

## **The journal of Thomas Parker (born August 3rd, 1852; died August 29th, 1929)**

Thomas emigrated with his family from Newcastle-on-Tyne in January 1884, disembarked in Townsville, and eventually settled in Ipswich, where he spent the rest of his days. He wrote these notes to record the journey.

Thomas was a tailor, as was his father before him. He was a life-long member of the methodist church, which, in those days meant he had what we would call 'wowsers' tastes - he never drank any alcohol, was abstemious in all things, and probably had a pretty strict view of 'fun'. My grandfather, Thomas Henry was his son - his only surviving one - who adopted his trade and took over the business he founded in Ipswich some time during the 1890s.

Grandfather never spoke to me about his parents, but my mother, his daughter, knew them until she was about 10, and carries an impression of rather humourless people, maybe even a bit severe. She somehow remembers that Thomas never approved of his son, even though he became a very accomplished tailor and successful citizen and family man. Maybe my grandfather wasn't puritanical enough. Who knows?

In the journal, he tells us mostly about some of the conditions of the voyage, and some novel experiences. He doesn't say anything about why he decided to take such a momentous step (when he left, he knew he would almost certainly never see any of his family again - and he didn't) or what expectations he had for his Australian adventure. The journal is silent too on other subjects we might be curious about, such as his children, who are only mentioned a couple of times when they got sick; the people he spent those weeks with in very close company; his reasons for choosing Queensland as his destination, and more.

And we never learn anything of the place he discovered, the conditions of life for an emigrant in Queensland in the 1880s, or how his fortunes flourished. The record ends with the terse statement "started work this morning", a few days after stepping ashore, and finding the tropical air full of insects. He takes up his pencil once more in November, as he sails to Brisbane, ahead of his family, after apparently deciding the North was not for them. But again, nothing is said about his reasons, and there is no record of how and when he moved finally, to Ipswich.

This omission of what is most personal is perhaps not so surprising. We can safely say, Thomas was a reserved man, and there is no reason to believe he was any more given to introspection than most people of his time. He does, however, seem to have relished the long voyage, and the overturning of his life, as an adventure. That much comes through in his spare observations, I think. It suggests to me that perhaps, beneath the careful surface of his tale, there is real passion that, at this time, knew no words to set it free. If you find yourself thinking his voice belongs to an old man, remember he was 32 at the time, and sailing to the other side of the world for a new life. Really timid people don't do that.

In transcribing the journal, I have had to elide a few words I couldn't interpret. These are given square brackets. The brief dated entries are supplemented in the journal with notes on blank pages. I've put all these under their dates, so sometimes, the same facts are entered twice. At the end, I've added a few pages in facsimile to give you an idea what the original looks like, and a couple of pictures so you can see the writer - though not as he was in 1884, but toward the end of his life. As far as I know, no portrait exists of the young man who travelled so far.

The dated entries begin on New Years day 1884, with two notes:

Tuesday 1/1/84: At Blackhill

Wednesday 2/1/84: Lost the train and stayed at Blackhill all day

1st, 1884

Commenced the year by first fooling Aunt Mewes at Blackhill. Stayed up talking till 3 o'clock.

2nd

At Mr Hardy's at Temple Town saw a Mr Barker, who asked if I would object to hear a prophecy of our future course. Which agreeing to, he said that after the commencement of the voyage was over we should have a pleasant time of it, as it was the best time of the year. When there we should live very near a State Church. We should come across a gentleman who in appearance and disposition to Mr Hardy - who would ask a favour which we should be sure to grant, such action leading to our certain success. The climate would be very suitable to myself and after a little difficulty, would agree with me, I should grow much stouter. Mr Barker had previously told Jennie that we should have a pleasant after a little illness we should live in a small cottage with a garden in front and a wood behind.

Thursday 3rd

Newcastle 9.10

Blackhill 7. 30

Friday 4th

Blackhill

Saturday 5th

Left Blackhill 12.30 after bidding goodbye to friends and relations.

Sunday 6th

Gloucester St. Attended service for the last time in the old place.

Monday 7th

Made final arrangements. Saw friends at the house.

Tuesday 8th

Doncaster [Mbro] 10.5 Arrived at Middles.. and saw friends Nicholson & family and Mr & Mrs Colley. Mr Peter Nettleton, wool stapler, Melbourne; from [Ossett] WR York. Mrs Colley's cousin.

Wednesday 9th

Left [Mbropeper] 10.40 train for Doncaster. Spent 1/2 an hour in York but had no time to view the place. Staid in Doncaster 1 1/2 hour; did not like the town which is an old fashioned one. Arrived at West Milton about 4 and staid the night at Mrs Burnett's. A woman in the back street thought to dry some gun powder before the fire. Work for the Doctors. Am of opinion she won't do it again.

Thursday 10th

Had a ramble round the country and saw Wash-Milton and the canal locks. Out with Mrs B, the wife and bairns. Wash is a wild looking place although a very good place Colliery Village.

#### Friday 11th

Left Wash station by 8.11 for London. Arrived 1.15 Moorgate station. Mr Geddings to supper.

#### Saturday 12th

At the Royal Albert Docks looking after the luggage. Rambling round London. Geddings to tea. Saw Tom Mewes

#### Sunday 13th

Spent the day in Portsmouth. Saw Grandma and Mr & Mrs Bartlett, Aunt [Licha]

#### Monday 14th

Met friends in the evening.

#### Tuesday 15th

We all reported ourselves at the Emigrants' Home Blackwall; spent almost the whole day waiting.

#### Wednesday 16th

We were to have set sail today but it was much too foggy and we had to return to town.

(undated) Mrs Worley - 3 East Crew. Mrs Tee - Lazy Lane Porthsea. T Worley. Mr J Worley 69 East Surrey Grove London SE - G Gevling 29 W Kent Rd

#### Thursday 17th

Again went to the depot - this time just in time for the tender. *SS Dacca*. Got up steam by about midnight. This day may be put down as an eventful one for us all. We got on board from the tender, along with some 700 souls. I must confess to a very curious feeling upon getting on board. Our own berth is not so very bad but we have very little room. The ship evidently has not been a passenger ship, the third class berths having been roughly fitted up between decks for the accommodation of the passengers. Not much comfort and a good deal of noise. The ship did not sail until midnight - and when she did it was hard to tell that she was moving although she was really going at a good pace.

#### Friday 18th

Off the south coast - Dover to Brighton, Isle of Wight. Plymouth Sound about midnight. The arrangements on board are not such as to suit our family, although we cheerfully make the best of it. The ships company is divided into messes of 10 persons, presided over by the first on the list, and I happened to be first on our list. I have to seek the provender for them and look after the cleaning of the dishes - and such a cleaning there is! Upon deck about 40 men scrubbing away at the dishes trying to get them clean with cold water. But we have to have hot in future. The food has been very fair so far, and more than enough. Breakfast - porridges, molasses, coffee, bread; dinner - soup, meat, potatoes, tea; tea and bread and butter. As we expect to be able to post at Plymouth, I have to write home and send them off.

#### Saturday 19th

At 1 o'clock pm, left Plymouth after taking some 80 extra passengers. £3.2.0 was demanded for extra luggage. Paid under protest, as being assured there was a mistake. Left Plymouth at midday and was soon out of sight of land, passing close to Eddystone lighthouse; saw the new one and the remains of Smeaton's. As soon as we got out into the channel there was a heavy swell upon the ship and very much sickness. Janie was laid up at bed time. We had the mortification of getting as neighbours an Irish family of four, making us very much more uncomfortable. I complained to the surgeon, but all I could get was an extra light close to our cabin or crib. 8 o'clock ship rolling very much. Some fun on deck among the more fortunate passengers. It is very striking, the effect the rolling has, and how quickly it acts. The children were a little better today. Breakfast - coffee, bread. Dinner - salt pork, potatoes and pea soup with rice for Theresa and warm water to wash children.

#### Sunday 20th

On the Bay of Biscay. No religious service. Much sickness on board. Sunday was on the Bay of Biscay, but the sea was extremely smooth with a long steady swell which caused the ship which was lightly loaded to roll very much, laying most of the passengers up with sickness. There was no religious service on board, though there were different groups of singers during the day. We saw the glistening of the phosphorus upon the sea this evening very distinctly, being like a very fine display of fireworks. Breakfast - coffee, bread, no butter served out. Dinner - roast beef, potatoes, tea and bread. Janie was very unwell from the rolling.

#### Monday 21st

Sighted the Portuguese coast by sunrise. Very fine day, and pleasant sailing. The ship did not roll as much. Very fine sunset. Sighted the coast of Portugal by sunrise. Very beautiful, as we could see rugged and mountainous. Sighted several vessels during the day. The day was beautifully fine, the sea being very smooth, and the passengers very jolly. Had a first sight of a sunset at sea on a fine day. The effect was indeed very beautiful. Regulations issued ordering each male passenger to take his turn in watching the berths during the night, as a caution against fire. Much complaint about the want of lights in the berths. Each passenger also has to clean his floor. Much grumbling about it.

#### Tuesday 22nd

Off the Spanish coast. Very fine and smooth. Sun warm. Run 301 miles in 24 hours. At break of day, we were off the Spanish coast with a gentle breeze. The day was very fine with a bright warm sun. Run very near to the coast which was mostly high cliffs and seemed quite barren. The ship had run 301 miles in the 24 hours - the first account we could get as to our position. The ship carrying none (at least in the fore part) but coolie sailors, we had not the usual opportunity of talk with the crew. The black sailors are a hardworking, quiet lot of fellows; few of them speak English. In the afternoon we were again hit of sight of land.

#### Wednesday 23rd

Passed the Straits of Gibraltar at 4 in the morning. Sighted an island to the north very mountainous and rugged. Run 298 miles. Very fine and warm. A concert was held on board in the afternoon. At night were interested with the effect of the phosphorus in the water. Some large fish raced the vessel and the effect of the phosphorus was something wonderful. We passed the Straits of Gibraltar at 4 am when we were all

abed, which disappointed us very much, as we were so anxious to see the rock. Afterwards sighted a small island to the north. Run for 24 hours, 298 miles. The day was much warmer in the afternoon a concert was given on the fore-castle of the ship - but was not much impressed with the talent. The baggage was turned out - only two of our boxes coming to light. At night we were very much interested in watching the beautiful effect of the phosphorus at the bow of the vessel. Some very large fishes also raced the vessel for many miles, dashing on before we could distinctly see their forms, surrounded as they were with the radiance of the phosphorus.

#### Thursday 24th

Off the coast of Africa. Passed Algiers. Fine day. Run 311 miles. Found us close the African coast. Passing Algiers. The coastline is mostly mountainous, covered with a sort of shrub and grass. At many places the scenery was very fine. In one place the mountain was snow-capped. Food - oatmeal, coffee, bread. Dinner - pork and rice, pea soup, tea and bread. The ship ran 311 miles.

#### Friday 25th

Still skirting the African coast. A heavy fall of rain occurred in the early morning, the first we have had, and the day proved a dull and damp one. The day wet and unpleasant. The children were rather miserable and cross. 320 miles.

#### Saturday 26th

Made Malta by 8am. Took in coals and left again by 3 pm. We made Malta this morning by 8 am and anchored in the harbour to take in coals. The town is a very fine one. All round the harbour there is a line of powerful fortresses, and large stone buildings, well built and designed. The harbour is a spacious vista & almost landlocked. Outside there is no sign of shipping, but once inside and you find some of the most powerful ships of HM's navy. On board it was quite a market day - the Maltese coming on board with all sorts of commodities and the ship being surrounded with fancy boats, the owners of which drove a roaring trade with the passengers who were not allowed to go into the town. Fruit is very cheap. We bought oranges, 1 penny for a pound - real nice ones. About 3 pounds of apples for sixpence; 4 watermelons for ditto. We also provided ourselves with sun hats. Tobacco is 1 shilling a pound cigars; sixpence to a shilling a box. Coaling being over, we weighed anchor at 3pm and were soon out of sight of land, giving hard chase to two ships which left in the morning. The day was fine with occasional showers

#### Sunday 27th

Service on the saloon deck at 11am. 262 miles. Being Sunday, Divine service was held on the saloon deck. Passed a steamer at 5pm which had left Malta 3 hours before us. Fine bright day with showers. 262 miles run.

#### Monday 28th

Fine with showers. Run 312 miles. Out of sight of land. 326 miles. Children very poorly and fidgety.

#### Tuesday 29th

Heavy storm of wind and rain in the morning. Passed Alexandria. Run 305 miles. At Port Said 56. Write home No.3 letter. Arrive Port Said 5pm. Heavy storm of wind and rain during the night and morning. The sea at times dashing over the bulwarks and drenching any unlucky person happening to be near, causing fine fun to the young

men. The wind blew at times with terrific violence, and not being far from shore, caused the captain some anxiety, he being constantly upon the bridge, and once even climbed into the fore-top to scan the horizon, being cheered by the passengers when he came down. However, the lighthouse of Alexandria was sighted about 10 o'clock. A tarpaulin was put up to protect the foredeck from the sun and rain, otherwise the hatches would have had to have been shut up. Much finer in the afternoon. Day's run 305 miles. 56 to Port Said. Steamed slowly and arrived at Port Said by 5pm.

The captain gave permission for the passenger to go ashore, but it became dark before there was any sign of an opportunity to do so, as no boat was allowed to come to the ship by the police. The captain afterwards advised us not to go ashore, as he feared the result, the people being so thievish. It seemed to be a poor town, and was not at all attractive in its buildings. We spent the evening watching the sailors load coal. It was a strange sight and sound. The barges lighted by burning coal fires; the strange dress and antics of the men, for the most part dressed like women in long loose gowns, and the gesticulations to one another and us as they alternately followed one another up the planks, each loaded with a lump or a bag of coal, and then scrambled for the biscuits thrown from the ship.

We stayed the night at Port Said and left next morning (30th) and entered the Suez Canal, surrounded on each side with interminable deserts of sand. The canal winds its way - it is very narrow at places - and for the most part of its length devoid of interest. Here and there we passed native people and houses, and the European telegraph house which created a stir on board. The canal runs into two large lakes, one of them some thirty miles (or so it appeared) in length, and the water of which is very salty. The ship took the ground three times during the day, and had to be moored during the night. Next day, proceeding still at the rate of about 5 miles an hour, we got to Suez by 4 in the afternoon. The latter part of the journey being much more interesting. Suez itself being a very pretty and clean town, and there being more vegetation upon the bank sides. Sometimes little cottages were to be seen surrounded by palm trees. We also passed a goodly number of ships. It must be noted that in the journey through the canal we had the coldest weather that we had experienced since we set out.

#### Wednesday 30th

47m. Left Port Said 7pm; entering Suez Canal.

#### Thursday 31st

Suez canal arrived at by 4pm; passing on without stopping, through the gulf of Suez into the Red Sea.

#### Friday February 1st

Red Sea 46m. On the Red Sea. Sea calm and the day much warmer with one heavy shower of rain. There was many complaints of the dinner issued today, being salt pork very badly cooked, and a few carrots in such a small quantity as to be hardly a taste to each individual. There was such dissatisfaction as to cause the chief steward to issue potted beef and carrots.

#### Saturday 2nd

Red Sea 302. Still running down the Red Sea, the day being beautifully fine and very hot. The boxes were again brought on deck, and we succeeded in getting ours out, and change of clothes which were much wanted.. Salt pork and beans for dinner. No

land sighted. At night there was a concert given by the cabin passengers., which was quite a success, there being a very good show of talent.

#### Sunday 3rd

Red Sea. Service on board. 300. Being Sunday, Divine Service was held on the saloon deck, presided over by the doctor. It was well attended. The piano was used to lead the singing, a lady named Mrs Stewart leading. The day was very fine and the hottest yet experienced.

#### Monday 4th

Red Sea 298. All bedding was ordered on deck before breakfast this morning for an airing. Sighted the islands, the Twelve Apostles - a number of rocky uninhabited islands away from the land. Saw two wrecked ships on the shore of one of them. In the after-part of the day a gale arose, but with little sea on. At dark, passed "Hells Gate", between two rocky islands.

#### Tuesday 5th

Aden Harbour 168. Reached Aden by 6 am. We have fresh experiences of life outside of England. Another gala day on board, and it is said we shall have to spend three more in the same way, waiting for the ship we have raced from Malta to take her mails on to Australia. The young natives here are very clever in the water, swimming and diving after money thrown to them. They were a source of much amusement to all on board. As usual, nature commodities were brought on board for sale. Fruit is not so cheap as at Malta, but there was a great sale of ostrich feathers which seem to be very cheap here. That is, to those who offered about a tenth of the amount asked. We bought a few feathers and some fruit. At night, there was athletic games for the rougher sort, and dancing for those disposed on deck.

#### Wednesday 6th

Visited Aden. Still in the harbour of Aden today. We got permission to go ashore. So along with William and Mrs Tomlinson, we started to see the town. We were landed by the natives boats for a shilling each, a distance of 1½ mile. We landed at a sort of hard or general place of debarkation and the sport at once commenced, we being immediately pounced upon by a dozen cabmen offering to take us to the camp (Town), the tombs, and other places which they reputed to be 5 or 7 miles for a charge of 2 shillings each. As our object was to stretch our legs, we refused, and set off to examine the place, followed by a jabbering crowd of cabdrivers, donkey men, camels, jews, money changers and beggars of all sorts, each kindly offering their services.

"Me do this, Sir", "Show you tanks Sir", "Me no father no mother Sir", "backoceed", and all sorts of cries, We searched in one direction and turned to go to the town, and after a good deal of bartering, bargained for a drive for sixpence each, went about a half mile, when cabby stopped and showed us his card of legal charges, and demanded 2 shillings as his fare. So we jumped out and left him, and walked about a mile, still followed by the motley crowd, when we met another cabby who offered to take us for sixpence, so we again got in and this time drove to the town which proved to be about 3 miles instead of seven. The fellow drove us right up the middle of the street occupied by the natives which was crowded by them, and landed us in the middle of them, and demanded 2 shillings each. Of course there was likely to be a

row, but we got rid of the fellow by giving him shilling, and started to explore, followed by the everlasting crowd.

It was one of the strangest sights it has been my lot to witness. Nothing but natives dwellings or shops. The town is principally laid out in large square, the streets running parallel to one another, with a market in the centre. In the market there were for sale native sheep - something a goat, covered with hair, not wool - and a lot of things the names of which we knew not. We had some refreshment at an Arab hotel - Huntley & Palmers biscuits at three times the proper price, and lemonade threepence a bottle, after which we again set out, chatting and laughing at the native followers through the principal streets, which were crowded. On our way back the streets were lined with shops but we could see nothing that we could buy. What we priced were far too dear. Nearly all the shops were for the sale of corn or dates and seeds. We could see native boys weaving some light shawls, making pots and grinding tools, and several other trades.

The women of gentility go about with their faces covered, and the men with a large cotton shawl tied round the waist and thrown over the shoulder. The younger party of the fraternity simply with cloths round the waist. They are mostly very good looking, noble people, the babies being very interesting. There are native police, each being provided with a cast-off English police staff which they carry in their hands. The houses are square built without window or chimney, smoke and air having ingress and egress through a large air door. A few of the official buildings were very fine ones and had a very pleasing effect alongside the others.

The island is a wild looking place, being nothing but mountains of a dark sort of stone, rugged and bare with not a blade of grass to be seen; not trees or bushes, except planted ones around public buildings. The hills are fortified and the town is entered by a deep cutting or pass through the mountain, commanded by a post. We walked back to the boat landing and got safe back on board by 5pm, having enjoyed ourselves immensely.

#### Thursday 7th

Aden harbour. Day very hot. Still in harbour waiting for the mail. Children not very well. Day very hot

#### Friday 8th

Fourth day at Aden. Children poorly. Fourth day in Aden harbour. Day very fine and extremely hot. There was a concert given by the third class passengers on the saloon deck.

#### Saturday 9th

Fifth day at Aden. [Sira Fort] in sight by 1.30. Weighed anchor 3.45. Fifth day of waiting for the "Siam" with the Australian mail. The spirits of all on board were raised when she was sighted entering the harbour at 10 o'clock, she anchoring alongside by 2 o'clock. The mails were got on board and we weighed anchor and steamed out by 3.15. Glad to get away once more.

#### Sunday 10th

Aden 237. 12°22'N; 48°55'S



Sunday. Service on the saloon deck. Day fine. Wind sails were erected to force air down below, it being very hot there, being now in the tropics we feel the heat very much

#### Monday 11th

Run 284. Lat 10°28'N; Long 53°3'E

Still very hot. Engines not working properly, consequently not so much progress is made, the days run being only 284 miles.

#### Tuesday 12th

Run 269. Lat 7°17'N; Long 56°17'E.

Stormy. The day's run 269 miles. Very stormy, seas choppy with heavy rains. Most of the passengers down sick. Janie sick in the morning, and self a little in afternoon. Much cooler with the breeze.

#### Wednesday 13th

Run 262. Lat 4°53'N; 59°56'E.

Water spout 5.30pm. Seas still choppy; the ship rolling much to the discomfort of the sick. The day not as hot, and in afternoon much finer. Saw a shoal of grampuses, also a water-spout, seeming about 10 miles distant and 30 feet in diameter. The spout could be distinctly seen stretching from the surface of the water in a straight even column up to a cumulus cloud, and after a time gradually melted away from the bottom to the top. Day's run 262 miles.

#### Thursday 14th

267 miles. 2°12'N; 63°29'E.

The day was much finer and very hot. The passengers gradually recovered their spirits as the ship settled. Day's run 267 miles. The last few days we have had our teas upon the deck.

#### Friday 15th

246½ miles. 0°3'N; 66°38'½E

I had to take my turn to watch the migrants' quarters from 2 to 6 am as guard against fire, every male passenger having to take his turn. 12 o'clock found us 3 minutes north of the equator, having made a run of 246½ miles - so that we crossed the line sometime before 1 o'clock. Some were dropped on because they could not see it. It was suggested that some ship must have been here before and rubbed it out. However, it's no joke to have the Sun direct overhead; the Sun sets now about 6 and half an hour after it is quite dark. You may be writing or reading easy, and five minutes after it will be too dark to see to anything.

There was to have been a concert today given by the young women, but it failed to come off owing to a disagreement between them and the Doctor as to the time of day at which it should be held. The girls holding that the Doctor wanted it in the morning to prevent the young men from hearing. There was also a dispute over the salt pork, the girls refusing to eat it, they alleging it was stinking and not fit to eat. They also demanded bread six times week, the same as the married a single men get, instead of three times a week. The result of the protest being that they are allowed to have their allowance of flour and other things and make their own bread and puddings.

#### Saturday 16th

252 miles. 1°14'S; 71°1'E

Sunday 17th

283 miles. 2°5'S; 75°39'E

Sunday service as usual, except that the girls refused to attend as a result of the previous day's quarrel. Every day there is some complaint as to the quantity of food. Today, the lime juice was withheld although we were on the line.

Monday 18th

296 miles. Lat 2°5'S; Long 80°55'E

A heavy storm of rain overtook us today. The rain came down in torrents with thunder. A double allowance of lime juice was given out owing to complaints yesterday. The bread was also weighed to show that the people got their proper quantity. Run 296 miles.

Tuesday 19th

315 miles. Lat 2°1'S; 85°50'E

The day was much finer and very hot. Passed three ships, the first we have seen since Sunday week. Day's run 315 miles Lat 2°1'S; Long 85°50'E

Wednesday 20th

292 miles. 2°1'6S; 90°42'E

Very little breeze and very sultry. There was a great row on board over the dinner served out today. Salt beef and carrots. The beef smelt very strongly and the people refused to eat it. So mess men went in a body to the steward and captain to complain, but they simply said that it was good meat; that it always turned a little in the tropics, and they could not issue better, and threatened to give us salt pork three times a week if the people were not content - upon which they threw the meat overboard. We missed the children's' dinner, owing to there being so great a crush for it, but we got a little arrowroot from the storekeeper and Janie made them a little pudding. We having to put up with bread and carrot - about half a pound of the latter between us. Run 292

Thursday 21st

310 miles. 3°30'S; 95°43'E

Ship stopped for a while to repair piston rod of engine. Run 310. 3°30'S; 95°43'E

Friday 22nd

Wrote letter to Ceily - home No.4. 293. 5°7'S; 100°20'E. Sighted land by 7.30pm. Two men down with sunstroke.

Wrote home expecting to post at Batavia. Day fine. 293 miles. 5°7'S; 100°20'E. Sighted land by 7.30 - the island of Sumatra. During the day the men were down with sunstroke. At night there was some heavy rain.

Saturday 23rd

315 miles. 6°14'S; 105°30'E

Very hot. Run along the island of Sumatra. Saw several high mountains and one volcano, the water in places being covered with the floating lava. I fixed a net to try and catch some, but the ship was going too fast, so we were disappointed. Passed several very pretty islands covered with palm and other trees, looking beautifully

green. Run 315 miles. 6°14'S; 105°30'E. Reached the outskirts Batavia harbour about 6.30 and cast anchor, when a most violent storm of rain came on accompanied by lightening that was awfully vivid.

#### Sunday 24th

Corned beef & fresh potatoes.

Sunday, no service on board. The hatchways were taken off to unload some cargo for Batavia. Coals were taken on board at night. There was another and more violent storm than that of yesterday.

#### Monday 25th

Fresh beef & preserved potatoes and broth. Weighed anchor 1.30.

Rain early part of day, but fine later on. Succeeded in fishing up with a net several pieces of lava from the Sumatra crater. Weighed anchor at 2pm. Dinner at 2.45.

#### Tuesday 26th

291. 6°17'S; 110°34'E. Tinned beef & yams.

Lecture on simple remedies for case of accident by Dr Colquhoun on the saloon deck. The skin and its functions; the suspension of respiration of the skin - the cause of speedy death. Prickly heat. The heat of the body in health always the same. The flesh or muscles. Action of muscles. Bones; the different joints. Bandages. Three-cornered bandage for head, arm, chest; sling. Roller bandage - how to apply to the arm.

At night there was a heavy storm in the distance and we got the hail out of it. Going cautiously, occasional stopping to heave the lead.

#### Wednesday 27th

273 miles. 8°35'S; 114°42'E. Salt beef & carrots.

At breakfast time the ship entered a very narrow strait - so narrow that before it was entered we could not see its entrance. It wound its way between the island of Java and two very beautiful places, especially the former. At dinner time there was another heavy rain storm.

#### Thursday 28th

304. 10°33'S; 119°23'E. Pork; potatoes, preserved, and soup, pea.

A great day on board is baggage day when all the boxes are got on deck for the passengers to get what they require out of them. All is commotion and bustle. The boxes are all brought on deck, whether wanted or not, and piled up for their owners to claim them. They are then tumbled down again and knocked about and damaged in all ways. Today I took a plan of our dwelling - the space shown being the abode, night and day, of 13 individuals, 6 adults and 5 children. The morning was very wet.

#### Friday 29th

289 miles. 10°26'S; 124°20'E. Preserved meat and carrots.

Early this morning there was a very heavy storm, the thunder being terrific, and the lightening so severe that the engines were stopped for two hours while the storm was on, in order to cover over the bright parts of the machinery.

#### Saturday March 1st

298. 10°14'S; 129°13'E

No land in sight. The singles women, having refused to eat their salt pork, alleging it be stinking, were served up the second day with it cold. In the afternoon the second lecture on simple injuries was given by the doctor. Syllabus: Blood vessels - capillaries, slight and [light]; vein - the blood comes quicker and dark; artery - in sharp quick spurts, coloured bright scarlet. Nature method. Contraction of muscle. Coagulation. 1st, pressure; 2nd, ice; 3, bandage. Cover with linen and crust of blood. Dry earth dressing. Throbbing indicates something wrong - indicating want of redressing - diluted carbolic acid and water dressing. Cut of vein - put bandage above and below. Artery - in arm, vessel inside of top of arm. Leg - half between thigh and knee, inside top. Bandages to be kept, on until bleeding stops or aid procured. Position carrying. Keep patient as cool as possible. A faint - helpful to stop recovery. Bleeding from the nose - patient sit up with head thrown back and feet in hot water. Three cornered bandage.

#### Sunday 2nd

312. 9°52'S; 134°28'E

Owing to it being a very wet morning, there was no service this morning. The after-part of the day was finer. All are in a state of expectancy to reach Thursday Island, the first point of Queensland.

#### Monday 3rd

299. 10°30½S; 139°31½E. Off Thursday Island midnight.

Still stormy. Very heavy rains. Reached Thursday Island by midnight and anchored outside the passage, being dangerous in the dark owing to the many small rocky islands which dot the water, of which during the day we passed a very great number, some of them being very pretty spots.

#### Tuesday 4th

167 miles. Thursday Island 8am; left 3pm.

Weighed anchor and steamed into the harbour by 8am. The place is like a little paradise. Not many houses - perhaps about two dozen, but very pretty and surrounded with the tropical flora - large ferns, palms and other trees. The houses are wooden and iron, and painted white. One passenger was landed and several fresh ones came on board for Brisbane. The hatches were taken off and a good deal of cargo discharged - iron sheeting for house building. Whiskey and Bass' beer, of which there was enough to have drowned the whole of the inhabitants. Country hilly.

Weighed anchor by 3pm and prepared to start, but soon got stuck in the sand, and two hours were spent in getting the ship off. We got away at last and steamed SE along the shore, which gave everyone a pleasant idea of the country. By 9.30 we came across a ship's boat with four sailors in it, their ship having run upon the rocks some ninety miles away, and they being upon the water since Friday, seeking assistance. Our captain gave them food and we went on, they apparently going on to Thursday Island. The anchor was soon after cast for the night, the coast being dangerous.

#### Wednesday 5th

152 miles. 12°14'S; 143°15'E. Lime juice discontinued.

Off again by 5 o'clock, coasting all the way along a sandy shore backed by dark bare hills. Stopped at the wreck of the steamer whose boat we spotted previous night, and

took off a man. Passed the steamers *Duke of Buckingham* and *Roma*, homeward bound. The passengers taken on at Thursday Island give our people a very poor account of the state of the country. Whether they wish to discourage the folk on board or look through coloured spectacles, we know not - but there is a good deal of conjecture going on.

#### Thursday 6th

251m. 15°1'S; 145°24'E. To Cooktown 28m. Cooktown arr. 2pm; dep. 6pm.

Being among dangerous rocks and sand banks, the anchor was cast the darkest part of the morning, losing us four more hours. The coast is not the least inviting, but is getting more mountainous.

#### Friday 7th

200m. 18°28'S; 146°34'E. Arr. off Townsville by 4pm. Not able to land.

#### Saturday 8th

Left the *SS Dacca* by 11.30 amid the cheers and good wishes of all. Put up at the shanty called The Depot: had to sleep in the open air in a blanket, Janie and the children being inside.

#### Sunday 9th

Walked through the town looking for a house, the Depot being unbearable, and the children taking badly with it.

#### Monday 10th

Succeeded in getting work at Walkers as trousers maker, and found a house near a place called the Carriers Arms, of 4 rooms at a weekly rental of 15 shillings, where we shifted to, getting wife and children there by 9 at night, thoroughly tired out. We laid ourselves in the blanket and slept amid a swarm of beetles and insects of all sorts.

#### Tuesday 11th

Today we got the boxes up to the house and set them out as furniture, sleeping upon the floor.

#### Wednesday 12th

Started work this morning.

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#### Monday, November 24th

Left Townsville behind by 12 o'clock. Janie and children remaining in charge of Bill.

#### Tuesday 25th

Bowen by midnight.

#### Wednesday 26th

Mackay.

#### Thursday 27th

Rockhampton. Fearful storm arose after tea time lasting all night.

After leaving Rockhampton a fearful storm arose which gave us some trouble. The seas were very heavy, and apart from the danger attendant, were grand and imposing as the breakers came along in the half-dark night, throwing their surf over everything, and every now and then deluging the ship so that the hatches had to be battened down to keep the water out. The ship being lightly loaded, tossed about like a cork upon the water, giving fearful rolls, sending the bulwarks at times completely under water. The passengers having to hold on tight, scattering every loose thing in every direction. Glass, boxes of ginger beer, carts, forms, water bottles, decanters, were all soon mixed together. I myself, after staying on deck until wet to the skin, laid upon the cabin floor wedged between a bunk and a box, and to sleep.

The crashes as the old ship came down upon the water were something horrible. Every inch of ironwork seemed to groan and twist, and ready to tear to pieces. The screw also, when the ship was out of the water [roichotted] round and came down with a crash into the water, we expecting to hear it break off. She rocked fearfully, the bulwarks at times being right in the water, first the one side, then the other. Twice she refused to face the sea as it came upon her in a straight wall of solid water, turning her round broadside on. After the break of day the wind moderated, but she continued to roll until we got into Moreton Bay.

#### Friday 28th

Storm began to abate by 8am, but very heavy seas on all day. No breakfast or dinner could be cooked. At tea we had to hold on to the cups and dishes.

#### Saturday 29th

Landed in Brisbane by 6 o'clock am.

#### Sunday 30th

Went to Chapel; saw Mr Lamb and presented letter of introduction.

#### Monday December 1st

Looked about the town

#### Tuesday 2nd

Intro to wholesale houses who promised to look out for me.



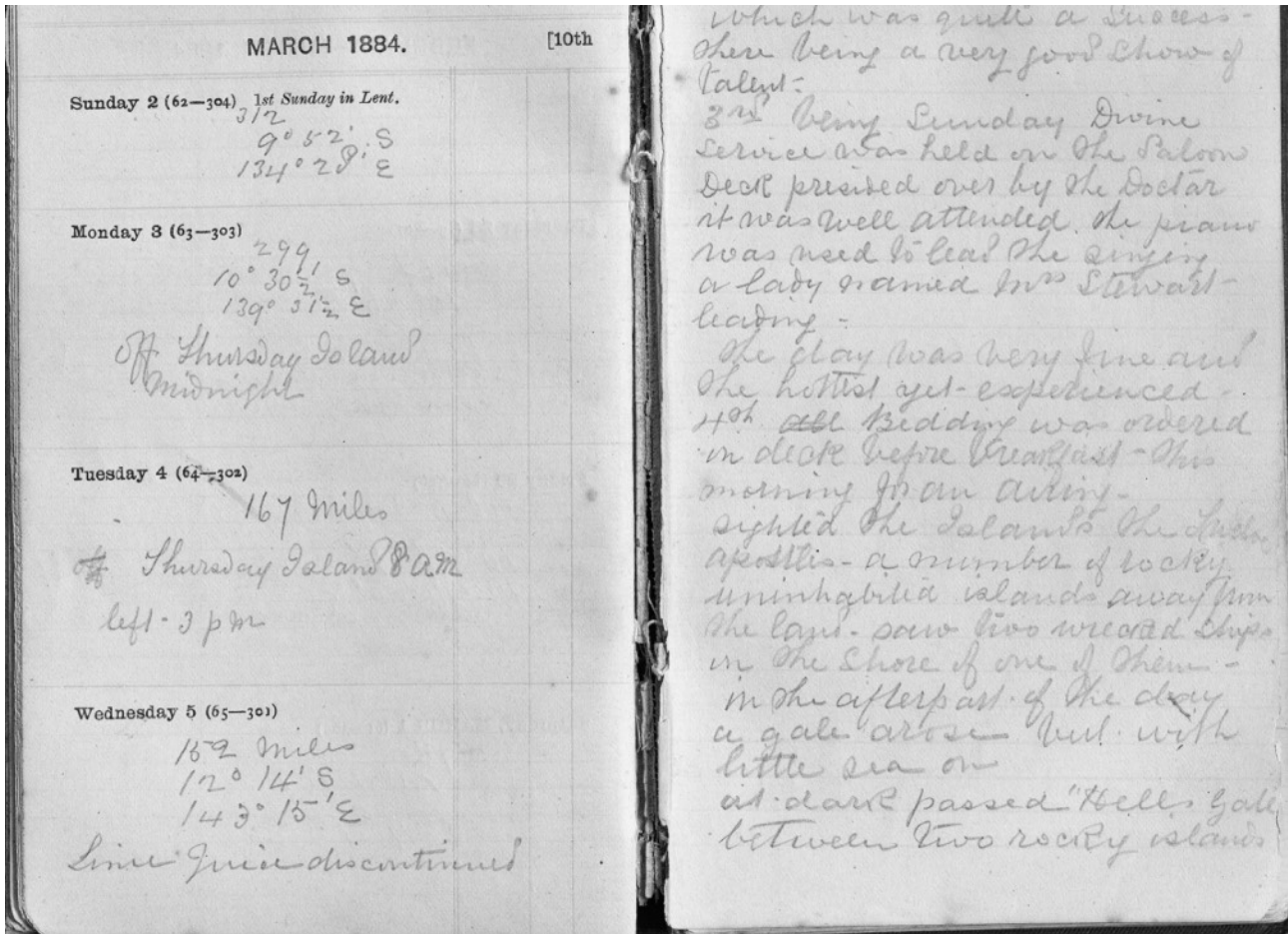
**Thomas Parker, the author of this journal, in middle age - perhaps around 1910**



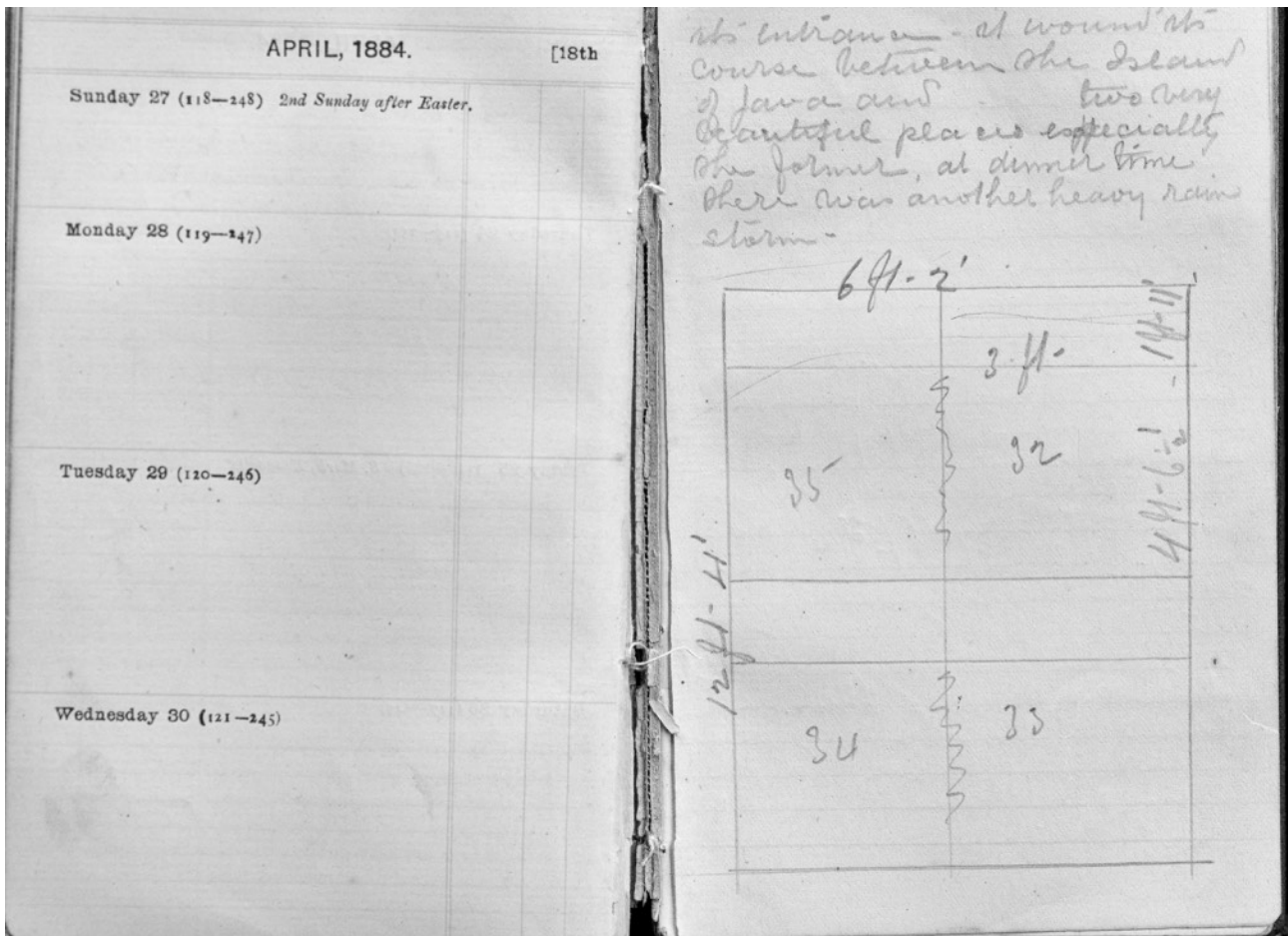
**Thomas Parker and his wife Janie, around 1920**







A sample of the pages that record bare facts under their dates, and discursive notes opposite



Plan of the accommodation for 13 passengers: 6 adults and 5 children, and home to the Parker family for two months, a lot of it in tropical heat (entry 28 February)

DECEMBER, 1884.		(51st
Sunday 14 (349-17)	3rd Sunday in Advent.	
Monday 15 (350-16)		
Tuesday 16 (351-15)	Cambridge Michaelmas Term ends.	
Wednesday 17 (352-14)	Oxford Michaelmas Term ends Ember Week.	

Goods Damaged

Shet-Linen	
14 Wool Shirts	1-7-0
2 " Singles	9-0
2 Pairs Boots	

DECEMBER, 1884.		Week.)
Thursday 18 (353-13)		
Friday 19 (354-12)		
Saturday 20 (355-11)	Michaelmas Law Sittings end.	

Goods Destroyed

1 Waterproof Cl. New	2-17-6	Coal-
1 Smead & Coal-	2-10-0	
2 Under Shirts	7-	
2 White linen Shirts	16-0	
2 Stupe "	10-6	
Muffler	4-6	
Accordian	18-6	
4 broken Leathers	10-0	
Books		
New Physicianary	1-5-0	
Capital of Genes	10-	
20 Sunday Books value	2-0-0	
of 1-15 3/6		

Record of losses incurred to the family's luggage on the voyage, possibly made for the purpose of a claim against the shipping company

