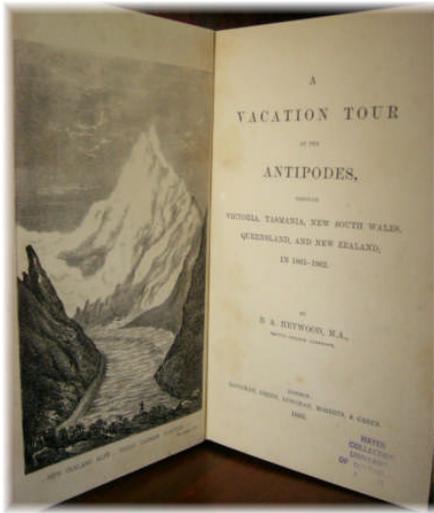


A Vacation Tour at the Antipodes Through Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand in 1861-1862

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A
VACATION TOUR

AT THE

ANTIPODES,

THROUGH

VICTORIA, TASMANIA, NEW SOUTH WALES,
QUEENSLAND, AND NEW ZEALAND,

IN 1861–1862.

BY

B. A. HEYWOOD, M.A.,

TRINITY COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE.

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1863.

PREFACE.

As I was recommended to take a *Long Vacation*, and to have a thorough change of air, for the benefit of my health, I determined to make a voyage to the Antipodes, with the intention of returning home through the Pacific and *viâ* Panama. The latter part of my plan was never realized, as the subsequent pages show; and my only regret now is, that I was unable to make a visit to the Colony of South Australia (a place of especial interest to both the commercial and legal world at the Antipodes) fall in with my later plans. Its fame, from the luxuriance of its wheat and grapes, and from the inexhaustible wealth of its copper mines, is now equalled by the distinction it has acquired through its "Torrens' Land Act," by which a simple, inexpensive, and safe mode of conveying

CHAPTER II.

VICTORIA AND TASMANIA.

JUNE 12th, 1861, I left Liverpool in the Black Ball clipper *The Lightning*, a ship of 1760 tons register. My fellow-passengers were upwards of four hundred in number, of whom only twenty were in the chief cabin. Delayed by head winds, we were thirty-three days in reaching the Equator; but the whole of our voyage was completed in seventy-seven.

When in 17° north latitude, and whilst our Captain was confined to his cabin seriously ill, the two chief mates cruelly ill-treated a sailor, and confined him in the ship's coal-hole in irons. With this exception, our voyage was pleasant enough, as we had a great variety of employments and amusements. At one time a school was held for the steerage children; whilst at others there was dancing, boxing, and playing at rope quoits, chess, draughts, or cards. In the Northern Tropics we had foot-races and leaping matches. There were also concerts; and in the

CHAPTER II.

(Continued.)

NEW SOUTH WALES AND QUEENSLAND.

At midnight of the 17th of October, our fifty-ninth hour out from Melbourne, we passed the entrance of the far-famed Botany Bay, whereupon Captain Moody (who was standing with me on the bridge of the steamer), much to my surprise, assured me that no convict settlement had ever been actually established there. (See p. 6.) In an hour and a half we passed beneath the Port Jackson lighthouse; and soon afterwards, running close by the "Gap," rounded a second lighthouse nearer the water's edge. The story connected with this "Gap" is very fearful. The *Dunbar*, from London, was seen in the distance off the coast one day. The sea was very rough, and the wind high; and the Captain, in trying to get into harbour after sunset, mistook the low gap in the precipitous rocks for the entrance itself. The ship was dashed to pieces, and only one man saved. He was found on a rocky ledge, but could not tell how he got there. The scene in Sydney next day

CHAPTER III.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE *Prince Alfred* did not reach New Zealand till December 24th, our seventh day out from Sydney. She was very uncomfortably crowded both below and on deck, with eighty-one horses* and a large cargo. The former filled both sides of the deck, quite to the poop, on which bundles of hay and boxes of fruit were stowed. We had, however, a calm passage, and plenty of time for reading. From *The Story of New Zealand*, by Dr. Thomson, late of the 58th regiment of infantry, I gathered much interesting information about these islands, and now give some extracts from it, as a preface to my subsequent pages.

It will be remembered from Chapter II. that Tasman, in 1842, discovered New Zealand; and that

* Horses are exported largely from Australia to India even. I have heard men from Bengal talk of the *Walers*, meaning horses from New South Wales.

CHAPTER IV.

RETURN HOME.

I WENT to Otago in the *Lord Worsley*, and lodged at Smith's Boarding House, close to the Barracks. Dunedin was advancing *very* rapidly. The *Aldinga* arrived with the English mails from Melbourne on the 17th; and as she left again the next day with the homeward mails, I went in her. We touched at the Bluff for the Southland letters, caught a glimpse of part of Stewart's Island,* passed Solander Rock, made 288 knots next day by steam alone; ran into a N.W. gale, fortunately got under the lee of Tasmania, and on the 24th reached Melbourne. Our mails were soon transferred to the P. and O. steamer *Bombay*, and some of ourselves to Menzies' Hotel.

The railway from Geelong to Ballarat had been opened during my absence, and I now took the

* The natives in the South trade largely with their brethren in the North, in supplies of the *Mutton bird*, which they boil down, and pack in its own fat in the large air bags of seaweed.

CHAPTER V.

EMIGRATION.

“I could not abide to live in the Colonies ;” and, *“If he can’t get on at home, send him out to the Colonies.”*

These two sentences represent the feelings of most people at home as regards the Antipodes. One thinks of colonial life as semi-barbarous and full of hardships; whilst another looks upon it as having a magic influence in replenishing the empty purse, or in reforming the hopeless youth.

In “Macaulay’s History,” and “Smiles’ Lives of the Engineers,” a sorry picture is indeed presented to us of the condition of England, Ireland, and Scotland, within the last two centuries. People even are alive now who would be recalled to the memory of what they themselves have seen in Great Britain in their youthful days, if they were to travel in the wilds of the Colonies; but in very many towns and districts of Australasia, the necessaries and even

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 - what churches were there and what time were services held?
 - what other activities were there in the community?
 - look for others who had the same occupation or other interests

All of this and more may be available in a seemingly mundane book such as a directory. Learn much of the background of life at the time, even if your ancestor is not listed there.