

A Shields Nov 17, 40

Dear Parents

We have just arrived here, and I write from this place that I may post the letter to day at Newcastle in order to go the packet of the 19th if any sail at that date - We left Pictou as you know on Tuesday evening, and next morning entered the Gut; here however we sailed but slowly all the forenoon on account of the tide. In the evening we left the Gut with a squally S.W. wind but the captain feared that we should not be able to clear the Cape Breton shore he therefore put back and anchored in Eddy Cove. Next morning we again left the Gut with a light westerly wind, and soon left the land. For seven days the winds were light or unfavourable and on the southern edge of the banks we were becalmed a whole day in a thick fog. The sailors commenced fishing and caught a few cod. They were very fine much better than our Pictou ones I got a few shells in their stomachs, and caught a land bird which came on board and which I had not seen before - I have its skin - ~~and~~ as next day we left the banks and as the fog cleared off, saw several fishing

and other vessels. After leaving the banks
we again had light and unpuntable
winds but very fine weather almost like
summer - At length on the 17th day after
leaving Pictou, a N W wind commenced
and soon changed to the W. with squalls
and showers of sleet and rain - for a day or
two we went fine before it, but one night
a sea broke over the decks carried off part of
the bulwarks, and compass, broke the wheel
and poured a torrent of water down into the
cabin. It was the second mate's watch and
he and another man a number of mine
(John Brown) were bruised and nearly washed
overboard. The Captain & Mate ran up on deck
in their shirts and got the vessel hoisted soon
as I got my clothes on I helped the 2nd mate to
undress & get into bed - Next day they got the
wheel repaired and other things put to rights as
far as possible, and in the evenings we got a
fire on in the cabin, and made things con-
fortable again - After this we got on fine again
and on the 24th of Nov made land at the
Sisard point near Fulmoult. We sailed
up Channel with fair winds, but after passing
the towns the weather changed and for the
remainder of the passage was very stormy and
unpleasant. At night we were nearly becalmed
in a fog among Gannett sands, and knew nothing
of where we were or how to steer except that we heard
the water breaking upon the shoals; and another time
when running before a gale of wind in thick weather
we just passed through the broken water on the
edge of a bank called the Surgeon where we

if we had struck you would probably never have
heard of us. Indeed we had a gale of wind
almost every day and that upon a coast
where there are plenty of shoals and rocks and
no good harbours. There is not a harbour which
we could enter within 10 miles on either side of
Newcastle, and the Tyne itself is a bar harbour
only accessible at high water and with westerly
winds. After reaching it we lay off all night in a
gale uncertain whether we could enter till next
day. We did get in in the morning however, and
I feel grateful for the protection which we experienced.
Others were not so fortunate. In the gales which we
had many colliers and other vessels were lost and
only a day or two before we arrived, two vessels
were lost with all hands; one on the bar at the mouth
of the Tyne the other on the rocks at its entrance.

I was a little sick for two or three
days but was afterwards quite well. The
accommodations were comfortable. The cooking
good though very dirty, but I soon got used to that,
and the water excellent all the passage -
My cutables and drinkables were very useful
I had porridge in the mornings until the
meat was done - wine to dinner and presery
to tea - all the passage. The pound cake kept
wonderfully, I have a piece yet as good as when
it was baked. I am quite well and in high
spirits at getting ashore - and hope that those
also are well and happy and hope that I
will hear from you on reaching Edinburgh, where
I intend to go after spending a day or two in seeing
the sights of Newcastle - If a packet sails on

The 18th or 19th you will probably receive this
card in December. I will also write by the N York Steamer
and will then give you my opinion of what I have
seen of England - Your affectionate son
J. W. Garrison

The writing of this letter is a sad business
but I am fast about going to New Castle
and therefore in a hurry
J. W. G.

Mr James Garrison

Bookseller

Pictou

at Nova Scotia

Per Packet

