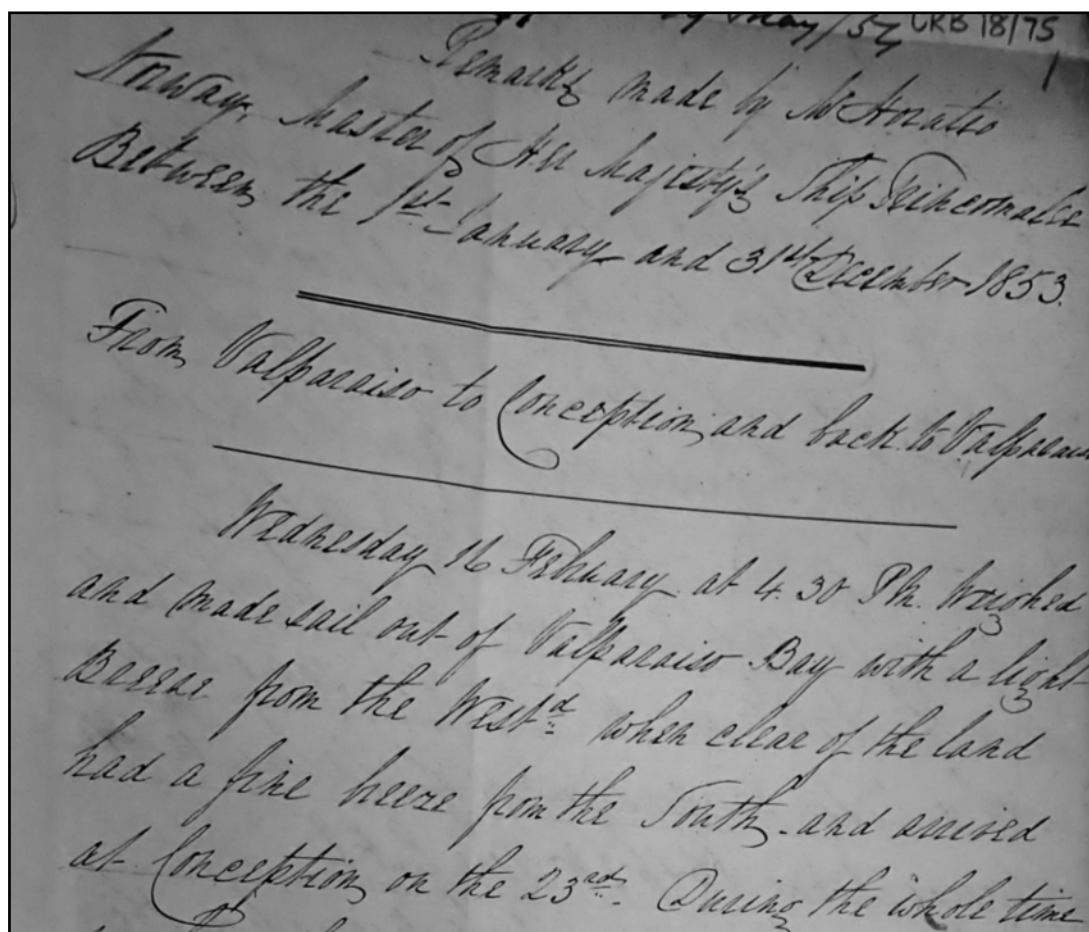


Master's Remark Book HMS Trincomalee – 1853



Remarks made by Mr. Horatio Norway, Master of Her Majesty's Ship Trincomalee between the 1st January and 31st December 1853.

- The following is a reduced version of a transcription of the original remark book by Dr Hugh Turner -

From Valparaiso to Concepcion and back to Valparaiso

Wednesday 16th February at 4.30 pm. Weighed and made sail out of Valparaiso Bay with a light breeze from the West. When clear of the land had a fine breeze from the South and arrived at Concepcion on the 23rd, During the whole time we had wind from the South veering for a short time to SE SSE and the current setting to the Northwards from 10 to 18 miles a day.

On the 23rd at 11 am observed the land ... and steered a course for the entrance of the Bay at 3 pm. ...tacked as requisite working up the anchorage off the South end of Quiriquina, where we anchored in 15 fathoms, mud, off a low sandy spit ... we passed over the position twice ... observed large quantities of medusae mostly of the kind called Vellellae ... at times the sea was covered with them as far as the eye could reach. Also quantities of jelly fish, there was also a seal seen but no other sign of land in and about the neighbourhood. How the seal came there considering the distance we were from any known land is strange.

From the 18th till the 25th we had a very good run with the wind from the SW to the NW and one day from the SSE when we made Cape Classet NE to E $\frac{1}{2}$ E about ten miles having sounded when about 25 miles off in 90 fathoms sand and stones and at 8 am Cape Classet SE 4 miles.

Cape Classet is the SW Point of the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and when within 4 or 5 miles of it you will easily know it by Pillar rock which is said in the directions to be 400 feet high but I would say 100 would be nearer the truth, there is a patch of islands laying off the Cape ... it is much better if the wind is light to give Cape Classet a good berth as the tides run towards it at both ebb and flood from 3 to 5 knots an hour. ... in the afternoon, shortened sail and hauled to the wind ... for Royal Bay 5 pm anchored in 10 fathoms in soft muddy bottom. ...

Monday June 27th ran into Esquimalt Harbor and moored ship off Dockyard Island ... Esquimalt Harbor extends about 2 miles North and South with Village Bay in the eastern part, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile up there is a sunken rock off Inskip Island, which narrows it in that part, in the Head of the Harbor there is a fresh water stream where you can water but very seldom get more than one [?] a day on account of the tide which is very irregular. ... The tides are very uncertain and are influenced by the winds in the straits, in the Gulf of Georgia and by the large rivers that empty themselves in these waters causing sometimes three and four risings and fallings of the waters in the Harbor in the 24 hours, during the time we remained here we had very fine weather, the sea breeze during the day flowing from the S.W..

On the 10th of August we weighed at 4 am and were towed out of the Straits of St Juan de Fuca by H.M. Steamer Virago she being bound for San Francisco and ourselves for Sitka to which place we made a very good passage of 11 days during which time the wind was principally in the N.W. twice during the time it was SW accompanied with thick weather, fog and drizzling rains, it was mostly thick hazy weather during the whole passage, but it did not except on one occasion prevent us from getting sights.

On the 20th in the afternoon we sighted Cape Woodhouse but it being thick and it being some way to leeward we stood off for the night. The next day we made out Cape Edgecombe and Robin Island. In making the land endeavour to bring Robin Island, which at a distance will appear as two, in a line with Mount Edgecombe bearing N 43 deg. W by Compass, Mount Edgecombe will be easily known, being an extinct volcano and the highest mountain in the neighbourhood 3260 feet. Pass Robin Island about 1 mile off then steer for the next Island ahead about 8 miles distant NE $\frac{1}{2}$ E by Compass which keep on your port hand, and on no account pass to the Northward of it as there are a great number of rocks both above and below water in that part of the sound. Pass this Island about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of them bring Robin Island open to the Northward until you are passed a sunken rock which lies about 2 cable lengths off another Island which you keep on your starboard hand. Near this Island a Russian Steamer took us in tow and towed us through the central passage into Sitka when passed bring Robin Island a little open of this Island to the Northward and steer NE $\frac{1}{4}$ E, it will bring you to the Eastern Channel and abreast of the central one, the Eastern passage is to the NW of Sitka.

The Russians have a Pilot and Steamer always ready to tow any vessel into the Harbor, the passage being very narrow, the central one being about 1 cable's length across the Harbor is formed of a number of small islands forming a perfect natural breakwater. The marks for the anchorage are Robin's Island seen through the central passage SW by S. Flag staff on the [Fort which is] under a high mountain. Sitka or New Anchorage the seat of Government of the Russian American Territory is situated on the East side of Norfolk Sound about 15 or 16 miles within the Capes Woodhouse and Edgecombe which are about the same distance apart. The position of the observatory is in Lat 57 deg, 3 min, North Long. 135 deg. 18 min. ...

During the time we remained we had very fine weather and only one rainy day which is rather remarkable as the least rain that has been known to fall in the year is 75 inches and the most 100. The Russians informed us that they had kept a meteorological journal for 10 years. In the SE part of the sound they have salmon being on a large fresh water lake where they take large quantities of fish. They export from 30 to 40 thousand barrels of fish annually to San Francisco and the Sandwich Islands. They supplied us during our stay with as much fresh salmon as the Ship's Company could make use of (but they could not supply us with fresh meats, being obliged to live in salt meat themselves.) without payment. About 6 or 7 miles from this place they have hot sulphur baths and springs which the Stikeen Indians destroyed about 10 months since we visited both of these places.

On Sunday the 4th of September at 5 am we were taken in tow by the Russian Steamer and towed out of the Sound when she cast off a light breeze having sprung up from the SE and we made sail for Virago Sound in Queen Charlotte's Island where we arrived on the 7th September in the evening having had light winds from the SE West and SW ... with thick foggy weather.

Virago Bay or Sound is situated in the North End of Queen Charlotte's Island ... The appearance of the land in the North end of Queen Charlotte's Island is rather flat and of a uniform height there not being any high hills until you get back into the interior of the Island ... The leading marks into Trincomalee Harbor in the 4½ fathoms channel are the trees on Naden Point ... Here we got large quantities of halibut and potatoes, in exchange for old clothes, sheets, blankets, tobacco and soap.

In the afternoon of the 20th September we left for Esquimalt Harbor where we arrived on the 5th of October having had light winds from NNE North NNW, NW, WNW, except for two days when we had a strong breeze from the SW. On Sunday the 25th of September in the afternoon it being very clear we observed Mount Olympus 140 miles distant. Sounded is from 35 to 110 fathoms as we were running along Trincomalee Island from 12 to 15 miles distant. When the soundings fell under 50 fathoms the bottoms was coarse mud, black sand and stones, grey and reddish stones, above that it was fine sand, greenish sand and blue mud. On the 26th on the forenoon it being calm and foggy we [brought] too with a kedge in 48 fathoms. ...

On the 27th in Lat. 48 deg. 38 min. N and Long. 125 deg. 59 min. ... sounded in 68 fathoms shale apparently coal and shell calming and light winds from ENE to E until October 1st. ... Lat. 48 Deg. 26 min. N, Long. 125 deg. 16 min. ... at 5.30 pm. Anchored with kedge in 38 fathoms stones and fine sand. Cape Casset S6E Pandora Peak N33E in the afternoon of the 2nd and ran up the Straits with a light air from the NW until 6.50pm when the tide making out and the wind being light we brought too with the kedge in 58 fathoms off the entrance of San Juan Harbor, and on the next day we weighed with the wind at ENE and worked up the Straits to ... the West end of Bay ... and from thence we weighed on the 4th with the wind from the East, but in the afternoon it shifted round to the westward and at 4.30 pm we anchored to the East of Pillar Point in 14 fathoms rock and mud. During the first watch it blew very strong from the WSW ...

October the 5th at 7 am weighed and arrived in Esquimalt at 10,20 am and moored. Inskip Island NW Rodd Point WSW Dockyard Island S¾E. We remained here until the 25th October during which time the wind was principally from the SW accompanied with heavy rain.

...

October the 27th calm and light wind with occasionally rain.

October the 28 weighed at 5.30am with light air ... From this time the weather became thick and foggy flowing in heavy squalls with force from 5 to 10. At 8.30 we were obliged to haul in the jib down it then blowing a hard gale. The men on the boom were not able to stow it and we had not room to keep the ship away, it was split and blown to shreds. At 10.30pm the strength

of the wind was 4 at midnight it was calm, during all this time it was raining very heavy.

October 29th during the middle watch we sounded in 78 and 75 fathoms dark green sand. 4.30 am sounded in 75 fathoms coarse sand, 5.30 sounded in 45 fathoms stones, 6.45 40 fathoms shell and stones. 8 am. 40 fathoms pebbles. When it cleared up for a short time Cape Classet bore SE by E 8 or 10 miles. Noon Cape Classet SE by E 8 or 10 miles, we did not expect we were so far out of the straits until we struck soundings on this bank, Portland Bank. We consider this a very good mark in foggy weather for knowing you are to the north of Cape Classet and you may shape your course up the straits or to the SW clear of the dangers off C. Classet ... At 5 pm the wind shifted suddenly to the southward and became squally and it increasing in strength we shortened sail ... at 8 pm it was blowing a moderate gale accompanied with heavy squalls and rain.

October 30th at 1.30 am sounded in 54 fathoms coarse sand 3 in 50 fathoms coarse sand. ... the wind shifted to west and we were able to steer a course south clear of this very squally latitude. I should recommend all ships bound up the Straits when clear of the dangers about Classet ...work up on the south shore as there are many good anchorages there where a ship may remain in safety during the prevailing gales which take place during the Autumn and Winter months from SE to SW ... Another mark is the deep valley of Douglas which appears to separate the high mountains in [those] brought to bear SSW and steer NNE.

October 31st it cleared to very fine weather with a moderate breeze from the East. Wednesday November 2nd had a fresh breeze from north up to noon and went by

Here the available material for transcription finishes.

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