lighthouse and small village and signal station. Beautifully wooded with palm trees. We passed within 1 mile of shore and got a very good view.*



*Tuesday Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>*

*Nothing fresh.*

*Passed Telemachus at 3.30 pm. The latter is the largest boat owned by this Company and carries 11,000 tons of cargo.*

*Wednesday Nov 18<sup>th</sup>*

*No land. Heavy rain. More whales. No ships seen.*

*Thursday Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>*

*Passed Minikoi about 6pm. Still no sight of land.*

*Spend morning and afternoon o fcsle head with Douglas watching for fish. Came into shoal of whales which were quite near the ship and on all sides of it. One large whale we almost ran into it was so near that were able to throw orange peel at it. Splendid view. Also large flying fish, porpoises, cuttle fish, turtle, Benita, grampus etc.*

*Evening with the Captain. Argument on ice at dinner.*

*Friday Nov. 20th*

*No land nothing fresh.*

*Saturday Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>*

*About 8.30am we caught sight of Adam's Peak in Ceylon 7,500 feet. We could see the peak when 70 miles away. Then other hills, eg. Haycock became visible by 11 o'clock we were South of Ceylon and about 3 or 3 1/2 miles from shore. Passed many native boats Catamarans of all sizes, large one coming from Lacadives, smaller ones fishing.*

*About noon on Saturday we were abreast of Point de Galle with its small port. Ceylon is beautifully wooded. We were off the coast from 11am till 6pm when it came dark and everywhere we could see was covered with trees.*

*Clan liner turret ship was coaling at de Galle. Here we signalled. There is also a good lighthouse. I went on top deck and Captain gave me a telescope and by this I could see the time on the clock tower ashore 11.56am. Also saw Pagodas Temples and gardens attached thereto. The trees were palms.*

*The next Cape was [Dondra Head](#) with light house and more mountains. Was the Garden of Eden in Ceylon? De Galle Port is mentioned under old name in Bible. Plenty of large fish seen again today.*

*The ship has been painted throughout during the last few days, great nuisance wet paint but now the ship looks very smart. We are now steering for Ache Head in Sumatra at the top of the Straits of Malacca.*

*Sunday Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>*

*Captain, Chief officer and I spent morning on deck shooting with rifle at target. The scores at finish of 10 shots each were Captain 28, Self 26, CO 25.*

The next section is written in Pitman Shorthand:

*Chief Officer doesn't try because the Captain wants to win and if the Captain did not win he would be in a bad mood. This is Captain T.*

The hand-written diary then continues:

*Afterwards I sat on aft-poop with Douglas. About noon the Quartermaster came to hoist the ensign because a ship (sailing) was signalling to us. It was expected that we should be asked for water. We caught up to the sailing ship. She turned out to be a country wallah i.e. Captain Officer and crew all natives. Captain was an Arab and all the crew were Hindoo Lascars or some such breed. The ship was the Skofield of Calcutta from Mauritius for Calcutta.*

*The current hereabouts was so strong that in 24 hours our ship had gone 54 miles out of her course. The Arab had evidently taken his noon sights and could not believe his calculations for no doubt he found himself further from his destination than he was the previous day. So*

*he signalled us to know his position which means that he was quite lost and out of his reckonings. We informed him and steamed away.*

*Monday Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>*

*This day was a wet one and the rain came down so heavily that I may describe it as heavier than home. The ocean current which has been keeping us back since leaving Suez has now gradually diminished until now we have a strong current in our favour. With the current against us our day's run has been as low as 233 Knots for 24 hours. Now we are doing 296 Knots per diem and so on. This rate of speed will bring us to Singapore on Friday morning before breakfast.*

*Captain is very anxious to unload cargo and take fresh and be ready to leave just after Saturday midnight. Cargo for Singapore exceeds 1500 tons. The cargo is under the charge of the Chief officer not the Captain and the Chief Officer says it is almost impossible to do it in the time working day and night. The dock labourers (Chinese) only work when they like and are paid for every little job (e.g. each package they carry from the ship) immediately they have done it. They draw their pay in cash as the work proceeds and when they have got what they consider sufficient for their immediate wants they knock off at once. So it is almost impossible to get any overtime labour in Chinese ports of Singapore. All cargo is shifted by hand labour in Eastern ports. Captain fears to stay in Singapore over Sunday because work at the docks is not allowed on Sundays.*

*Tuesday Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>*

*We seem to have run into bad weather for there was heavy rain all night and during this morning. At noon the weather cleared up and we were able to see the mountains of Sumatra although 60 or 70 miles distant. Afternoon continued fine and at 6pm we had come up to the land ; Pulao Bras, Pulao Weh, Pulao Ronds and many other smaller islands with Acheb Head and Sumatra to the South.*

*After dinner i.e. about 7pm many lights were visible on the island's big light houses. The course is now changed so that we run more to the South. At night I attend a rehearsal in the Quartermasters room for a concert fixed for tomorrow night. Step dances, Irish jigs, reels, etc., sailor's songs and Irish songs seem to form the greater part of tomorrow's programme.*

*This afternoon I had my hair cut by the Boson. I sat on a camp stool with a towel around my neck whilst he cut lumps of hair off with a rusty pair of scissors. After the operation I stripped and had a bath as the only possible means of getting rid of the hair which all seemed to have got inside my shirt. My hair now looks like cellar steps but as the Boson and the Lamp Trimmer are the only barbers aboard and we are equally in ability everyone else is in the same plight as myself. Hair cutting ashore in the East costs about 2s 6d. Certainly my hair is shorter than ever before and feels cooler.*

Wednesday Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> Straits of Malacca

Land in Sumatra visible during the day.

Afternoon spent in writing the programme for the Smoking Concert at night. Captain read Max Adler's Elbow Room to me on deck during the morning.



Concert 7 – 9pm

Great success. Officers pay for liquor. Chairman JW Smallwood.

- |                       |                                          |                    |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Selection on Banjo | Whistling Rufus                          | H Shackleton       |
| 2. Song and Step      | Can't keep away from dancing.            | J Matthews         |
| 3. Recitation         | Muddled mixture                          | J Thompson (Lamps) |
| 4. Song               | Broken Vow                               | W Woods            |
| 5. Song               | Farm Yard                                | J Power            |
| 6. Song               | Just becoss she made them Goo Goo Gooeys | P Steel            |
| 7. Song               | Lurking for a coon like me               | RN Hodgson         |
| 8. Song               | Santa Clause is coming fore de morning   | H Shackleton       |
| 9. Song               | Merrie England                           | JW Keeble          |
| 10. Song              | Longshoreman Billy                       | M Carrol           |

5 Minute Interval

- |                |                                         |                     |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 11. Song Welsh | Robin gock a darin back                 | O Jones             |
| 12. Song Welsh | Powder Monkey                           | JW Smallwood        |
| 13. Recital    | Dead man's Dream                        | J Thompson          |
| 14. Irish Jig  | Madame Madden, Ness Matthews and Keeble |                     |
| 15. Song       | Signal man                              | W Woods             |
| 16. Song       | Pat O'Hara                              | JW Keeble           |
| 17. Reel       |                                         | Keeble and Matthews |
| 18. Song       | Sherests by the Swanee River            | F Power             |
| 19. Song       | When I do begin                         | M Carrol            |
| 20. Song       | Listen to the hand                      | P Steel             |
| 21. Song       | Amateur fireman                         | JH Coveney          |
| 22. Song       | Midnight sun                            | H Shackleton        |

God Save the King

During the day there was heavy rain at intervals. Mr tanner and Mr Palmer did not attend concert. Chief Engineer sulky.

Thursday Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>

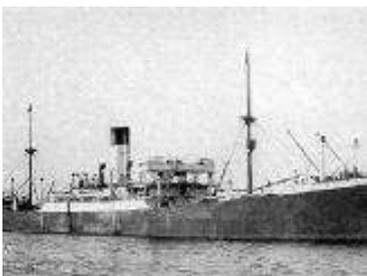
Showery weather. Beautiful scenery in Straits. Many wooded islands. Much traffic around us. We see the same blue funnel boats engaged in coasting trade around here. They distribute cargo of large ships from Singapore. They run from Singapore to Penang and Delhi. Tonight we anchor off Singapore. Ships not allowed to enter Singapore in the dark by Company's Regulations to their Singapore Pilot Captain Dart. Pilot will come aboard about 5am tomorrow morning to take us into the wharf. I have arranged to be called about 5am.

Captain is much distressed at Chief Engineer's conduct. Mr Sunner never speaks at the table beyond saying Good Morning. Captain is very decent and wishes to hold conversation at meal times. No-one knows what ails Mr Sunner.

Tonight we are passing through quite a swarm of small vessels coming from or to Singapore. During the day we passed a full-rigged 4 masted sailing ship. Very fine ship. Also passed Coasting Blue Funnel Hebe. Many lighthouses seen on the Islands. Saw 3 Malays fishing in small boat many miles from land. Captain signalled at Malacca so that agents might have everything ready for us to berth and work cargo immediately on arrival. If so we may finish Sat Midnight and leave at midnight on Sunday morning. Captain will be much distressed if we fail to manage this.

Friday Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>

Up at 4.30am. Took up the anchor at 5.30 am. Then had to wait for the Pilot until 9.30am. Arrived at [Tanyong Pagar Wharf](#) 9.30am. Waited breakfast until berthed. Then began on cargo. All labour is Chinese and Hindoo. Malays will not do this work. The wharf is 2 miles long and consist of Piles on a choral reef. Hundreds of Chinese are at work with cargo. The coal for the next part of the journey is bought here and the Captain buys 500 tons. This is brought by the Chinese from coal stays 100 yards away. They work in couples and carry one basket on a bamboo pole between them. They fill the basket at the stay then trot to the ship. Every 10<sup>th</sup> basket is weighed and considered the average weight of the ten. The average works out about 162lbs as they trot to the ship they pass the paymaster who gives the pay to one of them. The pay 1 3/4 cents between them. 100cents = 1 dollar = £1.10s or so. Today £1 = 10.80. Money changers or rather men hired by the real money changers come on board to change money. They give £1 = 10.70.



SS Antenor

About 10.30am I walk down to the Antenor another Blue funnel lying next to us. She has come in the previous day from Hogadati the most northerly port of Japan. The Doctor turns out to be Dr Perrin, a T.C.D man who has been with the ship for 6 years or so. As it is a wet morning I camp with him till lunchtime, taking of Japan. Good and bad dollars. The case of a 3<sup>rd</sup> mate of the Ajax who was put in jail for striking a Jap dock labourer at Yokohama because the Jap cussed him., etc.

*After lunch I walk up to Singapore 2 miles away and having a look all around I engage a rickshaw to run me around again. Without any instructions from me the runner begins to take me along the streets at a fair speed. As I did not possess any Straits money and only one sovereign 1 shilling and one sixpence I thought I had better get some change. It was now 4pm I thought the banks would be shut so I told the runner to go to the "Hotel". He did not understand and I found that he did not understand a word of English. So I made manual signs to indicate the act of drinking. Still he did not understand but ran me up to a group of Hindoos and Chinese to who I repeated the signals for they did not understand English. They seemed to understand my signs and shouted a great deal at my man and away we went again.*

*After running another mile or so, he ran up to the drive of what appeared to be a private club. I went up to investigate but the biggest door was marked Warders Mess-room. I suppose it was a goal so I hurriedly got back into the rickshaw and shouted at the man. So off we went again.*

*He pulled up at a bar and smiled with great satisfaction. I walked up the steps to the bar and was met by Hindoos. In the bar was hung a placard marked Welcome to Madras Bob's bar. The place looked like a barn. A German was playing the piano and the place looked disreputable so I turned and walked off again. Next I saw a place marked Hotel Cecil so I walked in and asked for a bottle of beer. They supplied a bottle of lager and then I began to talk about change. The man at the bar, a German Jew offered me a 5 dollar bill and 5 silver dollars and 30 cents for £1. I told him he was a thief and he did not seem pleased but as I had kept the £1 in my pocket I refused his offer and gave him 6d for the beer. He said the 6d was no good only 20 cents. So I enquired the price of the beer and found it was 40cents. I exchanged my 6d for 20 cents and gave him the shilling and some language for his beer and then set off for the docks.*

*Arrived there and gave my 20 cents to the driver. 10 cents would have been sufficient. Knowing I was green he tried to get more money from me so I handed him over to the police. My head was aching fearfully. This I attributed to the heat and the stink. After dinner I went to bed and stayed there until 8am next morning.*

*Saturday Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>*

The following section was originally written in Pitman shorthand:

*Captain came on the ship boozed last night and was very funny at dinner.....{illegible}  
.....when they came to look for the coat it was missing. No doubt.....{illegible}*

The diary continues:

*Dr Perrin came aboard from Antenor to visit me and we spent the morning yarning. After tiffin I went ashore and walked for about 2 miles along the Keppel Road but saw none but Malays and Chinese. Passed native villages and in one village I found a native billiard room where Chinese were playing a game like Skittle Pool. There were no windows in the room*

*only spaces for windows so I stayed to watch for a few minutes. These people stare at an Englishman but cease to look at you if you stare back at them.*

*A Dutch Mail Boat homeward bound from Java anchored next to us during the afternoon and Malay boys came alongside shouting Makeedive! They dive from their dugout boats for coins thrown by the passengers and they never miss a coin. The harbour and Roads swarm with Chinese junks and lighters. Captain Williams of the Antenor and Mr Williams, a clerk from the office, stay for dinner. Captain Williams is great fun. After dinner Coveney and I go ashore and after Coveney has upset a Chinese labourer who walked against him in the dark we get a rickshaw at 7.30pm and drive up to Singapore to the Hotel Europe. Here we alight and tell the boy to wait for us. We have and play a 100 game of Billiards. Won and then went for a drive round the town just to cool down. The waiters, billiard markers and everyone we saw at the hotel, except visitors were Chinese. Hats, caps and walking sticks, shirts etc. are on sale in the Billiard Room. We drove along Main Road Orchard Road, Malay Street, etc. and back to the hotel.*

*Here we met Mr Bird the Chief Engineer of the B.I. Paru and his Chief Officer. More drinks and more billiards. When we left everyone had to be tipped. Waiter, markers, Malay policeman at the door called our man for us. Then back to the wharf arriving at 10.30pm. The rickshaw man got 50 cents for pulling two of us round for 3 hours. He trotted pretty well.*

*I stayed on deck till 11.45 pm at which time the cargo was finished. Then to bed.*

*Sunday Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>.*

*About 3am was awakened by most awful clattering of the Chinese passengers coming aboard. Further sleep was quite impossible so dressed about 5.30am. We left the wharf at 6.50am and proceeded to sea for Hong Kong. We have about 600 passengers with comprador, cooks and tally clerks, etc. So these passengers are on the fore and aft decks down holds and in can be castle, it is almost impossible to find out their numbers. The passengers are mostly men but also 20 or 30 women and numbers of children. Some women have their feet screwed up, some men wear long figure nails some wear almost nothing. Very mixed crowd. Children wear silver bracelets around their ankles and wrists. Habits are not very cleanly and in a few days we shall know all about it. Spent afternoon in bed to make up for lost sleep. After dinner went to captain's room till 10pm and then to bed.*

*Monday Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>.*

*The first news this morning was that one passenger was already dead. After breakfast 1<sup>st</sup> officer and I went down to make enquiries and found the dead man with his blanket over him. We took charge of his money and effects. Found 10 dollars in his box but no doubt he had been robbed when he got there. We found him to be a young man aged about 20 from Swatow. He appeared to have had Hemiplegia. I certified the Captain that the death was due to Ht.dis. & embolism. Then the Boson and the Quartermaster lashed him in his blanket with a fire bar enclosed and in the presence of a hundred or more curious Chinese they shoved him*

*through the hole where the ashes are thrown out. He sank immediately. To show my impartiality I gave him a parting shove and there was one less passenger.*

*The passenger are lying about one group smoking opium, others playing Chinese dominoes, some pitch and toss fan tan, odd and even, etc. All these passenger are returning home often having made sufficient money to retire on. Sometimes when one loses all his money gambling he gets dotty and runs amuck. The usual run to Hong Kong is 6 days but as we are in the NE Monsoon, against strong winds current and heavy seas we may be nearer 8 days.*

*The passenger fare is 5 dollars = 9s 6d or so and for that the Coy carry them feed them and provide the best of attention including the doctor. So careful are the Coy of the passengers welfare that any officer striking one even under provocation (and there is plenty) will be dismissed on arriving home. The cost of feed a Chinese is not more than 12 cents per day so there is plenty of profit.*

*The ship has carried as many as 1800 at a time. This is the Chinaman's favourite company and it this branch of the business which made the firm. The pilgrims for Mecca via Jeddah are very similar to this crowd. We expect to take pilgrims to Jeddah on our return journey.*

*Population of Singapore = 100,000 of whom 800,000 are Chinese etc.*

*This morning Mr Smallwood and I walked in and out among all the passengers looking for the sick if there were any. Lamp-trimmer and sweepers came with us to brush up the dirt and spray Carbolic around. The atmosphere in the holds and centre castles was horrible and in addition the weather was so bad that the majority were sea sick and too ill or lazy to go to the sanitary conveniences and the result is almost beyond imagination. Very little of it was quite sufficient for me. I am informed that their quarters on this ship are palatial compared with their manner of pigging in their private houses. The wonder is that they live. Our firemen are angels compared to the passengers. Yet many of our passengers are doubles worth £50 – £100 or more. They lie huddled up together and if left alone would not move till we reached Hong Kong. Tomorrow if the weather abates an attempt will be made to take tickets and count passengers.*

*Some of our sailors amuse themselves by catching hold of a man's pig-tail, hoisting it around the owner's neck and then half strangling him in a playful way. This must be very amusing to the Chinaman! The most well-developed of the Chinese are very fine men but will allow little white man to punch them all around the place. Chinese will not touch a dead body for they consider it "bad joss". When one is buried they give him presents for Chin Chin Joss. Our man today was given a Chinese wooden pillow for Joss.*

*The weather is getting very bad and we are only making 8 knots or less though steaming at 11 knots. The waves constantly wash over the poor passengers who are lying on the decks. The decks are covered with awnings but they are no use for keeping out wind and sea. Many passengers wear nothing but a pair of cotton pants and perhaps a soft felt hat like father's.*

*We are now in the China Sea where the Typhoons occur. I am not anxious to experience one. Yesterday morning after leaving Singapore we passed an Italian gunboat but since then (36 hours) we have not seen a ship of any kind.*

*Yesterday we saw a few islands but shall not see any more until within a few hours of Hong Kong. There seems to be as much rain in this quarter as there is at home. We have had rain every day for 10 days or so.*

*Singapore by day did not appeal to me greatly. The buildings looked old and of poor material. By night it looked fine. Well lighted buildings look very fine, shops covered with Chinese lanterns. As there are no windows in most places you can see everything as you drive past e.g. concert in Town Hall, dinners in the clubs native barbers shaving heads and cleaning ears of Chinese. Opium dens, liquor shops, different kinds of shops, Fish, rice, green grocers, coffee taverns, Chinese eating houses. Raffles Hotel where all the customers go in evening dress. The hotels seem to have no window panes only openings (very large) through which blows what little wind there may be. The native quarters seem very uninviting. You rarely see a woman – only old ones.*

*Tuesday Dec. 1*

*The sea is very rough wind blowing mod. gale and we are shipping water forward constantly. Under difficulties all the passengers were driven from their quarters except women and children. Having collected them on deck they were allowed to return to shelter through the forward door of the centre castle and tickets were taken at the door as they passed in. Great struggling. Subsequently all the tickets were counted and found to number 644 including the dead man and 8 stowaways who had money but were trying to escape payment. They Swore they had no money but still they were induced to pay up. Heathen Chinese. Most of these people are quite lousy. We are only making 7 knots at present. We also carry 1 comprador, 8 cooks for passengers and 5 Chinese Tally Clerks for book-keeping and cargo work.*

*As we left Singapore on Sunday morning, a mail boat from home was just arriving. Probably had letters for me for I got none in Singapore. I hope this mail boat catches up with us in Hong Kong. Letters from home would be very welcome. Since leaving Singapore we have rapidly left warm weather behind us and now I wear jacket and vest to feel comfortable. The ship pitches but I feel quite comfortable now and must be getting used to it.*

*Wednesday Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>*

*Yesterday afternoon Captain asked me to examine and report on condition of Engine Steward. There was one case of ague among the passengers. Today the weather was fine but exceedingly rough. Gale blowing. The P&O Mail Boat was sighted behind us at 2am and passed about 5pm and was out of sight by 11 or 12 am. Our speed is reduced to 4 Knots and the P&O ship is estimated to be doing about 5 or 6 knots. Shipping seas continuously and the passengers' lot is not a happy one.*

No serious cases among the passengers although some showed minor ailments, e.g. ulcers but by the advice of Chief officer I took no notice otherwise every passenger would have some minor ailment for which he wanted treatment. Engines have been racing all day but I feel quite comfortable. The movement is all pitching an a/c of head seas. Awnings stops and stays torn down or carried off by sea. Had words at lunch with 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer about "sardines" and used strong language but settled down to old familiarity during the evening. Wind increasing and the sea has just carried away the large awning over No.1 hold where we have some of our passengers. (Spent afternoon on hold).

Thursday Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>

Examined all passengers this morning. Heavy weather continues unabated. Yesterday's run was 118 miles as compared with 104 miles the previous day. Seas wash the decks continuously. It is too rough to go on deck so I spent the afternoon in my bunk sleeping. At 4.15pm the Steward brought me my tea but as I was asleep, he left it on my chest of draws. I awoke to find the tea and toast rolling on the floor. In some rooms, more luxuriously furnished than mine, pictures are thrown from the walls. The 4<sup>th</sup> Engineer has been awakened twice during the last 2 days by the pictures at his bunk head falling on his head as he slept.

I went to Captain's room at night and played cards. He explained to me the Captain's duties when the ship is in port, also the formality of deeds of chartering a ship. Inland revenue on 4550. Whilst we were playing cards several heavy seas broke on board the ship and during the night we run at half speed. We ship much water and do considerable damage to fose awnings, etc. It is impossible to stand in the full blast of the wind without holding on to something.

Friday Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>

Awoke at 7am. Shower bath etc. Weather just as rough as ever. The run for the last 24 hours is just 96 miles, this is the ship's worst record for a full day's run. Never less than 100 previously.

Usual inspection of passengers 9-10am and spent the morning with 4<sup>th</sup> engineer, he in bunk, I on satee. After lunch I examined all instruments for rust but found all in good order. Then had my first shave in a week managed without any great difficulty in spite of the weather. At 6pm just as the dinner bell rings, the sea breaks over fore deck and breaks down the awning over the No.1 hold where we many passengers. Hardly had this been remedied, breaks awning again and floods the hold to a depth of about 2 feet and deck to 5ft. The Chinese passengers are in for bad times as their bedding floats around. They themselves do not take much harm for they are scantily clad but their baggage and bedding must suffer severely. The Comprador has 4 days supply of provisions left and we shall be 6 days yet if this weather continues. Still passengers are very happy. Captain remarked at dinner that if my father could see me now he thought my days as Ship's Surgeon would terminate at the next port of

*call. Still I am very comfortable. If we do not meet a typhoon we shall do very well. Chief Engineer and Captain have settled their differences.*

*Saturday Dec 5<sup>th</sup> 1903*

*Weather continues very rough and water is constantly coming aboard. Examined passengers this morning and found one man sick. Phthisis. Tally Clerks have had a row with the cook this morning and gave one cook a hiding for not providing better grub. The Comprador is paid by the Company to feed the passengers and Tally Clerks. For the pay he provides rice, dry fish, salt beef. He also keeps ducks and sells them to the passengers who care for such luxuries. Lately he has only supplied rice for he says weather too bad to cook beef or fish. Still he cooks ducks for those willing to pay. Heathen Chinese. He suggested that as Clerks were not satisfied the stewards should feed them out of ship's stores. Rather rich when he is paid to provide for them. When he kills a duck they collect the blood and let it set in saucers. No part of the duck is wasted. They even clean then eat the guts and eat them with the rest. What do they do with the feathers?*

*These Chinese write with a small brush. As the Chief Engineer remarked today about No.1 Chinaman "What he does not know, is not worth learning." He told of a No.1 on another ship with him who asked for a holiday on Good Friday. When questioned, he knew about the crucifixion, etc. but said "English big Joss no good like Chinaman Joss. Man kill English Joss. China Joss kill man." All Chinese Firemen belong to a Guild who protect their interests. Any ship ill-treating Chinamen would find it impossible to sign a fresh Chinese crew. Chinese Firemen are much addicted to smuggling. They appear to have no sympathy for a sick Chinaman and laugh at the antics of a sick Chinaman who is too weak to move. A sea sick Chinaman is a laughing stock to all the rest. Typhoon= Chinese word for big wind.*

*Sunday Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>*

*Just as rough as ever. It is impossible to stay on deck on account of the pitching and rolling. I am not sick but have got a cold from being we by spray and do not feel comfortable. My time is chiefly spent in the cabins of the 3<sup>rd</sup> officer and 4<sup>th</sup> engineer and shall now be very glad when we do reach Hong Kong. It is now a month since I received news of home and even that was a fortnight old. Still I am fairly happy and shall be very so when we reach port again.*

*The passengers are a nuisance and I do not like going around their quarters. They are a filthy dirty lot and stink as the Captain says "you can fold your arms and lean on it".*

*It is too rough to write letters and so I must wait until we reach Hong Kong. Captain has arranged for Singapore letters arriving late to be forwarded to Hong Kong.*

*Fan Tan is played by Chinese in such a way as it is heavy gambling. The Carpenter once lost 35s in an afternoon to them. No.1 is a great man at the game and plays for £5 or more at a throw. These people still gamble everything they possess or ever hope to. Some of our Firemen owe £10 or £15 of gambling debts to No.1. Their pay is £1 per month.*

*In Hong Kong we pay off the Chinese and sign on again so there will be some work for me in examining the new hands.*

*Monday Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>.*

*Wind moderating, sea decreasing but still rough.*

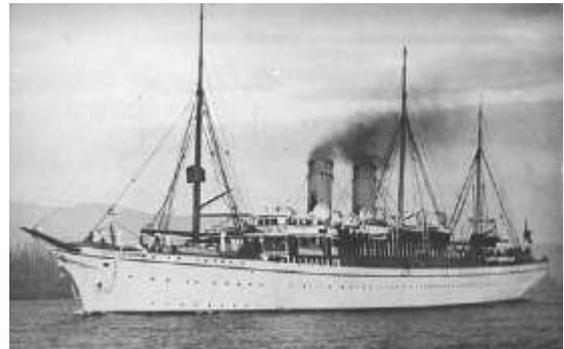
*Examined passengers for the last time today and we shall reach Hong Kong tomorrow. At dinner had a great argument with Captain and Chief engineer and officer re Burglary. Played cards in the evening as usual. Nothing really fresh today.*

*Tuesday Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>*

*Hong Kong. Arrive at 2pm.*

*About 9.30am we sighted Gap rock with lighthouse and passed at 11am. After that we were dodging between islands right up to Hong Kong. Splendid scenery, bare rocky islands very small but rising to great heights. Victoria Island or Hong Kong seems to be the largest of the island and Victoria Peak rises to a great height most precipitously. At the bottom of the hill is the business town. At the top is the European residential quarter. Splendid buildings everywhere. It is quite hot here although so cold at sea. Magnificent natural harbour. We lie at a buoy about half a mile from shore.*

*Next ship to us is the CPR Empress of India which connects Hong Kong to Vancouver and so the CPR to Montreal and on to Liverpool.*



*Large numbers of British Battleships Cruisers and destroyers etc. lie near us at the Naval Dockyard. This is the Centre for the China Squadron.*

*Passengers and baggage are quickly discharged into sampans and launches. Port Officer comes aboard fills in his papers. Had a scrap with Coveney. After dinner I am going ashore with Mt Smallwood. Hong Kong looks a very beautiful place but will investigate shortly.*

Canadian Pacific Railways  
"Empress of India"

*Later.*

*Captain invited me to go ashore with him for dinner. We go in the Captain's sampan. Get rickshaws and drive round for a couple of hours and then to Hong Kong Hotel where we got a splendid dinner. This Hotel is far bigger than anything I have previously entered. At dinner there were about 200 people. These include officers from French, Italian and English warships lying here. Dinner 7.30 to 9.30pm \$1.25. The bill of fare consists of 80 different edibles. All waiters are Chinese and their waiting far surpassed any previous experience of mine.*

The next line is written in Pitman shorthand:

*We have a few drinks and the Captain gets just a trifle skewered.*

The diary then continues in plain English:

*Get back to ship by sampan at 10.30pm and then to bed.*

*Honk Kong is very like England except that the streets and people are Chinese. Some places, e.g. hotels are full of English people. Police are Chinese or Sikes. Soldiers and sailors abound everywhere also marines. Leviathan, Glory, Thetis, Amphitrite and other are in here.*

*The China Squadron settle here for winter except for a few guard ships around the coast as at Wei Lei Wah. There are many fine barracks and military clubs, naval clubs, canteens, Service Hospitals, etc. polo grounds, cricket football and lawn tennis, race course etc.*

*December 9th*

*This morning about at 7am. The Mutual boat Hysen arrives also a large French 1<sup>st</sup> Class Cruiser. After breakfast our Chinese firemen are paid off and a new crew signed on Only 7 new ones out of 29. Chinese traders are aboard and I but ashtrays, cufflinks and a watch. Then the Captain and I go to the Hyson to call upon the Captain and doctor. Captain Davis and Dr Garatty. CS Ireland. Surgeon has had two trips with Booth boat Jerome, also to OSS Archises to Java. He strongly urges me to take the Booth trip and the OSS Australian trip. After looking at his curios I return to Dardanus for lunch having promised to call for Dr Garatty to go ashore at night.*

*In the afternoon I explore Hong Kong and buy tobacco and picture postcards. I return for dinner and then to Hyson.*

*Garraty is engaged for evening in examining new crew so must go ashore without him but with Matthews and Thompson.*

*We go to the Traveller's Hotel which is crowded with British blue Jackets. Here we meet the Boson's Mate from the Leviathan. Mt Seymour is a very decent young fellow who has been through the S. African Campaign and the Taku Ports and Yinstin engagements. I arrange to go over Leviathan on our return to Hong Kong. We return to the ship at 11pm in the*



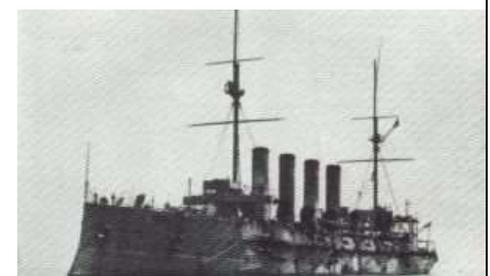
HMS Leviathan



HMS Glory 1899



HMS Thetis



HMS Amphitrite

*sampan and we meet Quartermaster Madden. The passage money for the four of us the woman is paid 40 cents and kicks up a great fuss on the gangway but she got no more money. For the return to Hyson and the shore in the evening we gave the woman 2 20cent pieces. Our cargo work is all finished by 6pm but is undesirable to leave or enter Hong Kong harbour in the dark. So we await daylight to continue the voyage to Shanghai. Many men have been lost from sampans in the Eastern ports. The Chinamen used to rob them and throw them overboard so now all sampans that leave from the pier and an official takes the number of the sampan, the destination and the number of passengers and enters these into a book so if a man is missing they can tell if he entered the sampan and what sampan he was in.*

*A sampan is a small junk usually sailed by women who live on the boat with their husbands and family. Women do the coaling in Hong Kong.*

*Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>*

*This morning we left HK at 6am for Shanghai The first part of our journey is through a narrow strait with high hills on each side. The weather is beautiful and the journey is very pleasant. The strait is no wider than the Menai strait and in places narrower. Hundreds of junks are out at sea fishing and we continue meet them for hours. The sea is calm but the wind is increasing again. In Hong Kong I ordered a cane chair at £3 25s and a painting of the ship to cost £1. I shall be short of money before we get home even if I get a good draw at Yokohama.*

*Hong Kong continued*

*When the Chinese firemen are paid off they get a roast pig from ashore and large numbers of Chinese crackers. With these they have a great Joss Festival. They fire off the crackers to frighten off the evil spirit from their quarters in the fore-castle and then have a roast pig feast. In Hong Kong there were quite a hundred small banks. The clerk there count the coins a great rate and ring each coin as they count to see if its good money. A strange custom out here is "[Comshaw](#)".*

*Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>*

*The wind is getting up again and it is expected that we shall have more rough weather. One day at sea in this weather is much like another and I find an increasing difficulty in writing an account of the day's travel. Any coast is almost annihilated and quite beyond my geographical knowledge. We are now out of sight of the coast.*

*We are now passing through the Formosa Straits and are about 25 – 30 miles from the China coast. The weather is fine but very cold and after the hot weather we had in the Indian Ocean we feel the cold much more than had we been used to it.*

*Chinese junks out fishing are continually in sight again and occasionally small sampans or rowing boats though how the men manage to keep them on top is surprising. This morning*

*we passed a large Russian cruiser going South to Hong Kong for winter. From all accounts the war scare has evidently subsided. It is strange to think that I have no home news later than October and it makes me wonder sometimes how everyone is at home. Of course I know that other people on the ship have not got letters lately and also that letters for me are somewhere on their way. I hope that all are well. Late in the day we pass a British sloop sailing down to Hong Kong. At 8pm we pass unseen an island with a fine lighthouse.*

*Wind still increasing and sea coming over a little. I have been writing home and now find that it is 11.30pm so I suppose I must get into my bunk. By the engines the ship should be doing about 12 Knots though actually she is doing 8 the difference is due to the wind, head sea and current.*

*Dec.12<sup>th</sup>*

*Nothing particular to note.*

*Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>*

*Today we passed a score of islands and finally picked up our Shanghai pilot at Fair-was-buoy. Then we preceded up to Wusong a port at the mouth of the Jan Tse Kiang. The river hereabouts is 10 miles in width. The tide was out and would not be up to dark and it is not safe to attempt to navigate the river in the dark so we must wait till morning. To save time in Shanghai we begin immediately Sunday afternoon to discharge cargo into lighters whilst lying about a mile out from shore. These labourers work through the night. The pilot stays on board for he takes us into Shanghai and then waits for us turning and takes us back to the Fair-way-buoy. The pilot is Mr Guntry, a half-bred European-Chinese or something of that nature, He is a very nice fellow and tells us much about Chinese customs e.g. burial, compass, Evil influences, buildings, the honest nature of the "uncontaminated" Chinaman. The Chinese Almanac and its bearing on business transactions, the storming of the [Taku Forts](#), the payment of the soldiers for each piece of work done e.g. Gunners paid for each shot. I was also told of the Chinese Mandarins receive the money to maintain sailors and soldiers but forget to engage any. When inspection arrives they pay "boys" to dress in uniform and parade before the inspectors. For the same reasons their battleships are useless.*

*Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> Monday*

*At Shanghai*

*At daylight we proceed up the River. At the river mouth many ships were anchored overnight awaiting daylight and tide. Here we saw the Blue funnel Prometheus which had arrived from Japan during the night.*

*Soon we left the main River Yangtsi and enter the Wosung River about a mile wide. This river resembles Liverpool on*



SS Prometheus

*the Mersey more than any other place I have seen.*

*In the river are several fine Chinese cruisers and as we pass along we see grave mounds, forts, mills etc. on shore and many fine ships on the river. We arrive at the wharf at 9.30 having travelled about 15 miles upriver from Wosung. At Shanghai are French German American warships but I see no British.*

*Mr Shackleton and I go ashore in the morning and drive around the town in rickshaws and return to ship for tiffin. At tiffin we meet Mr Wortley and the Captain from the Prometheus which has followed us up the river and is now lying at a buoy just a short way from the wharf. Mr Wortley is the OSS Company's representative and is travelling abroad picking up information for the firm. He left England after we did cross the Atlantic to America, then by rail to San Francisco and on to Japan by one of the various lines. It is said his chief object is to make enquiries relative to the Trans-Pacific passenger trade, for this Company is said to be building 8 large passenger ships to run in connections with the American railway to Montreal then rail across America and this Company's boats to Japan.*

*Mr Wortley is really the Company's naval designer. He has just returned to Shanghai from Peking where he has stayed a week and has many interesting yarns about his travels. In the afternoon Shackleton and I go across to Prometheus. Here I find Dr Forsyth a junior surgeon of the Edinburgh Infirmary who has been compelled to resign his office and travel on a/c of breakdown in health due to septic poisoning affecting his heart.*

*On the Prometheus they have a fine gramophone and we have quite a nice impromptu concert. Shackleton then crosses to that side of the river opposite Shanghai to call on friends so about 4pm I return to Shanghai and Dardanus for dinner. At night I stay on board for no-one is off-duty and I do not care to go alone. In the morning we called at Astor House and drove along the Bund.*

*Dec.15<sup>th</sup>*

*Work goes on all night but I sleep well. Next morning go for a long walk in Shanghai and examine many places of interest e.g. [Bund](#), various Consulates, different European quarters such as the French Colony, British Colony, German and American districts. Foo-Choo Road, Peking Road, Nanking Road, Broadway, etc. Return to ship for lunch and learn that Dr Forsyth called on me in my absence and left word that he would call for me in the afternoon and we could go to the China city or native city of Shanghai. He arrived soon after 1pm and we proceeded to the shop of AL Khee the taylor and asked him to send one of his numerous relatives with us as a guide. We then took 3 rickshaws and drove to the city gates which must have been about 2 and half to 3 miles from the ship. At the gates we paid our rickshaws and discharged them, engaged a guide to show us around.*

*The city is enclosed by a wall and has a moat around it. We cross the bridge and enter the city. What a horrible dirty place it is with open drains running down the main streets like rivers. The stench is horrible. Other streets are so narrow that I could touch both sides with*

*my outstretched hands. We were taken through Joss Houses council chambers the courts Saw their Gods , etc. Also their stocks and instruments of torture. We saw a Chinese marriage The vaccination place - their god of health and sick Chinamen praying to him. Then we went through the tea houses, opium dens, etc. Saw silk threads being manufactured by hand from silk fibres, ivory being carved etc, etc. We saw no other Europeans in the place and wherever we went the natives crowded around us some begged of us. Also we saw the Mandarins riding in sedan chairs sitting in judgement at the Court House, etc. On leaving there we proceeded to a tea house in the Foo-choo Road where we had tea and were entertained by a native band and Chinese singing girls. The price of tea depended on the seats occupied. We sat in the front seats and paid 60 cents each.*

*Then we had opium smokers all around the room. They seemed to smoke in pairs each one lying on a sofa at opposite sides of a small table with the opium outfit on it. Here they pay half a dollar for opium smoke or 1 dollar for opium and tea and they make a day of it.*

*On leaving here we drove to Astor House for a drink and a game of billiards. I won the game. Then we went to the barbers and Forsyth had his beard shaved off. Then to our respective ships for dinner. At night walked round the town alone for three or four hours and saw the native streets lighted and returned to ship about 6.30pm. A tea house runner comes aboard and wants to take us ashore but we decline. He raises his hat and says "Good night Sir".*

*During the day I met French and German blue jackets marching in detachments with the bands playing. The bands consisted of a few horns and drums and made a rotten noise. The Shanghai Police consists of Chinese Sikhs, Britishers, Germans, Italians etc, according to the district or colony.*

*Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>*

*The pilot (Gandry) came aboard at 8.30am and in a few minutes we left the wharf, went down the river and unfortunately met the Mail Boat P&O just coming up to Shanghai with our letters. After clearing the river we dropped the pilot and steered for Japan. During the day we got into rough weather and the ship being light rolled tremendously. The Captain is again having trouble with his stomach.*

*Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>*

*I was called at 7am to see the Captain who was suffering from a bilious attack. The weather was again very rough and cold with occasional hail storms. No land in sight though at noon we were about 60 miles South of Tuelpart. At night I play Halma with the Captain and get to bed about 11pm after an hours reading.*

*Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>*

*This morning we are in the Straits of Shimonoseki and are delayed about two hours waiting for a pilot. The scenery is magnificent. 3 little Jap doctors, the Port Sanitary officials come*

*aboard and examine all the crew. They drink coffee and have cigars. All European visitors Pilots etc. seem to drink whiskey when they come aboard in various places. Not so the Japs. They wear fine uniforms with no end of lace (gold) buttons of brass. We take on a substitute pilot and make for Moji. We are now in the Inland Sea of Japan – world famous for its scenery.*

*We arrive at Moji 12.45pm and immediately commence cargo work and also take in 1200 tons of coal. The women and girls help to work the coal from the lighters into the ship. We lie about half a mile from land in the Strait of Shimonoseki with the town of that name on one side and the town of Moji on the other. The Strait resembles Menai in many respects but is deep water and there are plenty of ships here. It is bitterly cold. The surrounding coast consists of big mountains with villages lying at the foot.*

*The Japs are most polite always cringing to Englishmen and are continually bowing and raising their caps to us. The labourers favour two classes of costume, one a kind of dressing gown with a band tied round the middle, with no under clothing; the other in skin tight cotton suit and makes them look like evil spirits in a pantomime. The women also are almost naked. I do not go ashore because it is hardly safe to go in a sampan as the wind is very strong.*

*Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>*

*Leaving Moji at 1.45pm and passing through the Inland Sea with Mr Devonish as Pilot. At night I play cards with the Captain until 9.30pm when Shackleton reports from bridge that we are about to enter a very narrow pass. The Captain goes on the bridge deck and stays there until we are through the pass. It seems to be about 150 yards wide and is well marked out, there being light houses every half mile or so. Then I retire to my bed.*

*Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>*

*When I get up at 8am we are rapidly coming into Kobe, arriving at the Quarantine Station shortly after breakfast. After another minute inspection we are allowed to proceed to the buoy and lie about half a mile out from Kobe. Traders come aboard with all kinds of China, vases, lacquer work, boots, tobacco, clothing, scents, soaps, tools, oranges, postcards, stamps, etc.*

*About 11am Captain Tilbotson, Captain Hannan of the Calchas and myself go ashore in the launch. We are taken to the Kobe Club and made full members. After a few rounds of drinks (from which I kept aloof) we adjourned to the Oriental Hotel and had very good tiffin with more drinks. I drank Kerrin bear (i.e. Jap larger) and found it very good indeed. Then back to the Club for billiards and drinks. I had no drinks and one game of billiard, won it and then slipped off and had a long walk through the town. At 6pm*



SS Calchas

*I met Captain and went back to the ship for dinner.*

*In Kobe during my walk I met Edgar Leich who was just about to leave Kobe for home with the Calchas. They had been across the Pacific to British Columbia. Leich advised me not to take the Trans Pacific trip. After dinner I had Shack and Douglas in my cabin for two hours or so and when they left I wrote letters to home, FW Pollard, Briggs, Rev WG<sup>1</sup> and Sister Cartwright. It took me until after midnight to finish and then to bed.*

*In the morning I met Captain Harrison, a marine surveyor on the ship and after speaking to him for a moment, he remarked that I was evidently a Lancashire man from my accent. He said he had relatives in Preston and invited me to tea in the afternoon. I had arranged to meet with our Captain at 5.30pm so did not avail myself of the invitation.*

*Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>*

*Left Kobe at 4pm. I did not go ashore today as the ship was expected to leave for Yokohama about noon. We were delayed till 4pm by cargo taking longer to discharge than was expected. During the morning I bought 6 pieces of imitation bronze for two Chinese dollars, 3 Japanese working toys for 4.70 Jap dollars, 14 coloured photographs for 2 yen, 12 packets of Old Gold cigs for 50 cents. This reduced my stock of money brought from home about £5 to 3 or 4 dollars. On arrival at Yokohama I intend to draw about £10 of my screw.*

*During the night the cold has been very severe and water escaping from the tanks has frozen so that there is plenty of ice about us now, Captain Harrison came on board before breakfast and invited me to lunch at his house but owing to the uncertainty about sailing I was compelled to decline but promised to call on him on the return from Yokohama. He told me that the news re Russia and Japan was worse this morning than at any previous time. Europeans here were of the opinion that unless the Japanese fight this winter, Russia will be the top dog in the future, but that this winter the Japs could beat the Russians.*

*At Kobe we leave the inland sea and sail into the Pacific on our way to our next port. Today despatched my letters and 8 postcards by Trans-Siberian mail. If war should break out these letters would never get through. The Empress of Japan leaves Yokohama on Xmas Day for San Francisco with European mail via America. I must write soon and catch that mail in case my Siberian mail fails to get through.*

*Practically the entire Russian Navy is at present around this quarter of the world. I am informed that Jap despatches for St Petersburg go to London first for approval before being sent on. The American Squadron which was ordered to Panama owing to trouble there has received orders to return to Japan for the winter. Usually the American Squadron winters at Hong Kong. British residents in Kobe have been advised by the British Consul to send their wives back to England. Lloyds have refused to underwrite cargos for the East at present.*

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Reverend William George Flack, Dr Flack's brother.

*Altogether it is thought that the present signs point strongly to hostilities which it is said may begin at any moment. Now to bed.*

*Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>*

*Beautiful day, but very cold yet. During the day we had more fine scenery. At 7am Yokohama was in sight and remained in sight till dusk. We also passed very close to an active volcano on an island named Vries Island<sup>2</sup>. Smoke in great volume was issuing from the crater.*

*About 6.30pm we arrived outside the port of Yokohama, anchored and waited for the pilot and daylight. About 5 in the afternoon a Japanese Battleship came by at full speed cleared for action and firing her guns at a great speed. The Japs have their army and navy quite prepared for war.*

*I am beginning to believe that Japan is the finest country in the world or I am quite sure I would rather live at Kobe or Yokohama than any place I have seen in the East. The scenery of the I.O.M. is very poor by comparison.*

*After anchoring the Jap Port Sanit. Officers came aboard and inspected every man very carefully. The more I see of the Japs the more I like them. From our anchorage we see Yokohama and its lights very distinctly. Several other ships are lying near us. The approach to the harbour is a narrow pass between two break waters and requires daylight for its navigation.*

*Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>*

*This morning I was called at 5.30am to see the carpenter who had developed an attack of ague. It was just coming daylight. At 6.30 we took up the anchors, picked up the pilot and proceeded to the buoy on the harbour selected for us. Traders, agents, stevedores and coolies were quickly on board and our remaining cargo was soon discharging. After breakfast I waited for money in shore coming aboard. This delayed me until 12 o'clock.*

*After drawing my cash \$120, I went ashore with the Captain, we took rickshaws and drove round the Bluff, a high headland outside the town where the Europeans reside. It resembles the ride from Douglas to Port Soderick<sup>3</sup>. We called at a tea house with which was combined a sea-bathing establishment. This place is one of many but in cold weather they are deserted. We had drinks and stayed about an hour warming ourselves by the fire. Then we drove away again through rice-fields and native villages and arrived in Yokohama again about 4pm. The Captain took me to a Jap hotel and at his request the lady manageress took us all through the place. Gardens, hothouses, fountains. Music room, bed rooms (English and Japanese).*

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<sup>2</sup> Now known as Izu Island (see <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/298517/Izu-Islands>)

<sup>3</sup> Douglas to Port Soderick is a coastal road on the Isle of Man.

*The place was better furnished than any hotel I have been in previously either at home or abroad.*

*Next we inspected the curio shops and the Captain bought several pictures but I thought he paid too much for them. Then returned to the ship for dinner. During the morning my letter from home and Newspapers were handed to me. In the evening Shackleton, Coveney and I went ashore and had a billiard tournament which I won and afterwards we had a look around in our rickshaws. 65 dollars were stolen from Coveney's room this afternoon.*

*Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>*

*Today I stayed on ship until after lunch and then went ashore. This time I walked around all afternoon and returned for dinner. By this time the ship's Carpenter had commenced to be ill and was complaining of vomiting and cramps in the legs. This subsequently developed into delirium tremens. He wrecked his room and roamed around the deck with a fully loaded 6 chambered revolver. This was taken from him with difficulty and he was put in irons and lashed to his bunk.*

*In Yokohama on this day I made the great mistake of going ashore in my badge cap, with the consequence that all the beggars, rickshaw men and sampan men badgered me a great deal. Quite a procession of cadgers followed me wherever I went. The sampan men refused to row me back to the ship for less than half a dollar. I consulted a policeman but could not quite make him understand. He did however order the sampan man to take me aboard and I arrived there at about 6.30pm and half an hour after dinner commenced.*

*Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>*

*We sailed at 12.30 (just after noon) so did not go ashore today. At 6.30 we sat down to Christmas Dinner.*

#### *Menu.*

*Soup – Tomato*

*Boiled fish. Salmon (fresh) Parsley Sauce*

*Veal cutlet Mushroom sauce*

*Fricassee of Calf's Feet*

*Pigeons Pie*

*Roast Soo Chow Turkey - Boiled ham*

*Roast leg of Mutton*

*Boiled Shanghai Corned Beef*

*Boiled Fowl and Ham*

*Veg. Cauliflowers, Potatoes, Cabbages*

*Pastry. Plum Pudding. Apple Custard*

*Blanc mange, Plum cakes, Mince meat pies, Victoria Sandwiches*

*Cheese*

*Fruits – Apples, oranges, persimmons, mangoes*

*Coffee, Claret, Beer, Brandy, Whiskey, Port*

*After dinner the captain proposed “Those we love and who love us”*

*This was well received and after a few others we left the table at 8pm for the focsle where the men were holding a Smoking Concert to which we were invited. The room was decorated with ships flags and Chinese lanterns. We left at 10.30pm.*

*Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>*

*Today we passed the active volcano on Vries Island and arrived outside Kobe at 6pm. The doctors came out to us and after their examination we had dinner. Anchored outside the harbour we awaited daylight. I played the usual game with the Captain. During the night the Carpenter was very bad and rough and I had to sit up with him. He thought the crew had mutinied and were setting fire to the ship. So he marched the deck with his revolver vowing to shoot all he saw. Mr Shackleton gained his confidence and got the revolver off him. It took seven of us half an hour to put him in irons and tie up his legs to get him into his bunk. He has been secretly drinking since we left home. He had a slight attack last voyage which Dr Jones logged as Malaria.*

*Dec 27<sup>th</sup>*

*I was only able to go ashore for 3 hours in the afternoon as the Carpenter was not fit to be left for longer than that. In the afternoon Shack, Lamps and I went ashore and bought China etc. in the Moto Machi at Nakamuras. We bought other things at the different shops and returned to the ship for dinner. Whilst in Nakamuras the Captain walked in and did not seem pleased to see me ashore. He asked how I left Chips and when I intended to return. I told him but did not hurry off for I did not come out here to act as an asylum attendant. At night we had a little concert to ourselves in Shackleton’s room.*

*Dec 28<sup>th</sup>*

*This morning Chips was much better so the captain and I went ashore at 10am and called at the office where I had to sign a form that the ship was free from infectious disease. Then we called on Captain J. Turner Harrison and arranged to meet him at his office at 12.30 and go up to his house for lunch. I went off on my own hook and walked about till 12.30 when I met the two Captains at the office and we drove up to Captain H’s house for tiffin.*

*At his house he introduced Mrs Harrison to us also the son – her son, his step-son. Mrs Harrison is a Spanish Princess who owned many islands in the South Seas where she met Captain H who was trading down there with his sailing ship. She is very wealthy. The son (Charles) was educated in Tokyo, Stonyhurst<sup>4</sup> and Germany. When the S.A. war broke out he*

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<sup>4</sup> Probably refers to Stonyhurst College (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonyhurst\\_College](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonyhurst_College))

*left school in Germany and enlisted as a Private in the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Dragoons and was two years in S.A. got medals and five bars. He is now 20 years of age.*

*We had a very good time there and a good lunch. After that I drove to the Waterfall and looked around. Then drove to Hyogo and examined the temple<sup>5</sup> and other places returning to the ship for dinner. At night I wrote letters home. Later we had a concert in Mr Sh. Rooms and spent the evening on board. At night it began to rain, this was the first rain we had experienced in a fortnight. Went to bed 12.30pm.*

*Dec. 29<sup>th</sup>*

*The rain still continues and it is impossible to work the cargo this morning. Too wet to go ashore so I finish my letters write up the diary and the log. This keeps me going till 2.30pm. Tonight the Captain and I are to dine with Mr Devonish the Company Pilot.*

*At 5pm we went ashore together and called at the office. I changed my remaining stock of Japanese money for Chinese. We drove next to the Kobe Masonic Club and there met Mr Devonish and were introduced to two gentlemen who were to dine with us as Messrs Whymark and Adams. At 7pm we drove from the Club to Devonish's house. Here we met Mrs Devonish and her 3 daughters. The youngest was a girl about aged 8 and named Mabel, who reminded me of someone at home<sup>6</sup>. Also there was a Japanese gentleman present at the dinner named Mr Botali. We had a great feed and music afterwards. The house is a fine one and magnificently furnished. Devonish's income as a Pilot = £1,200!*

*We left at 11.30pm and drove down to the ship in our rickshaws which had remained at the door the whole time.*

*29<sup>th</sup> December*

*Mr Devonish was aboard by 5.30am and we left at daylight and proceeded down the Inland sea. This journey I had a full day in the Sea and enjoyed the scenery immensely. We left the Inland Sea at Shimonoseki and dropped the pilot at Rock Huron about 4am next day. From this point to Shanghai is about two days steam and there is not much to see except small islands so there will be no description necessary. We had fine weather all the way and made good speed.*

*Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> 1904*

*At night about 11pm we arrived at the mouth of the Yangtse, took on a pilot and proceeded to Wo Sung where we anchored till daybreak next day.*

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<sup>5</sup> Probably the Ikuta Shrine (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ikuta\\_Shrine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ikuta_Shrine))

<sup>6</sup> Dr Flack was probably referring to his sister Mabel Flack, born 1900.

Jan. 2<sup>nd</sup>

About 11am the tide was high enough for us to cross the bar and we arrived at Shanghai about 2pm. The Company buoy near the wharf was under repair and we had to anchor on the opposite side known as Putung<sup>7</sup>

The large cotton mills in the district are situated at Putung and I noticed that work continued well into the night, the mills being lit up as late as 9pm.

Owing to a boil on my head and considerable oedema of the face resulting therefrom I felt compelled to stay on board but I did not mind that much as I had a very thorough acquaintance with Shanghai on the outward run. Most of my time here was spent in my cabin either sleeping or reading.

As we came up the river, the Pyrrhus was about a quarter of a mile ahead of us but she went to the wharf because she was outward bound. 3<sup>rd</sup> Engineer went aboard Pyrrhus and got boozed.

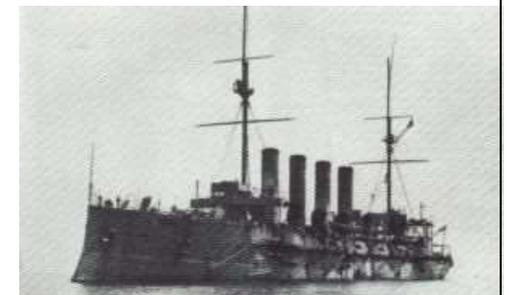
Next morning he was reported by Mr Sunner to the Captain as incapable of doing his work satisfactorily. Consequently he was entered into the official log.



SS Pyrrhus

Jan 4<sup>th</sup>

Left Shanghai with the tide about 1pm with Pyrrhus about half a mile ahead of us again. She is bound for Fusan and Corea. Mr Wortley joined us at Shanghai and is travelling with to Hong Kong. On the way down we travelled at 14 Knots per hour, engines full out and favourable current. Mr Wortly has been making arrangement for the Company to build docks at Shanghai, Tacoma Seattle etc and also Taku in China.



HMS Amphitrite

On our way down to Hong Kong the T<sup>o</sup> rose rapidly and we were soon enabled to throw off our winter clothes. We passed HMS Amphridite travelling at full speed to Wei Lei Wei. She was doing 28 Knots, so we passed at the rate of 42 knots (28 & 14) = 47 or 48 miles!

Mr Wortley was a great conversationalist and time passed rapidly.

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<sup>7</sup> Probably misspelt, meaning Pudong (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pudong>)

Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>

Arrived in Hong Kong at 6.30 am on this day. We found that there was 2000 tons of cargo waiting for us so it was decided to clean boilers here. So this requires at least 4 days, we shall have a long stay here.

After lunch I went ashore and walked to the tram terminus and took a return ticket to the Peak Hotel. From here I climbed up to the summit arriving about 3pm. I sat down and enjoyed the view till 5pm and then made my way back to the ship via the tram.

The weather here is as fine as one could imagine and just cool enough to make walking comfortable. We never see a cloud here and the harbour looks fine with its great quantity of ships. There are 60 or 70 large ocean going steamers lying at anchor in a small area.

Among the men-of-war are HMS Albion, Eclipse, Glory, Leviathan, Centurion, Vengeance, Tamar = Prison Ship, gunboats and several destroyers.

USA Rainbow and others, French Argus etc. The principle troops are Sherwood Foresters, Marines, Sikhs, Royal Garrison Artillery. Etc.

Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>

This morning Captain and I went ashore at 9.30am engaged rickshaws and drove around the town. Later we were introduced to the Club and made visiting members with full privileges during our stay here. We had tiffin at the Club and afterwards separated. I went down the Happy Valley to see the Cup-tie between the Leviathan and Glory. It was a good tussle Lev. Won 4:2. Afterwards the Albion played the Hong Kong Club and beat them 1:0.

I met the Captain at 7pm at the Hong Kong Hotel where there was musical dinner at 7.30pm. We stayed for dinner and had a very good time,. Music was provided by the full band of the Sikh Regiment. They were an excellent band and the same description applies to the cooks.

Leaving the Hotel at 10pm, we went to the Club for an hour and returned to the ship at 11.30pm.



HMS Albion



HMS Eclipse



HMS Centurion



HMS Vengeance

Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>

*This morning we started off again and went to St John's Cathedral for morning service at 11am. The service was very good, not so the sermon or the congregation. Included in the congregation were military and naval officers also Chinese Christians.*

*After Church we met a clerk from the office who invited us to have tiffin with him at the Club. Captain accepted but I declined as my funds were getting very low. Money is scarce aboard and to raise the wind the crew have been selling their curios. Thus I bought a small pair of cumsha vases from Lamp-trimmer for 3 dollars and a set of coffee cups and saucers etc. from Steel for 3 dollars. Other purchases in Hong Kong were chair 3 and half dollars, picture 4 dollars, 2 silver buckles 5 dollars. In this way the money melts and I have now less than two dollars to last until we get to Marseilles when we shall be able to sub again.*

*I spent the evening writing letters to home E.A.C., Dr Briggs and pollard and to Mr N.A. Smith. Although I have written many letters and post cards up to now I have received 6 letters, two from home 3 from E.A.C. and one from Briggs.*

Jan 11<sup>th</sup>

*Captain Holman of Glenfarg dined with us. I did not leave the ship from Sunday noon until we left Hong Kong on Tuesday Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> at 8am.*

Jan 12<sup>th</sup>

*We left Hong Kong by the East Channel which I thus traversed for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time. Weather is very good, slight swell giving little motion to the ship. French Mail Boat Hainan left with us and came out the same way and was in sight for two days. She is making for Saigon then Singapore. She has my letters aboard and if I write at Singapore she will carry that letter also.*

*Played Halma with Captain at night. Captain Shack and I discussed Chippendale Sheriden and old oak furniture at dinner. Captain not at all pleased because we preferred modern furniture or said so.*

Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>

*Not invited to play with Captain tonight so yarned with Douglas till 10pm. Another fine day with no sea. No land seen since passing Gap Rock outside and South of Hong Kong. Captain is getting despondent and melancholy about his work, his wife is not coming to Marseilles etc. The melancholy occurs every voyage at this period. We are carrying 13 Chinese Firemen from HK to Singapore to join Butterfield and Saines [?] boat the Myrmidon Sign Jara [?]*

*Good weather prevailed and we made good passage to Singapore arriving in*



SS Ping Suey

roads Sunday Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> at 7am. Waited till 9am for pilot – Captain Dark and arrived at wharf at 9.30am. The Ping Suey was lying in the next berth to us. Dr Barlow of the Ping Suey called on me during morning and stayed till 0-30pm. Letters from home and from Sister Cartwright awaited my arrival. In the afternoon I walked up to Singapore and made enquiries about Mr Bailey. The oil works were closed (Sunday) so I called at Hotel Europe to send him p.c. asking when I could see him next day. Back to the ship for dinner. Afterwards music and hymns. Then several of us went aboard Ping Suey and stayed until 11 pm. Then to our bunks.

Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>

In the morning Barlow and I walked into town and stayed an hour or two, called at the Europe Hotel, drove back to wharf in 'garry. Mr Bailey telephoned that had got my pc and would meet me at the Cricket Club Pavilion at 4.45pm. In the afternoon Barlow and I took a 'garry to the Gardens 4 miles out. These are Botanical & Zoological Gardens. Drove back and arrived at Club at 4.45 and met Bailey about 10 minutes later. He soon put me on to an old Owens man<sup>8</sup>, Goodwich and then Bailey went off.

Feb. 3<sup>d</sup>

Bert's birthday.

We shall arrive in Jeddah soon after noon. At 4am the O.S.S. Co Calchas (Surgeon Dr Liech) was seen about 6 miles behind us. This ship belongs to the biggest class and is faster than our ship. She opened out her engines and tried to beat us into Jeddah. She rapidly overhauled us but we picked up the pilot first at 2pm. The Calchas being almost level with us at the time. She had to stop and wait outside for another pilot to come out. The pilots are Arabs. The harbour is a very dangerous one and to get inside we have to dodge round several long coral reefs and even then anchor 2 or 3 miles from the town of Jeddah.

Arab dhows come alongside chiefly manned by slaves either Negroes or Somalis. The pilgrims are not allowed to leave the ship for the quarantine station until the Agent and Port Doctor have been aboard and made all necessary arrangements.

I was busy getting snap-shots of the pilgrims during this time. No one from the ship is allowed to land in the town and the pilgrims are taken to the quarantine island some miles away. The town is plainly seen from our anchorage. I understand that the town is indescribably filthy and the European residents about 6 in 20[?] never drink water except what they beg from ships in the harbour.

There are two large towers from which the Priests order the prayers vide Arabian Nights. Also we can see the reputed Tomb of Eve, a long building painted light blue. Even the little sailing cutters of the Doctor and Agent etc. are compelled to wind about like a maze to reach the shore for the reefs just reach the water surface and breakers are much in evidence.

When we arrived we found S.S. Menelaus lying in the harbour and soon after us came the Calchas, so we had

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<sup>8</sup> Dr Flack is probably referring to his University College - Owens College at Manchester University



SS Menelaus

3 Blue Funnel boats lying together. The town seems built on a desert and even the hills behind the town are so yellow or colourless that they are only seen when we almost arrive. Ten miles out we could not see anything of the land except the white buildings of the town. The hills N&S Sisters are over 2,000 feet but look like sand hills.

The Menelaus left for Singapore at 5.30pm. We followed out at 5.45pm but as it was getting dark the Calchas had to wait for daylight for it is too dangerous to attempt the passage out when the light fails. Thus our race with the Calchas, although we only won by a 100 yards or so, has meant an advantage of 12 hours in leaving for Suez.

Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>

We now meet all the ships coming down the Red Sea including many cargo boats taking out coal for the Russian and Japs. We passed the Orontes of the Orient Line bound for Australia. Passed Daedalus Reef at 8pm.

Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

The 26<sup>th</sup> day.

Passed the Brothers about 4am. Mr Smallwood wakened me at 6am to see a Russian fleet going East. It consisted of a 1<sup>st</sup> Class Battleship, 3 Torpedo destroyers and a large transport crowded with troops. Every day we pass 20 or more vessels here although in our run across the Indian Ocean 14 days we only saw about 6 in all and these were generally a long way off our course. Passed Mt Sinai. I never play cards with the Captain now??

RMS Orontes



Feb 6<sup>th</sup>.

Arrived Suez 5.47am

Quarantined disinfected and clothes sterilized. Left at 10am and entered canal at Port Tewfik. 3 miles up the canal we tied and were passed by 11 ships in a lump. This kept us from 11am to 2pm. Then we had a unimpeded passage to Bitter Lakes. Anchored at Ismailia at 7.30 or 8pm changed Pilots and waited for a ship to pass us. Proceeded at 10pm for Port Said.

Passed the day in the canal. Very fine day. Passed ships ashore in Bitter Lakes Spent afternoon writing letters. Calchas arrived at Suez just as we entered canal and had to stop for disinfection. When we were at anchor at Ismailia she overtook us and was trying to get away first when the signal was given but she failed to do it. Probably we shall now run straight into Port Said with Calchas at our stern.

Captain of the Calchas = Captain Hannah

Chief officer Mr Lazonby

Surgeon Edgar Leach

*At night I wrote to Father, Briggs and E.A.C. Its time I turned in 10.15pm for I may be called to interview Dr at Port Said about 5am tomorrow. Many of the ships in the canal are bound for the Far East with coal. We passed one ship with coal the Shewsbury ashore on a bank. She was unloading cargo into lighters.*

*Feb. 7th*

*Called at 5.30am at Port said to interview Port Doctor. Took on 300 tons of coal and left at 9.30am.*

*Feb 8<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>*

*On route for Marseilles we saw Damietta, Gavdo, Gozo, Pantalaria, Cape Bonne, Sardinia and then arrived of Marseilles*

*Feb 13<sup>th</sup> Saturday.*

*Reached Planier Light about 6.30pm got a pilot but were unable to enter the port because the Port Doctors had ceased work for the day. Anchored till morning.*

*Feb 14<sup>th</sup>*

*At 6 o'clock the captain and I were rowed ashore in one of their ships boats to an island in the bay near the Island of Chateaudif. Monte Christos prison to call on the Doctors. Afterwards the ship's and crew's linen was taken to the quarantine station for sterilization. About 11.30am we were allowed to proceed into port. Docked about 2-20pm.*

*Marseilles is a very fine port and does a lot of shipping business. The docks are very fine and are being continually extended. Here we learned of the outbreak of the Jap. Russian was and were glad of Japan's early success.*

*I receive no mail here. On arrival I was rowed across the docks to an office where I got pratique or permission for the ship to work cargo. Captain's wife was waiting on the wharf when we arrived having reached Marseilles the previous day. After lunch I left the ship about 2pm and made my way into town and succeeded in finding a shop where I could purchase a Daily mail of the previous day.*

*The town was very busy and had not the appearance of an English town on a Sunday for the shops, cafes, music halls, etc. were all open. The most striking thing to me was the immense number of cafes. Returned to the ship for dinner at 6pm. At night Coveney and I went to town on a tram and visited a no. of cafes, very nice places indeed. Café Riche, Maison d'ore, etc. Crowds were assembled at the newspaper offices reading the telegrams from the war. Returned to the ship about 11pm. A quarter of the people in the streets were soldiers in uniform.*

*Monday Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>*

*Went into town after breakfast and got Sunday's English newspapers. Looked around the old part of the docks and walked about the streets until noon. Then back to the ship. Spent afternoon on board in Coveney's room c Shack and Coveney. Douglas asleep in next room. Got calendars etc from English and American bars in the town. At night Cov and I started for town with 8 francs between us. Visited cafes until 8pm then went to Music Hall the Palais Crystal. Performance lasted till 12pm then we adjourned to cafes and stayed till we had just tram fares left for returning. Arrived ship about 1am and off to bed.*

*Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>*

*Yesterday I learned of change of programme for destination of ship and wrote home and to B. burn accordingly. Dailed for London via Portland at 8am. Bad sea and strong winds kept speed down and we passed Gibraltar at 6am on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>.*

*Head winds continue.*

The following section appears to be shorthand and is as yet un-deciphered.

*Feb 20<sup>th</sup>*

*Fair passage from Marseilles to Gib which we passed at 6 o'clock in the morning Then good weather in the Bay = 36 hours. Heavy swell – great rolling.*

*Captain and Mrs T, ikey because I would listen to his abuse of the medical authorities at Gravesend.*

*Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>*

*Passed Ushant light at 8pm.*

*Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>*

*8am Off the Start*

*Making for Portland for Pilot.*

At this point the diary ends although on the next two pages there is a listing of the crew which is partly illegible but reproduced as completely as possible in the following section.

***Crew of S.S. Dardanus.  
Birkenhead to Port Said Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> 1903***

*Capt. R.A. Tillotson*

1<sup>st</sup> Officer J.W. Smallwood  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer R.N.Hodgson  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer H Shackleton – 176 Gt. Horton Rd. Bradford  
 Carp. Henry Pilkington  
 Bosn F. Power  
 Lampt J. Thompson  
 AB J.W. Keeble  
 AB P. Suisted  
 AB S. Carroll  
 AB W.C. Saul  
 AB J.S. Robinson  
 AB A. Wood  
 AB J. Madden  
 AB A. Sherry  
 AB R. Steel  
 AB J Matthews  
 O.S. R.O Jones  
 Chief Engineer J.K. Sunner  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer J.Palmer  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Engineer J.H. Coveney  
 4<sup>th</sup> Engineer D. Douglas  
 Steward Ah Ming  
 Surgeon F.H. Flack

Wo Lon	Mess Room
Fong Wah	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Tin See	2 <sup>nd</sup> Cook
Wong Khee	Fireman from Stenton [?]

Cheong Yip	No.1 Fireman
Cheong Fook	No.2
Cheong Noi	No. 3
Cheong Yin	No.4
Cheong Foo	Fireman
Wong Lin	"
Tow Soi Heng	"
Leong Wan	"
Chan Kin	"
Tang Fat	"
Hi Hie	"
Cheong Fork	"
Chang Yoke	"
Foo Chong	"
Wang Chan	"
Chang Choi	"

*Chang Can* “  
*Chang Heng* “  
*Cheong Lain* “  
*Cheong Jin* “  
*Cheong Yeng* “  
*Ng Sain* *Fireman’s Cook*  
*Cheong Tack* *Firemans Boy*  
*Chan Tai King* *Cook.*

**ENDS**

