

## Colonial Tramp - Travels and Adventures in Australia and New Guinea

Ref. AU0091

ISBN: 978 1 74222 787 0

This book was kindly loaned to Archive Digital Books Australasia by the University of Queensland Library [www.library.uq.edu.au](http://www.library.uq.edu.au)



### Navigating this CD

To view the contents of this CD use the bookmarks and Adobe Reader's forward and back buttons to browse through the pages. Alternatively use any table of contents or book index to look for specific information and then use Adobe Reader's page navigation controls in the status bar at the bottom of the window to go to the relevant page.

### Searching this CD

- This CD is searchable using Adobe Acrobat Reader 4 or later. It is also *FASTFIND* enabled, giving very fast searches of all files on the CD at once! The *FASTFIND* search enhancement only works with Adobe Reader 6 or later. Use the Binoculars/Search icon in Adobe Reader or "Search" under the Edit menu to initiate all searches.
- For more information on advanced searching and other tips for the best search results [click here](#)
- Generally 95% - 99% of the words can be searched. Where the original type was poor the words may not be recognised for searching.

*The technical advancements that allow this searching bring a wonderful finding aid but there is still no substitute for reading the book!*

This is one of over 1600 products published by Archive Digital Books Australasia and over 3000 internationally from the international Archive CD Books project

Click on this box for the full online catalogue

[www.archivecdbooks.com.au](http://www.archivecdbooks.com.au)

**FREE download samplers available for most Australian and New Zealand products**

Archive Digital Books Australasia exists to make reproductions of old books, documents and maps available in digital form, and to co-operate with family and local history societies, libraries, museums and record offices to digitise their collections in return for other benefits.

Copyright © 2010 Archive Digital Books Australasia All Rights Reserved



# A COLONIAL TRAMP

Travels and Adventures in Australia and New Guinea

BY

HUME NISBET

AUTHOR OF 'THE LAND OF THE HIBISCUS BLOSSOM' 'EIGHT BELLS'  
'MEMORIES OF THE MONTHS' ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.



*An Ideal Rockhampton*

London

WARD & DOWNEY

12 YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN

1891

*All rights reserved*

# CONTENTS

OF

## THE FIRST VOLUME



INTRODUCTION . . . . .	PAGE 1
------------------------	-----------

### CHAPTER I

#### *FROM LONDON TO PANTELLARIA*

Tilbury Docks—The English Channel—Bay of Biscay—Old Recollections—Spanish Coast—Cape Finisterre—English, Colonials, and Israelites—Cape St. Vincent—Lagos Bay— Sunset at Sea—Coast of Tunis—Canè and Zembra Islands— Pantellaria . . . . .	6
--	---

### CHAPTER II

#### *MALTA*

Places of Interest—Guides and Boatmen—Lace-making—Canary vendors, &c. . . . .	17
--	----

### CHAPTER III

#### *TO KANTARA, IN SUEZ CANAL*

At Sea—Death of Scedy-boy—Port Said—Coaling—Arabs—Suez Canal—Mirage—Night Effect . . . . .	25
---	----

### CHAPTER IV

#### *FROM KANTARA, IN SUEZ CANAL, TO SOCOTRA*

Kantara—Sunrise over the Desert—Ballah Lakes and Villages— Timsah—Ismailia—Suez—Hills of Attàka—Afterglow over Sinai—Donkeys and Guides of Suez—Troubles of an Amateur Dragoman—The Red Sea—Mount Gharib—Gebel Teir— Twelve Apostles—Abyssinia—Bab-el-Mandeb—Gulf of Aden Socotra . . . . .	34
--	----

CHAPTER V

CEYLON

	PAGE
Colombo Harbour—Mount Lavina—Adam's Peak—Sketching under Difficulties—Gautama—Buddhist Procession—Road to Kandy—Mountain Scenery—Kandy Temples, &c.—Gardens of Peradina . . . . .	42

CHAPTER VI

AT SEA

The Doldrums—Incidents on Board—Cape Leeuwin—First Sight of Australia . . . . .	61
---	----

CHAPTER VII

ALBANY

Albany and King George Sound—A Boorish Reception—Qualifications of a Settler—Secret of Colonial Success—Incidents in the Early Life of a Squatter . . . . .	70
---	----

CHAPTER VIII

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Mortality of Sheep—The Rabbit and Sparrow Plagues—A Run through Adelaide—Landing in Melbourne—A Tragic Idyll . . . . .	81
--	----

CHAPTER IX

MELBOURNE

Fashionable Melbourne—Robert Russell—Old Melbourne—Free Library—A Spoilt Epic—Floods—My Old 'Coach' . . . . .	88
---	----

CHAPTER X

MELBOURNE—continued

Theatrical Experience—Little Bourke Street—Paddy's Market—Melbourne Life under the Surface—Something more to be Desired than Laudanum . . . . .	97
---	----

CHAPTER XI

MELBOURNE—continued

Colonial Institutions—Fitzroy Gardens—Old Friends and Times—Our Commonwealth—The Yarra Yarra . . . . .	107
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII

*VICTORIA*

	PAGE
The Western District—Towards Camperdown—Geelong—James Dawson, Author of the 'Australian Aborigine'—His Work—The Black Fellow and his Ways . . . . .	117

## CHAPTER XIII

*NATIVE NAMES OF PLACES*

Western District—Camperdown, and Landscape round—Thompson's Mad Bull—Drive to Lara—A Victorian Station—Mount Elephant . . . . .	128
---	-----

## CHAPTER XIV

*WESTERN DISTRICT OF VICTORIA*

Birregurra and Colac—A Drive to Lorne—Black and Tiger Snakes—Walk through Cape Otway Forest . . . . .	136
---	-----

## CHAPTER XV

*CAPE OTWAY FOREST*

The Selector and his Family—All about Snakes—An Advice to Socialists—A Horrible Night—Mr. Milder of Geelong—Queenscliff and War Preparations . . . . .	145
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVI

*TOWARDS NEW SOUTH WALES*

The Gold-yielding Districts—Ballarat—The Eureka Stockade—The Revolt of 1854—Mr. McIntyre's Theory of Gold—A Modern Representation of Jerusalem . . . . .	155
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVII

*BORDERLAND*

Road to Deniliquin—A Human Mole—A Sunset at Castlemaine—The Bendigo Porter—A Working Larrikin—Echuca—A Lesson in Good Breeding . . . . .	164
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII

*SHEEP-OWNERS AND THEIR ENEMIES*

The Riverina—Dry Weather at Deniliquin—Temples to Tethys— 'Jackeries' and 'Cockatoos'—Old Baldy—An Old-fashioned Hotel at Castlemaine . . . . .	PAGE 177
---	-------------

## CHAPTER XIX

*THE LAKE DISTRICT OF GIPPSLAND*

The Life of a Cattle Driver—Warragul—A Lenient Judge—Sale —The Lakes—A Native Poet . . . . .	187
---	-----

## CHAPTER XX

*GIPPSLAND*

Bairnsdale—The Lakes Entrance—Jamie the Aboriginal—A Night at Yarragon—A Mud Bath, and After . . . . .	197
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXI

*THE BUSH*

Monotony of the Bush—Yarragon—Size of Trees—A Young Man's Ideal—Laughing Jackasses—A Bush Church—The Bullock Driver—A Gentleman-Selector's Paradise—Beacons- field House and the Dandenongs—Weary Sundowners: a Theory—Farewell to Victoria . . . . .	205
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXII

*NEW SOUTH WALES*

Sydney—Peculiar Dreams—Liverpool—The Innocent Lag—Two Snake Stories—The Paupers' Asylum . . . . .	217
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXIII

*CONVICTS*

Some Reasons for Leaving out New South Wales—Mittagong— Berrima—Convicts—Bowral—A Walk to South Head . . . . .	227
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXIV

*OLD SYDNEY*

Old Days in Sydney—George Barrington—Convicts and their Masters—My Friend the Sea-Captain's Yarn . . . . .	237
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXV

*OLD SYDNEY—continued*

	PAGE
The Sea-Captain's Yarn— <i>continued</i> . . . . .	248

## CHAPTER XXVI

*THE BLUE MOUNTAINS*

Parramatta—Orange Groves—Penrith—Emu Plains—The Zig-zag—Educating Snakes—Over the Hills to Bathurst . . . . .	258
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXVII

*BATHURST*

Early Days in the Colonies—Governor Macquarie and the Great Blue Mountains Highway—Bathurst . . . . .	268
---	-----

## CHAPTER XXVIII

*TOWARD BOURKE*

From Bathurst to Bourke, and Towns between—Orange—To the Fish River Caves from Bathurst, and back by Katoomba— 'Auld Lang Syne' . . . . .	279
--	-----

# ILLUSTRATIONS

TO THE  
FIRST VOLUME

---

## PLATES

CEYLON ROAD TO MOUNT LAVINA . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
AN IDEAL ROCKHAMPTON . . . . .	<i>Title-page</i>
ZEMBRA ISLAND . . . . .	<i>page 6</i>
THE LAZARETTO . . . . .	„ 16
ST. ELMO . . . . .	„ 24
PORT SAID AND SUEZ CANAL . . . . .	„ 32
SUEZ AND RED SEA . . . . .	„ 40
CEYLON . . . . .	„ 56
WESTERN AUSTRALIA . . . . .	„ 72
PORT PHILLIP HEADS . . . . .	„ 88
YARRA YARRA AND GEELONG . . . . .	„ 120
BUSH FIRE . . . . .	„ 136
A SELECTOR'S HUT . . . . .	„ 152
ON THE RIVER MURRAY . . . . .	„ 168
LAKE DISTRICT, GIPPSLAND . . . . .	„ 184
ABORIGINAL HUT IN FERNS GULLY . . . . .	„ 200
SEA-CAPTAIN'S YARN . . . . .	„ 248
SEA-CAPTAIN'S YARN . . . . .	„ 256
THE BLUE MOUNTAINS . . . . .	„ 264



*IN TEXT*

	PAGE
GIBRALTAR . . . . .	12
STREET IN MALTA . . . . .	20
WHITE TOWER, WILLIAMSTOWN . . . . .	114
THE VEILED HARPY . . . . .	141
A BULLOCK TEAM . . . . .	211
THE SUNDOWNER . . . . .	215
A SNAKE . . . . .	222
SYDNEY HARBOUR FROM DOUBLE BAY . . . . .	238

# A COLONIAL TRAMP

*Travels and Adventures in Australia and New Guinea*

BY

HUME NISBET

AUTHOR OF 'THE LAND OF THE Hibiscus Blossom' 'EIGHT BELLS'  
'MEMORIES OF THE MONTHS' ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.



London

WARD & DOWNEY

12 YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN

1891

*All rights reserved*

CONTENTS  
OF  
THE SECOND VOLUME

— • • —

CHAPTER XXIX

*AT SEA*

	PAGE
<i>En route</i> to Brisbane—The Daring Captain—Smoke-room Yarns —‘Eow we were Saved,’ and Dick’s ‘Tale of a Shark’ . . .	1

CHAPTER XXX

*INSECT LIFE*

Coast Scenery from Sydney to Brisbane—Moreton Bay and Brisbane River—Impression of Long Ago regarding Foreign Countries—Habits of Insects—Mosquitoes, Scorpions, Centi- pedes, Fleas, Ants—A Great Battle on a Limited Field . . .	13
---	----

CHAPTER XXXI

*BRISBANE*

Early Days of Brisbane—A Gold-digging Episode . . . . .	25
---	----

CHAPTER XXXII

*BRISBANE—continued*

A Gold-digging Episode— <i>continued</i> . . . . .	34
--	----

## CHAPTER XXXIII

*AUSTRALIANS*

	PAGE
Brisbane of To-day—Governors Macquarie and Brisbane—Why all True Australians must be strictly Conservative—A Pious Land Speculator—About some Bazaar Horses—From Bowen Terrace . . . . .	48

## CHAPTER XXXIV

*MARYBOROUGH*

Sugar Plantations and Kanakas—Black-birding—The 'Young Dick'—An Idea for the Planters—The Kanaka Melodies of the Future . . . . .	60
---	----

## CHAPTER XXXV

*ROCKHAMPTON*

Some Shady Passengers—The Lion Comique and Lionesses—Burnett Heads—Keppel Bay and the Fitzroy River—A Night at Rockhampton—The Fasting Insect—Rockhampton as it is and as it ought to be . . . . .	68
--	----

## CHAPTER XXXVI

*MOUNT MORGAN*

The Queensland Throne of Greasy Mammon the Great . . . . .	79
--	----

## CHAPTER XXXVII

*COAST SCENERY*

Suburbs of Rockhampton—Olsen's Caves—Towards Townsville—Whitsunday Passage—Bowen—Two Nice Young Passengers—A Breakdown at Bowling Green—Cleveland Bay and Townsville . . . . .	91
--	----

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

*HIGHER THAN NIAGARA*

The Future Capital of Northern Queensland—Why the Town of Cairns should be Chosen—The Barron River and Falls—Mr. Monk's Idea, and Description by Mr. A. Meston . . . . .	100
--	-----

## CHAPTER XXXIX

*TO CAPE YORK*

Mr. McNaulty of Thursday Island and the Everlasting Ego—The Alexandrine Ranges—Cook Town—Albany Pass, and the Land's End . . . . .	109
--	-----

CHAPTER XL

*AT THURSDAY ISLAND*

	PAGE
Mr. Kerry's Account of a New Guinea Massacre . . . . .	116

CHAPTER XLI

*SAVAGES*

At Thursday Island—Kanakas—Superstitions of Savages—Will-power—Cannibalism . . . . .	127
--	-----

CHAPTER XLII

*CAUSES OF MASSACRES*

Savage Customs and Superstitions—Laws of Tapu . . . . .	144
---	-----

CHAPTER XLIII

*NEW GUINEA*

A General Survey of New Guinea—Its Possibilities, &c. . . . .	160
---	-----

CHAPTER XLIV

*THE LAND QUESTION*

A General Survey of New Guinea— <i>continued</i> . . . . .	169
--	-----

CHAPTER XLV

*THE PAPUAN AT HOME*

A General Survey of New Guinea— <i>continued</i> . . . . .	179
--	-----

CHAPTER XLVI

*UP MILNE GULF*

New Guinea—East Cape—From Samarai to Milne Gulf—Natives on the Rampage—An Errand of Peace—Scenery Going up . . . . .	187
--	-----

CHAPTER XLVII

*NEW GUINEA*

The Return Journey—Teste Island and Mr. Kessick—Surrounding Islands—Lakatoes and South Cape . . . . .	205
---	-----

## CHAPTER XLVIII

## MISSIONARIES AND TRADERS

	PAGE
The Rev. James Chalmers and his Work—Samarai—Jerry's Swim—Kerepuna—Dressed and Undressed Savages—Currie, Guise, and the <i>Pall Mall Gazette</i> . . . . .	215

## CHAPTER XLIX

## KEREPUA

A Big Man—Mourners—Hula—Coast Scenery—Port Moresby—Ellevara and Hanuabada . . . . .	225
---	-----

## CHAPTER L

## PORT MORESBY

A Parting at Port Moresby—Mr. Lawes and Father Vergus, the French Missionary—Laws of Permit—Andrew Goldie and his Journal—A Pretty Sunday-school Story . . . . .	237
--	-----

## CHAPTER LI

## FAREWELL TO NEW GUINEA

The Islands of Torres Straits—Thursday Island, and once more towards Brisbane . . . . .	250
---	-----

## CHAPTER LII

## ABOUT A VENING QUESTION

To Men and Women who may wish to Emigrate—Where they should go—South and Western Australia—Queensland . . . . .	260
---	-----

## CHAPTER LIII

## TASMANIA

Prison and Prisoners—Hobart—To Launceston—Mount Bischoff Tin Mine—A Launceston Sage—To Sea . . . . .	270
--	-----

## CHAPTER LIV

## THE AUSTRALIAN ALPS

Feathertop, Baldy—Razor Back—The Dargo—Omeo—Kosciusko—The Murray Gates—Drive to Bairnsdale—and End . . . . .	280
--	-----

# ILLUSTRATIONS

TO THE

## SECOND VOLUME

..\*

### PLATES

SYDNEY HARBOUR FROM NEAR SOUTH HEAD . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
BRISBANE FROM THE RIVER . . . . .	<i>page 16</i>
THE BUSHRANGER . . . . .	„ 40
THE BARRON FALLS . . . . .	„ 96
PETER BOTTE . . . . .	„ 104
ALEXANDRINE RANGE . . . . .	„ 112
CAPE MELVILLE . . . . .	„ 120
THE LIGHTSHIP . . . . .	„ 128
A NEW-GUINEA DANDY . . . . .	„ 136
A PAPUAN QUEEN . . . . .	„ 144
COAST SCENERY . . . . .	„ 152
MISSION HOUSE, PORT MORESBY . . . . .	„ 168
PORT MORESBY BY MOONLIGHT . . . . .	„ 176
HEATH ISLAND, EAST CAPE . . . . .	„ 184
AROMA, NEW GUINEA . . . . .	„ 200
CATAMARANS AND LAKATOES . . . . .	„ 208
BELL AND CLIFFY ISLANDS . . . . .	„ 216

## CHAPTER VII

*ALBANY*

Albany and King George Sound—A Boorish Reception—Qualifications of a Settler—Secret of Colonial Success—Incidents in the Early Life of a Squatter.

I HAVE, in the voyage out, kept a regular account of the points of interest day by day, for the direct purpose of letting readers who may follow my footsteps know exactly when to look out for the places ; but there is no necessity of doing so any longer, as it is a matter of choice, or convenience, how he may continue the rest of his journeyings—that is, after he shakes himself free of the punctuality of the mail steamships : therefore I drop the diary form with relief to myself, and, I doubt not, with equal pleasure to the reader, and after this will go on, stop, turn aside or back, as I feel inclined, without regard to time.

A balmy morning when we steam through King George Sound, and drop anchor inside the Princess Royal Harbour, with the pretty town of Albany lying in front of us, upon the shores of as lovely a bay as one could wish to look at.

During the night we have been passing Flinders Bay, Black Point, Donelly, Warren, and Bowles rivers, Point d'Entrecasteaux, with Mount Mitchell and the Bennet Ranges, the shores lighted up here and there with bush-fires, and by daybreak have sighted Break-sea Island and lighthouse at the entrance to the sound ; fine bold headlands



## CHAPTER XIII

*NATIVE NAMES OF PLACES*

Western District—Camperdown, and Landscape round—Thompson's Mad Bull—Drive to Lara—A Victorian Station—Mount Elephant.

I SHALL not soon forget the pleasant time I had with this genial Victorian squatter. It cheered me upon many a mile of my travelling.

'Why do you call this place Camperdown?' I asked him; for the fact that the land must have had characteristic native names and the incongruity of such a name for such a district struck me forcibly, when they had so much originality to pick and choose from.

'Why?' I had hit my friend in a sore place, for his bright blue eyes blazed out with wrath as he answered: 'Why are all our finest and most poetic native names turned into meaningless English ones? Because some idiot is appointed by Government to rush over the country and give names to places already named properly. The fellow who called our town Camperdown came here in a hurry, pulled out his Bradshaw, and on the first page he opened at random was Camperdown, so he straightway christened it, without rhyme or reason, by that name. And would you believe it, the native name of the township is "Warrnatts." M'Arthur's hill over there is called "Meenin'gnurt." That point of land over there on Lake Bullen Merri is called "Wuurna-wee-wheetch," or the "Home of the Swallow"; the country

## CHAPTER XIV

*WESTERN DISTRICT OF VICTORIA*

Birregurra and Colac—A Drive to Lorne—Black and Tiger Snakes—  
Walk through Cape Otway Forest.

THEY say that all good Americans when they die go to Paris. I fondly trust, if I am good enough in this life, after I pass away (for I have almost relinquished the hope during life) that I may be allowed to haunt Birregurra.

‘Don’t bother about Birregurra,’ my friends said; ‘spend what time you may have at Colac, which *is* worth a visit. See its Free Library and Town-hall, the rabbit-preserving factory, and the house of the man who introduced these interesting specimens into Victoria.’ It is the habit of pious Moslems to turn towards Mecca when they mutter their prayers; in Victoria it is the custom of all true squatters to turn towards this unpretentious building when they mutter their prayers—and fervent prayers they are, too. ‘See the bacon-curing, salt-works and fruit-preserving factories, and our grand freshwater lake, Colac, which is nearly 7,000 acres in extent, and delicious water; don’t miss that by any means.’

I didn’t miss Colac, or its lake; but though I hurried over it I made my sketches conscientiously. Somehow, Birregurra had got hold of my imagination by some occult power, and I felt feverish until I had deposited my sketching-bag and minute bundle of change of flannels in the



## CHAPTER XXXVI

*MOUNT MORGAN*

The Queensland Throne of Greasy Mammon the Great.

WE are now in the portion of Queensland where the earth is filled with treasures for those who may not be content with its bounteous surface—gold, silver, copper, and other metals. I have a box filled with precious stones with which a prospector presented me before I left the land, all from Central Queensland, and all in the rough: diamonds, rubies, opals, sapphires and other precious ware. They are dull pebbles of uncertain shape and varied low tones, for they require cutting to bring out their beauty; yet I prefer them as they are, because there may be flaws in them, which I cannot discern now, and I don't want to know their faults. Sufficient for me that experts have decided that they are what they were represented to be, real gems from Queensland.

All round Rockhampton the soil is good and productive; that we are getting into the tropics I know, because a man wanted to sell me a living young crocodile which he had caught a day or two before in the river above the Suspension Bridge.

But one of the most wonderful sights about this part is Mount Morgan, which is a mountain of gold.

In all other parts of the world men have to dig down for the precious metal, whether it is in alluvial or quartz form, but here they have only to shift the loose earth, or quarry

## CHAPTER XLIII

*NEW GUINEA*

A General Survey of New Guinea—Its Possibilities, &c.

NEW GUINEA, the largest island in the world, is being forced upon our notice more and more every day by the conflicts between natives and Europeans. The noble abnegation of the missionaries, who so frequently fall victims in their efforts to make peace between the offended Papuan and the acquisitive adventurer, the appalling stories of outrage and cannibalism, and the vague rumours which float towards England of vast possibilities and wealth in future to be gleaned from these coral-bound shores, tempt me to tell you what I know about it.

During this present tour throughout Australasia I went over the British portion of New Guinea, and besides, had the good fortune of being fellow-passenger from Cook Town to Brisbane with Dr. Knappe, who had just returned from his country's portion of this land of wonders; so that while I had the advantage of seeing from Motu Motu to East Cape on the southern side of the island, I likewise had the benefit of his experience of the northern side.

I did not go to New Guinea as a geological, botanical or geographical explorer, but rather in my capacity of artist and author, to observe the people and their ordinary habits, to learn how they built their houses, and cut their canoes, ornaments and general utensils, what they occupied them-

# General Tips

for searching and getting more from Archive CD Books products

- update to version 6 or later of Adobe Reader at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) for the best searching capability.
- enter the MINIMUM number of characters needed to bring up the search results required
- use Adobe Reader to do some trial searches to try to identify the characters that may be misread. These can show up in the extra text in the search results list. A few minutes trial will help you to avoid using characters that are more prone to being misread, e.g. try entering "rederi" if you want "Frederick", but find that the letters "F" "c" and "k" are sometimes misread.
- use the "Match whole word" option to eliminate unnecessary items in your results list, e.g. to eliminate all the blacksmiths and tinsmiths etc when you only want the name Smith
- use the "Match case" option when you want to eliminate all the occupations "smith" if you only want the name "Smith"
- Don't just search for names. Search the book for other names, places and subjects of interest:
  - look for others of the same name
  - look for others who lived in the same place or street
  - who was the postmaster or police officer in the town?
  - how often and at what time did the coach arrive in town?
  - 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.