

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA: EXTRACTS FROM
THE OFFICIAL DISPATCHES OF COLONEL
LIGHT, SURVEYOR GENERAL OF THE
PROVENCE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND
FROM LETTERS OF SETTLERS WHO HAVE
REACHED NEPEAN BAY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649534906

South Australia: Extracts from the Official Dispatches of Colonel Light, Surveyor General of the Province of South Australia and from Letters of Settlers Who Have Reached Nepean Bay by H. Capper

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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H. CAPPER

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

EXTRACTS FROM
THE OFFICIAL DISPATCHES
OF
COLONEL LIGHT, SURVEYOR GENERAL
OF THE
PROVINCE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA,
AND FROM
LETTERS OF SETTLERS
WHO HAVE REACHED
NEPEAN BAY,

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE POSITION, SOIL, CLIMATE, CON-
STITUTION, GOVERNMENT, ETC. OF THE PROVINCE;

THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COMPANY;

And a variety of useful and authentic information,
intended to point out the

SUPERIOR ADVANTAGES OF THIS SETTLEMENT
To the intending Emigrant, accompanied by a
VIEW OF RAPID BAY AND A MAP OF THE PROVINCE.

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY

H. CAPPER,

SOLD BY W. WATKINS, 408, STRAND; MR. CLIBBON, SOUTH
AUSTRALIAN AGENT, 3, AUSTIN FRIARS;
AND BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Price Eightshillings.

1837.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

INTRODUCTION.

FROM the following extracts of official despatches and letters it will be seen that the hopes and expectations formed by the originators of the infant colony, as regards its situation, soil, produce, &c. have been fully realized to the extent of the evidence obtained. When we consider the short period which intervened between the arrival of the vessels and the writing of the despatches, the description of the explored country, although of an unconnected and partial nature, ought to satisfy every mind, as to the probable fertility and capabilities of South Australia.

In several instances the reader will meet with repetitions in the details: this, however, tends to strengthen the evidence of the writers and gives additional authenticity to their statements.

They all agree in describing the soil as light and loamy, easily cultivated, and of great apparent

fertility. Indeed, this may at once be seen from the fact of six Englishmen having located on Kangaroo Island and supported themselves during a lapse of years upon a few acres of land with but one or two tools of the rudest description amongst them. If then these settlers, with such limited means, could raise food of every description and in ample quantities, what may not be done by a numerous body of men practically acquainted with the cultivation of the soil and backed by capital and the requisite implements of husbandry?

The description of the harbours and rivers, as far as they had been surveyed, is also of a satisfactory nature. Many persons will doubtless be surprised to hear that in South Australia there are bays where hundreds of men-of-war might ride at anchor in all seasons of the year with as much security as in the river Thames.—Such, however, is the fact.

At the time of writing this, the rest of the emigrants, with his Excellency the Governor, the Colonial Commissioner, and other officers, are located in their adopted country; and ere long we may hope to hear of the founding of the town of "Adelaide." Such are the first steps which have been taken in the establishment of this colony, forming an important era in the history of colonization.

EXTRACTS
FROM
THE OFFICIAL DISPATCHES
OF
COLONEL LIGHT,

**SURVEYOR GENERAL TO THE BRITISH PROVINCE OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**

**TO THE COLONIAL COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH
AUSTRALIA.**

*Dated "Rapid" Brig, in Nepean Bay, Kangaroo Island
August 23, 1836.*

GENTLEMEN,

"I have the pleasure to report the safe arrival of this vessel, on the 19th instant, after a passage of 104 days from the Lizard, to her anchoring in the bay called Antichamber Bay, by Captain Flinders. On the following day we anchored at the south-east end of Nepean Bay, and having the wind from the N. W. against us, had to beat up, and passed along the shore to the southward and eastward of Cape Jarvis. I can hardly express

the delight I felt at the beautiful appearance of the main land. With good glasses, at the distance we were off (about 3 miles) it looked more like land already in possession of persons of property than that left to the course of nature alone. On the 21st at day light we weighed and turned up to that point of the bay which had been selected by the Manager of the South Australian Company for landing their stores, and at 2, 30 P. M. came to an anchor about two miles from the point."

"In this bay there is excellent anchorage in 3, 4, and 5 fathoms water, safe in every wind."

"I feel convinced that labour and a little resolution will do much here; and that even in this place a good settlement may be found, and this is one of the *scorers* in the island. There are several English sailors who have run from ships and settled in the island. Some of these worthies paid us a visit last night, who state that at their dwellings they are never in want. They have plenty of corn, good gardens, water, and all they require in the wild life they have by choice embraced. If, therefore, these men, without agricultural implements and without the least knowledge of farming, can produce wheat, melons, cabbages, turnips, fine potatoes—rear pigs and poultry, what may not be done by an emigration of men professedly adapted."

"The whole face of the island appears, so far

as we can see, to be covered thickly with gum trees and shrubs; and the soil I saw was very moist, with trunks of trees in every direction; but nothing can be easier than clearing the whole surface. Yet this is not (to appearance at least) to be compared with Cape Jarvis."

"29th. Visited the northern sides of the bay. I was delighted to find it exceed my expectation. I see nothing to prevent a settlement being formed here, even if no other can be found. A well about six feet deep has been dug in the sand about eighty yards from the sea, and good fresh water is procured. If such water is procured so near the sea, why may it not on any part."

"Ships of considerable burthen may anchor close to the company's point in a very safe harbour, and barges could transport from them to the town. Vessels of 200 tons may anchor very near this shore."

"Should the Cygnet arrive during my absence on the main land, I shall leave directions for Mr. Gilbert to take possession of the ground near the river for landing his stores."

*"Rapid Bay," Gulf of St. Vincent,
Sept. 10, 1836.*

"On the 7th inst., we weighed and stood over from Kangaroo Island for the main, but being

becalmed soon after, we came to an anchor, and remained till next morning, when we again weighed with a very light breeze from the southward, and at 1 P.M. came to an anchor in the bay to the eastward of the point called by Capt. Flinders, N.W. High Bluff. I went on shore to look at the valley which from the ship had so pleasing an appearance; I was quite delighted to find it exceed all my anticipations."

"All yesterday was employed in conveying necessary things on shore, having determined on pitching four tents here, and to remain until I complete my examination of this place. I have been able to examine this valley, and I am happy to report most highly of this most beautiful place, which, for the present, I call "Rapid Valley." There are three countrymen with me, one of them a gardener, and the other two also good judges of land: they have been digging up a portion, and pronounce it most excellent soil. We have put in some seeds, that, on our return, a better judgment may be formed of its quality. The water in the river is very good indeed, and I am told there is no want of it all the year round. I have engaged one of the sealers from Kangaroo Island, with his two native wives, and find them very useful;—the women are the hunters—and we have already been the better by their exertions, with the tail and hind quarters of an enormous