

**THE JOURNALS AND
LETTERS OF HUGH
STANLEY HEAD**

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The journals and letters of Hugh Stanley Head by Hugh Stanley Head

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HUGH STANLEY HEAD

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THE JOURNALS
AND LETTERS
OF
HUGH STANLEY HEAD.

EDITED BY HIS MOTHER.

LONDON, 1892:
RANKEN, ELLIS & CO., LTD., DRURY HOUSE, DRURY COURT,
STRAND.

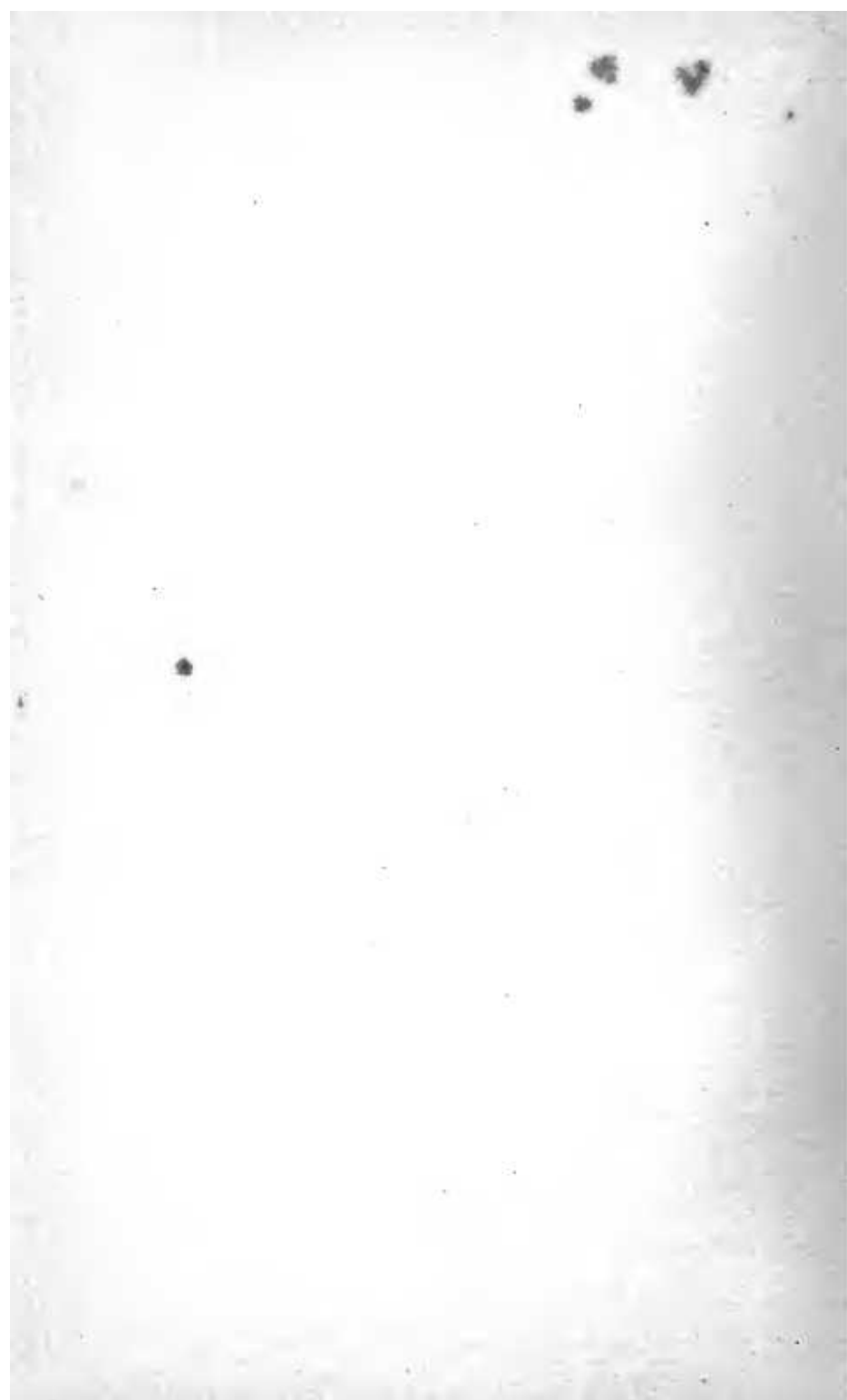
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IN Hugh's last illness he gave me the journals he had written during his long journey, saying, "You may be able to make something of them." I hope I have arranged them as he wished; I have copied them just as I found them, with the exception of the omission of a few descriptions of people and details of conversations, &c., of no interest to anyone but himself. I have retained his accounts of visits to friends in country houses; they were very hospitable to him; many times he has talked to me of their kindness, and I knew he would like it to be recorded. He left England a boy of eighteen; he was very delicate, and the journey was arranged too quickly for him to have any time to read of the places he visited, consequently his impressions have the merit of freshness if they lack that of experience.

Buckingham,
Shoreham.

March 13th, 1892.



CHAPTER I.

S.S. "NIZAM."

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Nothing very eventful happened after we left you the other day; we had a very calm time down to the Island, but it was very rainy and cold; I was very glad of my great coat. I slept very well that night and woke to find a very nasty choppy sea; I ate a good breakfast and went on deck. Passengers went down one after another; I went down shortly after lunch, very seedy but not nearly so bad as I expected; there was a very nasty sea on, we shipped seas every minute; I lay on my sofa and had my dinner in my cabin. I slept a good deal. About 9 p.m. we entered the Bay, and my first experience was frightful; I was not ill, but the ship rolled till we nearly went into the water. Nobody in the ship slept; all the officers were up; all our things were flying about the cabin, crockery breaking everywhere, I had to cling to my bunk by a pipe near the port-hole, it battered against a tin under a tank near the hatch outside my cabin, and made a most diabolical noise, finally stoving it in. Next morning I did not feel as well as I might have been, and was ill again. I got up about twelve. There were very long sweeping waves but no wind; it was a very dull, dismal day. I thought I should like a little dinner, but had to come out; felt like James looked in the "Overland Route," but still can't see any fun in it.

When once in bed I felt very comfortable and cheerful, and all my sea sickness went from that time. I had a very good night, and being very sleepy did not get up till twelve on Sunday morning. Beautiful day. It was still very rough, but I did not feel it at all. We just saw Cape Finisterre in the distance. Towards night it began to get rougher, and we shipped several heavy seas; we had a bad night, the ship rolling tremendously. When I was up to breakfast it was a most miserable day, raw and cold, the waves were like great mountains sweeping down upon us; it was all very well for Uncle William to talk of keeping your eye on the horizon, but there was no horizon, you could see nothing but a huge wave coming at us on one side, that we

had just passed on the other. We could sit nowhere on deck except in the tent on the port side which the Captain had rigged up to take the place of a smoking room. During lunch it got worse and as the ports in the saloon were open a tremendous sea came in. Whilst we were sitting in the tent a huge wave came right at us, it swept clean over the ship, as we did not quite rise to it, it came down on the top of the tent, we clung on as hard as we could but the tent went under the weight of the water, and we all thought we should be taken bodily over the port side into the sea, the water was up to our knees; some of the crew who were attending to the awning on the starboard were sent swimming down to the port, and the old gunner went flying on his back and has been bad ever since. The water went right down the companion into the saloon, the whole ship was in a most disgusting state, all the passages were converted into young rivers, mats were floating about in all directions, and it was not safe to go on deck. I had another try after some time, and slid from the companion to the tent, and came down hard on a seat, I hurt myself, and I felt angry—but the two parsons were sitting there. I did not stop much longer as it was so disgusting, but lay on my sofa and read. Mr. Kite kept me amused and awake by singing and making a noise generally. This very bad weather came on off Lisbon, which we sighted about twelve. I am told we had a very bad night, but I slept like a top and grumbled at having to get up. There was still a great swell on, and at breakfast it was all I could do to get anything to eat, the cover went a different way, my plate ran away from me, and my roll lodged in my opposite neighbour's lap, in spite of the fiddles. It was another disgusting day, a perfect drizzle and very misty; it began to get calmer as we entered the Straits. We passed Gibraltar at half-past two, but could see nothing but a huge grey form standing out in the mist. Towards night it became very calm, and the next day was glorious, though there was still a little swell on; we had the coast of Africa in sight most of the afternoon, I tried to make a sketch of Cape Tenez, it is very uninteresting at a distance and much resembles the sand banks at Parkstone on a larger scale. Though uninteresting by day it became beautiful at sunset—the sky to the East changing from the deep blue to a cold grey as the sun went down, the little pink clouds deepening into a purple tint until they finally merged into the greyness of the sky, the land gradually becoming darker and darker till you began to see the lights in the small villages along the

coast, and the pure yellow of the sky where the sun has just disappeared and the reflected light on the water. It was all very beautiful and I enjoyed it immensely. Yesterday was a very fine day and the sun was almost too hot, I felt it, as I have not yet left off my winter clothes. We passed Algiers in the night and kept in sight of land most of the day. I must give you some account of my fellow-passengers. To begin with, they are nearly all related, the most important is decidedly Mr. K., a J.P. of Sydney, and the most amusing man I ever came across. He is large, just turning grey, about father's age, he sings "Nancy Lee" before going to sleep, and has a loud, very loud laugh. He has a very nice-looking motherly daughter about nineteen, who has to take the place of a mother, as he is a widower; he has a younger daughter and two sons, the younger of whom is a remarkably clever boy; they are all very decent but decidedly Colonial. Next comes Mrs. F., a thin, pale, speechless, good natured, quiet, motherly sort of a woman; she has two sons, Harry remarked that one had a dirty collar, I thought at first they were cads, but now I find they are very fair specimens of the Colonial style, they have a little sister and brother, and all the family talk with a cockney accent—this I am told is also Colonial. Then there is Mrs. A., who is their uncle's sister but not their aunt; she has two girls, one speaks with a cockney accent, but the other very decently; the latter is a pretty girl, very composed. Mrs. A., herself is a very stont, noisy kind of woman, very tall, more like a large sack of meal, tied up a little in the middle. Then there are the Miss D's., one is an awkward, smirking girl with glasses. Then Mr. and Mrs. G., the parson and his wife, Mrs. G. has a mouth rolled up with much talking; at first I thought Mrs. G. common, but I found it was only her piety, she looks as though there was nothing more for her to do by way of being pious than to sign the pledge. I have half a mind to try and convert her, but I think she would die without wine as she looks ghastly. Their friend, Mr. S. L., is a person of renown in Melbourne, a portly, shaven, bald-headed, monkish-looking old man, who intones every word he utters and looks as though he had taken care of his stomach. The fourth of their party is a Mr. P., a melancholy looking individual. Then Mr. S., a grand old Scotchman; he believes everything, in that he believes nothing. He is a spiritualist and has just shown me some photographs of spirits; they are very curious, they were taken by a friend of his. Lastly, there are the S's., the

nicest people on board, they consist of an invalid mother and her daughters. The elder is very nice, I sit next her, the sister is pretty, but the elder is my great friend. The Captain is a delightful, little man. The officers are also nice, especially the chief, I go into his cabin very often and have a smoke. Mr. K. has with him, five thorough-bred greyhounds, three other dogs, prize fowls and ducks, and he tells me he wishes he had brought his thorough-bred horses, pigs, sheep, &c.; they are coming by a sailer. I don't know when I have enjoyed myself so much as I do now, I think the sea delightful, I hope I shall be a good sailor when I come back. The time goes too quickly, we don't seem to have time for anything, I have not got through half a volume of "Les Misérables." I expect I shall enjoy myself in Australia tremendously, the people seem very hospitable and jolly. I have forgotten to tell you that the food is excellent and well-cooked. I am feeling splendidly well and eat like five.

Love to all at home,
Your affectionate son,
HUGH STANLEY HEAD.

S.S. "NIZAM," SUEZ,
January 18th, 1883.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

When I last wrote we were approaching Malta, so I suppose I must now tell you something about the place. On Saturday morning I was woke by a great noise on deck; it was four o'clock, and we were just outside the harbour waiting for our pilot. We fired off five blue lights, and whistled continually, but the pilot being comfortably asleep neither heard the whistles nor saw the lights. We almost ran down a sailing ship, and we had nearly all the pilots in Malta round us. When our pilot did turn up (which he did after keeping us waiting an hour and a half) he caught it pretty well from the captain. We were moored and ready to coal about six. I got up and went on deck. We were lying along side of the "Volta," a cable steamer; the "Verona" had only left two hours before us. (She started a day ahead but she had to put into Gibraltar for a whole day owing to the bad weather.) The sunshine was very lovely; the curious flat-roofed stone houses glowing with pink and purple, the most beautiful pink clouds above, and