

Voyage

*From Falmouth to Halifax, N.S.
and back*

Sailed 7th February 1835

13 weeks 6 days

Returned 8th May 1835

*Lieu..^t William James R.N.
Commander.*

*List of the Ships
Company*

Lieutenant W.^m James R.N. - Commander.

	<i>John Pascoe -</i>	<i>Master</i>
	<i>James Williamson -</i>	<i>Surgeon</i>
	<i>James Everret -</i>	<i>Mate</i>
	<i>James Edwards -</i>	<i>Steward</i>
1	<i>William Hawkin -</i>	<i>Boatswain</i>
2	<i>Hugh Bond -</i>	<i>Cook</i>
	<i>William Stevens -</i>	<i>Sailmaker</i>
3	<i>Charles Prior -</i>	<i>Carpenter</i>
4	<i>William Hoskin -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
5	<i>Joseph Hoskin -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
6	<i>John Roberts -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
7	<i>John Collins -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
8	<i>William Martin -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
	<i>Alexander Webb -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
	<i>John Sedgmond -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
	<i>Thomas Treleaven -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
	<i>W.^m Coombe -</i>	<i>A.B.</i>
	<i>Thomas Pascoe -</i>	<i>young lad</i>
	<i>John Pascoe -</i>	<i>young lad</i>
	<i>John Braily -</i>	<i>young lad</i>

~~~~~

1. In room of Geo. Kelloway, left – made Boatswain
2. In room of James Quintal, left
3. In room of John Woon, discharged for drunkenness
- 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, - In room of Kelloway, Dyer Williams, Philip Waitcott, John Bellman, & John Jenkins, all of whom left us by their own wish, being afraid to encounter the dangers & hardships of a Halifax voyage, when the vessel had one voyage to make.

-----

Falmouth 5<sup>th</sup> Feb..<sup>ry</sup> 1835

Received from Lieu..<sup>t</sup> James as my pay from Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> January to Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of March inclusive, being 18 days of Harbour pay and one month's advance, the sum of - £13, 2, 10¼ [followed by 1/7 (one seventh) or 1/Y ?]

## *Voyage to Halifax*

-----

*Sailed 7<sup>th</sup> February 1835*

*13 weeks 6 days*

*Returned 8<sup>th</sup> May 1835*

-----

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 1835 - there being only one Mail to make, to day and that ours, we left the Harbour at 10 A.M. Gloomy weather. Fresh and foul wind.

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> – squally weather. Fresh and foul wind – heavy sea.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> – this morning at 3 passed Ushant at 8 or 10 Miles off. T'was touch and go with us. We were obliged to carry a heavy press of sail in order to be able to weather it, otherwise we should have gone on shore. Wind during the day nearly favourable & more moderate. Cloudy weather with heavy sea.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather. Fresh and favourable breeze, with heavy swell from NW.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather with one or two light showers. Light variable winds from N & E all day.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather. Wind moderate & nearly favourable, till 3 P.M. when the weather became showery and the wind fresh and favourable.

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> – light variable winds, mostly favourable. Cloudy but very pleasant weather.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> – up to Noon. Light favourable breezes. Very fine weather.

1<sup>st</sup> Hebdomade. Now we are again launched upon the deep, to encounter, as we expect, the most severe weather and the most bitter cold. We consider ourselves as having been very unfortunate in coming in for a Halifax trip at this season, especially as we have been there so very lately, and as it is likely that this will be the last voyage of the Old *Duke*.

But after all, every thing is ordered for the best, and if we were allowed to carve out our own outgoings and incomings, we should prove ourselves regardless of the justice due to others and selfish in the highest degree.

About a week after we came in six of our hands left us, three of whom had been several years on the ship, and the other three only one or two voyages. I hardly see an old face among the whole ships company. I do not love to see new & strange faces. You have to find out their character & for a long time you must study them in order to judge whether you will like them or not.

I do not exactly know the various reasons which influenced our late shipmates to leave. Some allege one & some another. As this is likely to be the last voyage, & that

considered a severe one, they perhaps thought it not worth while to remain – while they might join a vessel going to the Southwards. If so, I consider their conduct to have been exceedingly unhandsome, and like that of persons who stand by a friend only so long as they can make their advantage of them, but leave him to his fate, when all hope of deriving good from him is lost. I have also heard it said that our old Boatswain who was the first to leave, and who persuaded the rest to follow his example, had dreamed a dream – and in consequence had acted as he did. But of the truth of this I am not certain – only this I know that he is superstitious and inclined to place confidence in omens, auguries & dreams.

One week has now passed over our heads at sea, and the weather we have had has agreeably disappointed us in the main. For the first three days we had strong blowing weather & heavy sea, which, considering we were in the Channel, kept us in much anxiety. On Monday morning we passed so close to Ushant, that tho' it blew so very strong, we were obliged to carry a press of canvas to be able to weather. Had we not done so, we should most certainly have gone ashore – so says our worthy Master M.<sup>r</sup> Pascoe. After that we went on very comfortably. We have generally had favourable breezes and cloudy but pleasant weather – really very unexpected at this season of the season. The winds have been in general very light, with now and then a pretty considerable puff. The Thermometer has been on the average at 54\* - Maximum 51\* - Minimum 46\*

## II Week

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> Feb.<sup>ry</sup> from Noon - beautiful weather. Light variable winds now foul now fair.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> – fine weather. Light and foul wind.

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – light and foul wind – Foggy weather at times clearing up fine.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather. During the day, wind moderate and foul - at night very strong and foul.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> – most beautiful weather. Fresh and foul wind during the day – moderate at night with heavy rolling swell.

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – moderate Gales of foul wind. Cloudy but fair weather.

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather with strong gales in the morning – very fine day and more moderate – still heavy sea.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> up to Noon – wind fresh & foul – hoping for a change. Cloudy weather.

II Hebdomade. That we have had foul winds the whole of this week is a circumstance on which we had calculated. At the commencement the wind was very light and the weather was delightful. For the three last days we have been visited by rather moderate gales and a high sea. We consider ourselves as in tolerably good luck not to have experienced worse or more bad weather than we have. As yet we have felt no cold – or rather we find the air too warm. The stove we brought with us from England after being lighted for a day or two & being found rather a nuisance than a benefit, has

since been disused – but still remains in its place as a memento to remind us of the cold weather we have yet to expect.

Our way of being is very dull – but not more than it would be on any similar occasion when we have no passengers. Time sometimes seems to have stopped, on purpose to tantalise us, so slow in our imagination is its progress. The times for quib [quil ?] are glad specks in our diurnal history and serve as the point from which we set out, or mark the precise time when such an event happened. However as the woman in the story, said of the eels she was skinning I am used to it – and as I expected such a thing, I have recourse to various expedients to while away the lagging hours.

We are in hopes of soon getting a favourable change of winds – of [which] there is some prospect - & we wish it the more in order to be able to get to the Westward of the Azores – a great point with all Navigators bound to the Coast of North America. Thermometer 54 to 60.

### III Week.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February – very fine weather. Strong breezes and foul with much sea.

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> – strong gales and dark gloomy weather in the morning, - cloudy but fair day & more moderate. After a shower in the evening, fine weather and light winds with heavy swell.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – wind now strong, now light but always foul. No progress made or making. Showery morning – fine day.

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> – strong gales – laying to. Dull gloomy weather, with drizzling rain & occasional smart showers.

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> – very heavy storm – tremendous sea. Squally weather with frequent falls of hail, during which the wind blew awfully. Drifting back. Thermometer 40\*.

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> – gale still continues – not so violent. Weather cloudy but more settled. Very high sea driving us to leeward. Thermometer 48\*.

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> – light variable airs variable weather. Thermometer 52\*.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> up to noon – rainy weather. Fresh and foul wind. Thermometer 56\*.

III Hebdomade. But alas our hopes of a fair wind were raised only to be thrown down again. The appearances in the weather & sky from which experienced seamen are accustomed to draw their conclusions, and only served to render us more discontented than if we had never hoped. It is now generally thought that as we have had Easterly winds all November & December, during which months, in nine cases out of ten, Westerly gales prevail, the latter will be found to blow strong in March & April, the very months which are peculiarly appropriated to the Easters. In other words it is believed that there will be an interchange of periods between Easterly and Westerly winds. Hence it is that the Packets, which left Falmouth in November and December have had extraordinary quick runs to and from Halifax – contrary I believe to their own expectations. Hence it will possibly be that we, who sailing when we did might

otherwise have looked forwards to a short voyage, will occupy a very long time in reaching Halifax, and perhaps as long in returning.

That we have not so far formed an erroneous opinion on this point, the experience of this week amply confirms. First of all we had strong & foul gales – during which we could carry however some little sail & have steerage way thro' the water. Then came a lull – a sort of breathing space to the winds, which seemed to veer & vary with every half hour, & apparently to be seeking some point whence to blow. Tho' the wind was light, a heavy continuous swell was seen to roll from the Westward, causing the Packet to labour & roll in a most unpleasant manner. This was decisive as to the expected direction of the next steady breeze – nor did we entertain a doubt, because the wind then was not blowing from that quarter, or because the clouds seemed to rise rapidly from the opposite way.

At last on Monday night the gale commenced its long premeditated attack and soon increased to such a degree of violence, that we were compelled to furl all and lay to, sometimes under no sail at all, at other times under a small foretopmast staysail, hoisted on the main boom as a storm sail. Until Thursday we lay in this condition – one of the most unpleasant in the world. The wind blew with tremendous force, which during passing squalls, was aggravated an hundred fold – roaring, whistling & rattling the shrouds & ropes, as if struggling to find a vent from some narrow aperture. The sound at different times resembled the wind sighing and moaning amidst the countless leaves and branches of a forest, which as you know is one of the most melancholy sounds one can \_\_\_\_ to have to listen to, when difficulty, uncertainty and danger encompass you around, in a situation where all your nerve & presence of mind are required to ward off or meet impending danger.

And the sea – what is it like when tossed to and fro by the waves? It is only like unto itself – it possesses a character of awfulness, and, if you like it, of sublimity, which has no parallel in appearances or objects on land. When the heavens are enveloped in deep darkness, occasioned by heavy lowering, low impending clouds interposed between you and the sun, the mountainous billows of the troubled ocean look dark as ink, except when the tops, reaching far into the air, become crested with the white foam which contrasts more fearfully with the pitch colour of the body of waters. Oh what a cheering relief it is, when the sun, bursting from his prison of clouds, sheds a bright glare over the sea, and deprives it of half its imagined horrors. We hail his presence with joy and under his influence feel elevated with the hope that our storm will soon pass over, when but a few moments before his appearance we were inclined to fear, that its duration would be interminable – or at least protracted for weeks.

As we were far removed from all rocks and sands, and had plenty of sea-room, our sole anxiety arose from the apprehension that some of the many heavy waves which passed from side to side of us, should fall in board and carry away our masts or cause us to founder. Our Master was particularly anxious on this point, not being fully aware of the excellent qualities of our vessel. He did all that lay in his power to guard against any accident, & provided before hand the means to be used, should we lose our foremast or any spars.

For some time we came on admirably and our spirits rose accordingly. This time many heavy seas struck us – but the tops only came in & did us no damage. But on Wednesday forenoon - as the Captain, Master & self, were anxiously employed in watching each fast succeeding wave, as it rose at some distance from us, rolled majestically its vast volume along and finally approaching our vessel, as if about to overwhelm it, sunk quietly under, only to rise as high on the other side – I say as we

were thus watching, a wave suddenly rose near us, far surpassing in height & bulk any we had yet seen, being fully as elevated as our main top. We saw it coming on with inexpressible anxiety. It approached nearer & nearer, but did not seem likely to sink down before it reached us. We stood breathless for a few seconds – unable to stir from our exposed position – fascinated as it were – till it was so close that it appeared right over our heads. Instinctively we all fled into our poop cabin and hardly had we accomplished this ere the huge wave burst right in board, causing the vessel first to stand still then to quiver & shake like an animal endowed with sensation. The whole length of the decks was swept by the flood – the water rushed to & fro seeking to escape & fortunately, in expectation of such an event, one of the ports had been left open to leeward, whence it gushed to gain the general mass of waves. When we were first struck, I involuntarily closed my eyes, but soon opened them again in the fear of beholding our masts of boats gone. But thanks be to God, Almighty, the Creator and Preserver of all his creatures, we sustained no injury – when as has often been the case, a similar accident has sunk or dismasted many many vessels.

Providentially this was the only serious cause of alarm we had, and on Friday our minds were set at ease, for a time at least, by our having moderate breezes. The future is known to God. We fear we have still much bad weather to encounter – but we hope to encounter it in a humble reliance on the mercy and protection of him, who controlleth the winds & the sea.

As might be expected from what I have now stated, the weather was not to be spoken of favourable – but then during this week that was a matter of meer secondary consideration.

#### IV Week.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Feb.<sup>ry</sup> from noon – Cloudy but fair weather. Fresh and foul wind.

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March – beautiful weather – Moderate & foul wind.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> - moderate and foul wind. Expecting change of wind. W.<sup>r</sup> variable.

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> – strong breezes in the morning. Moderate at night – Foggy weather.

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> – favourable wind during the night – foul & strong during the day. Cloudy weather with slight drizzling rain.

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> – moderate & foul gales. Cloudy weather at night rainy weather – Wind moderate & more favourable.

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March – strong gales during the day, laying to – more moderate but still foul in the afternoon. Fine weather with occasional falls of hail & heavy squalls.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> – up to noon – continuous heavy rain. Moderate & foul wind from South & Westward.

IV Hebdomade – Sunday at the commencement of this week was the 1<sup>st</sup> of March, and never did a finer day show out from the heavens. It is a common saying among sailors that when March comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb & vice versa. If this prove true we have but a dreary prospect to look forward to towards the

termination of this month, and what will render the matter still worse, we shall, ere that time, most probably be near the coast of America, of all places in the world the worst to be near in tempestuous weather. But all hope for the best, and as the saying is faint heart never won fair or in other words, the nervous apprehension of coming evil never prepares but rather unfits the mind for applying all its power & energy to meet, counteract or ward off the same evils. Perhaps after all we are too hasty in assuming that March with us has come in like a lamb – for I am sure on three or four succeeding days, he has been roaring & raging like any lion of them all. Seldom have I met with more unsettled weather, or with that which has been so little beneficial to our progress. The wind has hung most pertinaciously to the Westward, never yielding a point in our favour except indeed when it blew a gale which rendered all nugatory, since we did not dare to set sail, but *nolens valens* went to leeward like a shot. On the abatement of the gale, the wind returned to our old spot. We have little more than half completed our task, and should we be still so unlucky as heretofore, my cracky the next packet that follows us is likely to reach Halifax as soon as we. To speak of the weather I can only say that is as cold & as uncomfortable as a man could wish to fall to the lot of his worst enemy. Dark gloomy is the best we can say of it, and rain drizzle, fog & hail the worst of it. I often wonder, & wondering at, admire how admirably my stock of patience hold out – much better I believe than our stock of provisions & water – call[?] why the more frequent & loud the demands upon the former, the more it rises in strength & increase, while alas for the latter, the consumption of every additional day subtracts most woefully from the grand sum total of the whole. The more is the pity \_ for this sharp weather sharpens the edge of our appetite, & renders the cravings of hunger scarcely to be endured beyond the ordinary times of meals.

#### 5 Week.

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March from noon – constant rain wind light & favourable from S & SSW, till 4 P.M. when at once it shifted to NE, blowing very strong – fair for us but we could do nothing for an hour or two in consequence of a heavy squall from the W. As soon as possible we made sail with a fresh & favourable breeze.

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> – lost our fair wind last night. Fresh and foul wind during the day. Cloudy weather.

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> - Gale of foul wind, thick gloomy weather.

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March – cloudy but fair weather. Moderate & rather more favourable wind.

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> – fine day – thick and gloomy afternoon with constant drizzle. Fresh and favourable wind.

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> – strong gales of foul wind. Cloudy weather with occasional slight showers.

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> – fresh & foul wind. Cloudy weather with passing showers of hail.



Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> – up to noon - strong breezes, still increasing; of foul wind – cloudy but fair weather.

V Hebdomade – Still the same story over and over again of foul winds – gales – bad weather & disappointed hopes. The order of things has been one day gale, next moderate, 3<sup>rd</sup> day gale & so – 2 days & half of foul wind with half a day of fair, thus giving little better than 24 hours of fair wind. The changes of wind have been very frequent from SW to NW & vice versa – often has the wind fallen light or died away to a calm – frequently have we observed the swell rolling after us, or the clouds in motion from astern forwards – and from all these appearances, during no week so much as during this, have so many opinions been expressed & so sanguine hopes entertained of a favourable & lasting change. But experience here has been falsified and the course of nature has seemed changed. One consolation remains to us, that the longer we are in reaching the coast, the finer the weather is likely to be.

The weather during the week has been very variable – on the whole we ought to complain, as it is rather more than one might have expected.

6<sup>th</sup> Week.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March – from noon – strong Gales – laying to – constant rain. At 5 P.M. more moderate, when we made all necessary sails. Weather cloudy but fair.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> – moderate & foul wind – fine weather but very cold thermometer 36\*

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> – constant rain in the morning with light and favourable breeze. At 10 A.M. cleared off fine followed by fresh and favourable breeze. At 3 thick fog. At 6 cleared off – very light & favourable wind.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March – thick foggy weather – sounded on Banks of Newfoundland. Moderate & foul wind. At 4 calm. At 8 moderate & favourable breeze.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> – very heavy equinoctial gale – driven back again on the Banks. Dreadful sea which is always the case in soundings, when strong breezes blow. Squally & very cold weather. Minimum of thermometer 26\*

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – beautiful with a moderate & foul wind in the forenoon – calm afternoon – at 8 P.M. moderate & favourable breeze. Thermometer 28\*

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> – gale of wind with heavy sea all day – weather variable but most miserable – Maximum of thermometer 52\* minimum 38\*

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> – very strong & fine breeze – cloudy but pleasant weather. Sun today crossed the Equator.

VI Hebdomade – Six weeks, the utmost extent of time we allowed ourselves to go out to Halifax, are now over, and we are still 500 miles from our destination, with as little prospect as ever of getting rapidly over so paltry a distance. A Portuguese or Spaniard placed in our situation would only shrug up his shoulders and vent his spleen by saying *patienza par forga* or enforced patience. But we are neither one nor the other

& whatever I may have boasted two weeks ago of my complete possession of that admirable quality of patience I confess – now that it is oozing fast thro' my fingers, & that in a short time I shall have little or none left. Little do I say that I have left – any I believe you would not be able to muster an ounce of it among the whole ships company. Fear to tell you the truth, so long as our ships company have plenty of grog & Tobacco they will prove as patient as a modern Job in every other respect – but touch my grog & tobacco – touch my temper & so as very little to a few & none of most of these indispensable commodities remain, our men are out of all patience & grumble & growl at the foul winds like bears with sore heads. Besides, for my part I do not see much merit in enforced patience, no more than in a man living a virtuous life in a situation where there is no hope neither for the indulgence of more vicious passions, or the exhibition of virtuous affections - and therefore as I should have no place on my compulsory patience, I have no objection to vent my spleen in abusing the weather & winds & in finding fault with every thing.

When you become impatient & fretful – when your temper is soured by disappointment, trifles light as air are will tend to aggravate you – *item hu\_\_our* - & much more so do we find that the heavy gales & severe weather of this week are as burdens to our calamities which are hardly to be born. Four [?] days have we endured the violence of raging tempests, with no small danger to ourselves, barring all the other accompanying disagreements. And we have reason amidst all our difficulties, to be thankful to that Almighty & most gracious Being, who tempered the wind to the shorn lamb, for his preserving care over us, without which we must all have been swallowed up in the deep. On shore, where sheltered from the storm & tempest, men do not so sensibly feel their need of the preventing hand of God, the sense of his presence & his p\_\_\_\_\_ scarcely presents itself to our minds – but on the unfathomable ocean, in the deep murky darkness of a winter's night, when the winds are billowing with the voice of ten thousand bulls & the sea rising raging & whitening all around you – Then, then it is that as it were irresistibly, a sense of our needs of divine and to escape the ever threatening danger, comes over the mind & compels the soul to look up to Heaven, whence protection must come.

I must not omit to make mention of [one] gale in particular. It took place shortly after we had got to the Westward of the Banks of Newfoundland. While laying to under our storm-sails, we drifted back upon the Banks and there encountered a sea, more really dangerous than any we have yet had. It is a remark among seamen that when you have a gale when on soundings, the waves are higher, more tumultuous & dangerous than elsewhere. You run then greater risk of shipping a heavy sea & no one can tell the probable consequences of such as event. Now so it befell us. When little expecting it, a tremendous wave, broke in upon our deck – carried away the hammock netting boards – displaced our ballast in the hold - & nearly sent the Old *Duke* on her beam ends. If another of equal size & force had followed immediately upon this & struck us in a similar way, we must have sunk, or the masts would have went by the board, leaving us like a log on the water. Providentially we took in no more seas – the Packet righted herself – and such on the men who had fallen picked themselves up, glad notwithstanding their bruises & that their lockers for their clothes were full of water, that matters were no worse.

The weather generally throughout this week has been very cold, the thermometer being as low as 26°, We have plenty of hail, ice & thick fog, which last was the worst of all, as it magnified the danger of the gale, by making the waves appear larger than they really were.

7<sup>th</sup> Week.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March – from noon – fine weather. Moderate and foul wind.

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> – much rain and strong gales during last night. This morning moderate and foul wind, with heavy swell from Westward. Cloudy weather. At 3.30 P.M. moderate and favourable wind, with thick gloomy weather and sleet.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – fresh and fair wind all last night & to day till 4 P.M. with thick foggy weather. Then the wind changed against us, accompanied with rain, which towards evening lulled the breeze nearly to a calm.

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> – fine pleasant weather. Moderate and foul wind, till towards afternoon, when it became lighter & lighter till at last it fell calm. At 8 P.M. it sprung up light & favourable.

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> – variable weather. Variable winds and calms all light [sic] night & to day.

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> – at 2 A.M. very heavy gale from the eastward, which continued till 11 A.M. of to day. While the wind was thus fair, we gained no advantage by not being able to carry sail – and by the time the weather had moderated sufficiently to allow us to do so, the wind became foul. Provoking. Cloudy and pleasant weather.

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March – most miserable weather, thick and dark with snow, sleet, or small rain all day. Nearly a calm till 1 P.M., when a light and favourable breeze sprung up.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> – up to noon – constant & heavy rain. Moderate & favourable breeze.

VII Hebdomade – What! Another week, and not in yet! Yes alas it is too true. What tho' our distance is short, if we have no fair winds? What could we do, with calms & gales, & light & foul winds? Nothing – and I'd defy any vessel, be her build & rig what it may – to have got along any better than ourselves. We have not had the winds from the same quarter for 24 hours together – often we have had them all round the compass in the same space of time. March which had come in like a lion seems disposed to go out like a lamb – not but that sometimes, when we imagined the lion to be gone, has he returned to growl & grumble – then however he never remained longer than a few hours, & left us again to devour our lamb. And yet what inconsistent mortals are we all. When we were visited by severe gales, we said to each other, that we should be content to be 6 weeks longer on our passage, provided we had moderate weather & light foul winds. Now, now when we have had moderate winds & calms, we again repine that with these we can make little or no progress and forget our former declarations in the annoyance of our present circumstances.

Together with our moderate winds, we have had a very considerable change of weather. We have not had so much rain, fog & sleet in one week as in this – and in my opinions & feelings no kind of weather is so disagreeable on board ship as this. We have not felt so much cold but what I regard as still worse, the feet are constantly damp & consequently cold – and you cannot take sufficient exercise to circulate the blood.

We are now not more than 190 miles from Halifax, and should we be so fortunate to hold the fair wind we have now for two days, we hope to be able by that times to thank God for our safe arrival at our destination.

8<sup>th</sup> Week.

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March – from noon. As we this week at last succeeded in reaching our port of destination and as I have nothing new to relate respecting so common-place a town as Halifax, I shall in order to fill up my letter, tell you, day by day, what we have been doing, instead of as heretofore, giving you a summary of the weeks wind and weather.

Saturday – from noon – constant drizzling rain with fresh and favourable wind. At 5 P.M. a thick fog came on followed by moderate breezes not quite fair for us. Sounded on the Sable Bank.

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> – nearly a calm all last night and to day. Fine forenoon. Thick fog in the afternoon. Light and favourable wind in the evening.

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> – this morning at 6 saw the lighthouse. Very thick foggy weather all around - & if it had not partially cleared up in time, shewing our near approach to land & the lighthouse in half an hour more we should have struck upon the Sisters, two ugly black looking rocks which uprear their naked bleak heads to an inconsiderable height about [sic – but ‘above’] water, and have met that fate which has befallen so many vessels before us against these same Sisters. As soon however as we descried the anticipated and dreaded danger, we put about and preferred taking our chance in the open sea, to standing on on our present tack, although by doing so we might we might have gained a desirable point. Whilst we were under the lighthouse we fired two guns which were answered from the shore, as we judged from the smoke, which was the only criterion for the wind blowing a gale on shore, no sound or report could reach our ear. We also hoisted our ensign, packet signal & Pendant, in the hope that if those on the signal station could make them out, the good people of Halifax might be advertised of our being at hand, and thus have their minds released from the anxiety under which they doubtless laboured, respecting the Safety of the Packet.

You must know, before you can conceive the extent of our disappointment, that Sambro lighthouse is not more than 20 or 24 miles from the Harbour of Halifax, or in other words they we only [lay] that distance from our Haven of Rest, which we so long buffeted about the sport of winds and waves & exposed to all the perils of the storm & the tempest were all so very very anxious to reach.

Fancy then what must have been our feelings to be compelled to put out again to sea, for fear of running on shore, and to do so even altho’ the wind was fair. But prudence dictated & fear enforced this indispensable measure. The wind blew a gale from the Eastward, and all surrounding objects were shut out from our view by a thick tangible fog, or as our Sailors expressed it, a fog that one might cut with a knife.

As soon as we had reached well off shore, we lay to, and allowed our vessel to drift to Southward & westward.

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March – the gale continued all day without intermission. We could set no sail but were obliged to let the Old *Duke* drift, drift away from our port. At night the wind somewhat abated and we were enabled to show some little canvass, and save at least a little of our distance.

Thick misty weather, with occasional showers of slight rain.

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April – cloudy but fair weather. Land in sight. Fresh and foul wind. Found that owing to a current, we had drifted 60 miles farther off than we had calculated upon.

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> – very fine but cold weather. Very light & foul wind. At 11 A.M. took a pilot on board, which gave us some hopes of soon getting in. At 6 P.M. we were abreast of Sambro lighthouse for the second time, making little way, the wind being so scant. Beating to windward as we were now doing, it is a very tedious & very fatiguing job, especially when your distance is short and you have to make so many tacks. By dint of hard labour, we succeeded in coming to a first anchorage at one or 2 in the morning – not our anchorage in the Harbour, but one 10 or 12 miles off.

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April – at 9 this morning came to our old anchorage in Halifax, to the perfect satisfaction of all and sundry, to whose minds all the hardships & perils, thro' which they had passed, seemed as nothing, now that they are so comfortably settled. Before we anchored, the Post Master Mr. Howe came on board for the Mail, and from him we learned that the signals we had made off Sambro on Monday had been recognised & our name thereby ascertained – and more over he had written by a vessel which sailed for England next day, to Mr. Gay Packet Agent at Falmouth to inform him we were off the Port with a foul wind. I hope therefore my dear Mother, that you may have seen this notification and be thus relieved from anxiety on our account.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> – variable weather. Of the wind I say nothing for it is now a matter of perfect indifference which way it blows.

9<sup>th</sup> Week.

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> – cloudy but fair all day till 2 P.M. when we had thick heavy rain & a gale of wind.

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> – constant rain & fog all day – Calm. Vast quantities of ice floating out of the Harbour – Guns heard outside supposed to be fired by the Packet which has followed us.

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April – heavy fog & rain – at night arrived the *Reindeer* Packet from Falmouth.

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> - fine weather.

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> – very fine weather.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> – most beautiful weather

Sat.<sup>y</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> – glorious weather.

9th Hebdomade – This has been a week of rest indeed – most acceptable & much required. We have [been] living like gentlemen at ease, both officers and men. With

the exception of taking in a due supply of water, little other work has been done. This would not have been the case at any other season of the year – but at present the weather is variable & sometimes so bad that it would [be] worse than useless to do any thing to the Ship or rigging.

Up to Wednesday of this week the weather most un[com]fortable – constant fogs & rain, with wind from Southward & Eastward. On Tuesday night the *Reindeer* arrived here from Falmouth after a passage of only 26 days – while we were 55. That is to say that we have been very unfortunate in our Mail – and that she started just at the time when a favourable change was about to take place.

With the arrival of the *Reindeer*, fine weather also set in and during the remainder of our sojourn, the weather has been most beautiful. Then of course I went often on shore at different parts of the Harbour – but my frequent shore-goings did not furnish me with any additional & novel information respecting this part of the world or its inhabitants.

10<sup>th</sup> Week.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April – delightful weather. Was to have sailed this morning – but in consequence of the non-arrival of the Quebec, we were detained till Tuesday.

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> – splendid weather. Took a long stroll on the Dartmouth side & enjoyed myself exceedingly.

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> – Quebec mail arrived late last night. Rainy forenoon with wind right against us. At 12 cleared up fine, with favourable change of wind – but light. At 1 received Mail on board – slipped from the buoy and made all sail for England. Wind moderate & nearly favourable.

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather with frequent showers of hail, Very fresh & favourable breeze – almost a gale.

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April – fine weather – fresh and favourable breeze, till 6 P.M. when wind fell light.

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> – blowing a gale during last night with very heavy sea – Fine day. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> – up to noon. Fine weather – a little hazy – Fresh & favourable breeze.

10<sup>th</sup> Hebdomade – After being detained at Halifax, few days longer than we had been led to anticipate, at last on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April, the Quebec Mail, which we had been so long expecting, arrived and by 1 P.M. we had slipped from our moorings and ran out to sea.

Early on the morning of this day, the wind was foul – the weather thick foggy and our spirits completely dampened by the prospect before us. But as the day advanced the atmosphere cleared & the wind changed in our favour. At first the breeze was moderate & unsteady, but next day we had enough of it, and bowled along in high style on the high road to England. And ever since, with occasional intermissions, of no long duration, we have been favoured in our course and already (such is the sanguine disposition of seamen) we begin to make our calculations as to

the day of our arrival at Falmouth. The termination of another week will enable us with more certainty to firm our decisions – and for my part, content with the good we have, I try not to render myself anxious respecting the future – and in this I sometimes succeed, but more frequently fail.

11<sup>th</sup> Week.

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April – variable wind and weather.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> – beautiful weather. Light and favourable breeze.

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – light variable winds – Glorious weather.

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> – fine weather. Moderate and nearly fair wind – fresh and favourable at night.

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> – fine weather. Fresh and favourable breeze. Several vessels in sight.

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> – very fine weather. Wind moderate & not so fair as we could wish, that is to say, we are picking up our Northing faster than we could wish. We do however passable well.

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> <sup>1</sup> – variable weather, rain, sunshine & fog. Fresh and foul wind.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather – moderate & foul wind.

11<sup>th</sup> Hebdomade – At the beginning of this week, there were more glorious, happy, and contented faces than at the termination of it. And good reason why. Then all nature (I mean what of it we could see around us) smiled, under the influence of a bright sun and cloudless sky – then the breeze blew fresh and favourable from the balmy South, Yet so softly that the sea kept smooth, and we were hardly aware how swiftly our course was tracing in the waters. Then we looked forwards to our speedy arrival at Falmouth where we had no doubt considerable anxiety would be felt on our account, and as it is the nature of a small place, numerous reports would be spread abroad, from what source no one could tell, of some disaster temporary or final having befallen us. Now the prospect for the present is changed. We have met again our old enemy of the Easterly, and from his known stubbornly character, whence once he set in; as we experienced so woefully to our discomfort last April, we are apprehensive, that we are about to have a second edition, enlarged & corrected of the same tune. And here I may remark how that by a combination of unfortunate circumstances, we have been foiled every way. A foul wind out (always from West?) and a foul Wind home, all from Eastward. Every day (for the 4 last days) we have seen vessels bound out to North America staggering along under a press of canvass, making the most of their present advantage, while we are obliged to haul close upon the wind, thereby impeding our speed, making lee way and moreover going on a course, which our [assaile?] would not have selected. We however say to each other, Oh! If our friends at home only knew of our safety and our comfortable condition, we should not mind the foul wind or the chance of a week or two longer at Sea. But

---

<sup>1</sup> See following footnote on a subsequent margin note.

there's the rub. Many of our men are married & have families – and all have friends & relations – at Falmouth – and consequently they feel for the anxiety of these respecting us, which of course must be increased by the comparatively recent loss of the *Thais* Packet, which took out the same Mail as ourselves.<sup>2</sup> We all hope & pray therefore that we may soon have a fair wind & be able to reach our Port by the end of next (our 12<sup>th</sup>) week.

12<sup>th</sup> Week.

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> April – from Noon – fine weather. Moderate & foul wind.

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> – pleasant cloudy but fair weather. Very light & foul wind.

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> – fine weather. Very light & fair wind all day with long heavy swell from Eastward. 5 or 6 vessels in sight. Towards evening wind inclinable to East.

[In the margin – ‘mistake Sunday should be Tuesday & & Monday Sunday.’]<sup>3</sup>

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> – fine weather moderate & foul wind.

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> – cloudy weather. Fresh and foul wind.

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> – fresh & foul wind – fine weather with passing showers.

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May – fine weather with passing showers of rain.

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – up to noon – very fine weather. Very light & foul wind. Spoke a bark the *John* of Liverpool, bound to Quebec, went on board and set the right arm of one of the seamen, who had the ulna broken.

XII Hebdomade – Bad luck, back luck – just the same – our worst fears have been realised. Tis impossible to describe the impatience & anxiety of the ships Company, to reach their homes, and satisfy their friends of their safety. Throughout we have had foul winds, with the exception of a few hours of a faint attempt at something more favourable. We have made little or no real progress, we have been running along a straight line of a certain length and then turned back again. We might be taken for a man of war, under orders from the Admiralty to cruise in a particular latitude and longitude and forbidden to go to one side or another of our assigned station. In every circumstances our situation now is similar to what it was about the same time last year. The same weather – the same winds, and the same deceitfulness in those winds, now dying away to a calm – now wavering in direction, whenever we have a shower of rain but finally returning to the post which we hoped they had abandoned.

Tho' certainly we have not given up all hopes, we have foregone by common consent all calculations as to the period of our arrival at Falmouth. Time meanwhile

---

<sup>2</sup> Under the command of Lieut. Charles Church, RN., H.M. Packet *Thais* sailed from Falmouth for Halifax, on December 12<sup>th</sup> 1833, with 35 souls on board. About a fortnight later wreckage from her began to wash-up on the west coast of Ireland. She had foundered with all hands, joining the growing list of ‘coffin brigs,’ as they became branded.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of this margin note is not clear. The sequence of days seems correct, though he has muddled up his dates from the previous Friday.



lags on most wearisomely. Four days may put us in, & yet we may be four weeks. One consolation we have had & it is no small one, & that is, that during the whole week we have enjoyed very fine weather, and our loneliness has been enlivened by numerous vessels, some brothers in misfortune with ourselves, & others scampering away with a favouring breeze.

13<sup>th</sup> Week.

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – from noon – fine weather. Very light and foul wind.

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> – lovely weather and moderate foul wind, till 3 P.M. After that cloudy but fair weather – Strong and foul wind.

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> – fine weather. Fresh and nearly favourable wind. If we had been more to the Southward, it would have been quite fair.

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> – fine weather all day, cloudy & evening rainy with thick weather. Fresh and favourable breeze.

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> - very fine weather. Moderate and favourable wind.

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> – thick foggy weather. Moderate & favourable breeze. At 10 P.M. saw Scilly Light.

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> – thick & foggy weather. At 10 A.M. came to anchor in Falmouth Harbour.

- Finish -

And here James Williamson's journals close in so far as his voyage accounts are concerned. Surplus to requirements, the *Duke of York*, was released from the Falmouth Packet Service, and presumably James left the service at the same time – his contract being with the commander of the ship, not the service as such.

~~~~~

(Annette to let me know if more info required.)

Tony P : 21/6/2014