

**A MONTH IN THE BUSH OF AUSTRALIA:
JOURNAL OF ONE OF A PARTY OF
GENTLEMEN WHO RECENTLY TRAVELLED
FROM SYDNEY TO PORT PHILIP; WITH SOME
REMARKS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE
FARMING ESTABLISHMENT AND SOCIETY IN
THE SETTLED PARTS OF THE ARGYLE COUNTRY**

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THOMAS WALKER

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1838.



P R E F A C E.

THE increasing interest which that part of the Public, who have directed their attention to our Australian possessions, take in every thing that relates to them, as well as the anxious desire of those who have intentions of Emigrating, to know any little particulars of the modes of the Country they are about to sojourn in, make it probable that a JOURNAL OF A JOURNEY LATELY MADE TO PORT PHILIP OVERLAND FROM SYDNEY, by a party of Gentlemen long resident in the Colony, will not be unacceptable.

It was intended only for the circle of the Writer's own Family, and, in the liberty of giving it a wider circulation, unknown to its Author, must be found whatever apology is necessary for its imperfections, being a literal copy of the original.

The responsibility of having infringed upon the privacy of individuals, from whom the party received so much hospitality, by the introduction of their names, must lay with the, perhaps, injudicious friend to whom it was addressed; nor was it without much reluctance he found himself obliged to do so, as the only means in his power of describing the localities of the travellers stages, and resting places.

Many of the details may appear tedious and unnecessary— they are retained as illustrative of the nature of the difficulties

and troubles, as well as the pleasures, that are incident to the Bush Life of Australia.

After they left the settled country they never diverged to either side of their route, except when nearest to that extraordinary country, the Australia Felix, of Major Mitchell, (an account of which will soon be before the Public), and, and though exciting their surprise and admiration, they only saw its outskirts—being still several miles from it—and may have also passed, very contiguous, to much fine country unnoticed.

A MONTH

IN

THE BUSH OF AUSTRALIA, &c.

Ship Inn, Liverpool, Thursday,
13th April, 1837, 9 p.m.

Being about to commence an extensive tour through part of this colony to Port Philip, I shall address to you a journal of my progress, knowing the interest you take in all that concerns this country. I am thus far on the way. We (Mr. Dutton and myself) left Sydney this afternoon about three o'clock. Our party are all to meet at Yass on the 20th, and start together for Port Philip. Some days ago we despatched a cart from Sydney with tents, provisions, and clothes, &c.; this, drawn by a pair of horses, will accompany us to Port Philip; there we think of selling it and our spare horses. We shall have two or three servants, besides a "black fellow," with us, so that our party will be tolerably strong. You may suppose that our ride from Sydney can have furnished few or no incidents worth recording. I found the road as dull and uninteresting as it used to be; it is in bad repair, particularly the half nearest Sydney. Few or no improvements have been made on the road-sides since we passed through them together, some years ago. The only improvement that I observed in progress is on the Burwood estate, which you are aware has been lately sold in small allotments; some of the new proprietors, are clearing and erecting buildings, one a very great improvement, has been made by the erection of the celebrated Lansdown bridge, over the creek formerly crossed by Bowler's bridge. The new structure is of stone, a single arch of 120 feet span, and is both handsome and substantial; it is, I believe, the first bridge of the kind in the colony, and does credit to the builder and architect as well as to the governor, in whose reign and under whose directions it has been erected. Although to-morrow will be market-day in Sydney, we meet very few drays with grain; the only agricultural produce I observed on its way to market, was hay, of which we met a great many loads; the number of horses now kept in Sydney is indeed very great; more, I should think, than in any other town of its size in the world. The weather to-day has been very pleasant, a clear atmosphere and mild temperature; indeed, with the sun shining as it did, full in our

faces, we felt it rather too warm, but now the temperature is delicious, neither too hot nor too cold. It being dusk when we arrived in Liverpool, I have not been able to see the town. The inn kept by Cummins, formerly in Sydney, seems remarkably clean, quiet, and well ordered. Good night.

Clifton, Saturday morning, 15th April, 7 a.m.—We arrived here last night at half-past eight, having travelled the last hour and a half by moonlight. We started from Liverpool at seven a. m., got to Raby to breakfast at nine, left it at eleven, and got to Kirkham at about half-past twelve. We were detained by Mr. Coghill's hospitalities until past four, when we set out for Camden, where we spent an hour, and did not reach this, till the late hour mentioned. The road we have found generally very bad; in several parts, say between Liverpool and Raby, and between Camden and this, it has never been made at all, just left to go over the natural surface of the ground. Between this and Camden, the road winds round the spurs of a range of hills running north and south, entitled the Razor Back, (over which the principal road to Argyle now ascends,) and it both winds and ascends and descends very much—a very bad line. The weather in the morning and forenoon was overcast, and so cloudy that we expected rain, but towards afternoon it cleared up and was very warm, the evening and night chilly. The scenery has been diversified, though in many parts of the road very uninteresting. Between Liverpool and a few miles beyond Raby, it is, for instance, very monotonous; few cleared spaces in the woods, though we passed in sight of the establishment of Glenfield (Throsby's), (J. T. Morres), Lepington (Cordeaux's), Raby (Rileys), (Chisholme's) &c. A few miles beyond Raby the scenery improved, inasmuch as we had the view of a few thousand acres of cleared land, extending to the Cow-pasture river, well cultivated, and with variegated tints from green to yellow, according as the crops, were springing or had been removed by the sickle. These lands comprise the estate of Oriulton, Harrington Park, Narrellan, Kirkham, &c. Passing the Cow-pasture bridge, we get into the Camden estate, of princely extent and value, comprising 25,000 acres, much of it very rich and alluvial, having about eighteen miles' frontage to the river. Even the uncleared parts which we passed, were thinly timbered and well clothed with grass; though there is a great deal of the land fit for the plough, not much of it, comparatively speaking, is under cultivation, only that which is cultivated by the family, about four or five hundred acres. I should think there are few or no tenantry, though it is by their means, I should say, that cultivation ought to be carried on. We did not go through the farming establishment though we passed close by it, and saw many well-built stacks, and that a horse power thrashing and grinding machine was at work. The mansion, garden, and ornamental ground, far surpass any thing I had before seen in the colony; they are, at the same time, substantially good and tasteful, and though costly, there is no display of mere wealth; they seem not intended merely to please the eye, or for show, but for use and comfort, and are at the same time elegant. We found Mrs. and Miss Macarthur as well as Mr. William there, and were politely received.

Cutter's Inn, Mittagong, 15th April, 8 p.m.—I was called to breakfast by Mr. M. McAlister, since I had completed my journal for yesterday; I shall, therefore, now resume. What struck me as most rare in the Camden pleasure-grounds was the green lawn, an ornament almost peculiar to and which I had not seen in perfection since I left England; it is as perfect at Camden as could be, and looked really beautiful. I was surprised to learn that there are but few sheep now kept at Camden, nor indeed is there on it much stock of any kind; what is wanted is tenantry.

After breakfast this morning we strolled about for a little while over McAlister's grounds. The view from the cottage which is built on an eminence is very pretty, and is extensive to the southward and westward; to the northward it is shut in by the Razor Back hills close at hand. There is for this country a very good garden in front of the cottage, in which there are a great many vines; the soil around is very good. We did not see Major Antil's residence nor much of his property, for on leaving Clifton (about ten o'clock) Mr. Matthew Mc A. was kind enough to accompany us as far as Myrtle Creek, distant by the road ten or eleven miles; but by taking us by a bridle path across a deep gully, the channel of the Stonequarry Creek, and impracticable for carriages, not more than four, we cut off Major A.'s estate, leaving it on the right. The road just there makes a most extraordinary bend so as to head the creek, and we went by the cord of this bow. At Myrtle Creek there is an inn (by Crisp), but we did not stop at it, proceeding on to Lupton's, seven miles further, where we arrived at about one o'clock and had dinner, a grilled fowl, bacon, potatoes, and green peas. The inn is kept by a young person who lost her husband lately, by his falling from his horse, and is very clean and comfortable. We left at three and arrived here at half-past five, so that we are making short journeys. We should have gone further to-day, but intend seeing the country about Mittagong and Bung Bung to-morrow, so have halted here in the neighbourhood of it. The road passed through to-day is very uninteresting, chiefly through Bargobrush, a scrubby barren country, thickly timbered with stunted trees. The road is level enough, but much out of repair. The weather has been cloudy but pleasant and warm in the afternoon.

Gray's Inn, Sunday evening, 16th.—We arrived here two hours ago, having been again overtaken by night before getting to the end of our day's journey. We had, however, a beautiful moon and enjoyed our ride in the light it gave, the evening being clear and cool. On getting to the top of the Range this morning we stopped to observe the prospect, which is very extensive and rather pleasing. Immediately on the other side of it is the estate of the late Surveyor-General Oxley. A little further on the road to the left is Broomfield, belonging to the estate of the late Mr. Edward Riley, into which we turned and proceeded through it. From thence we proceeded across the Bush to Throsby Park. Mr. Throsby has an extensive property here, and has just finished a fine mansion. We staid to dinner, having been hospitably pressed to do so by Mr. and Mrs. Throsby. We left about four, and came on to the public road near to Sutton Forest, having thus avoided many miles of the public road, and losing the sight of the settlement at Bong Bong, which