

Introduction

On 6 October 1950 Clare and Lee Crowe left austerly Britain for New Zealand to visit Bob and Bunty, Lee's brother and his wife. They went out on the Rangitoto via Panama and came back on the Stratheden via Suez, reaching home on 11 March 1951. Of these five months roughly three were spent in New Zealand. Clare jotted down a day-by-day account of where they went and what they did, and what her own reactions were. The journal is concisely written, not a wasted word. In transcribing it I have not tried to force it into grammatical sentences and although I have inserted punctuation where it was needed to make sense, I haven't tried to impose consistency.

The journal has three main elements, all of which Clare enjoyed to the full: the life on the ocean liners; meeting Bob and Bunty and their friends in New Zealand; and sight-seeing in New Zealand, of which the most important part was the fortnight visiting the geysers, thermal springs, caves and wilderness of Rotorua and Waikaremoana. I've added footnotes where I thought it worth supplementing the information that Clare gives, and once or twice to query what she has written. Perhaps it would be better if there were rather more notes on the Rotorua episode and rather fewer on the films shown on the voyage, but it would take a lot of time to do anything like justice to the extraordinary natural world of New Zealand—perhaps a project for another day or for someone else better qualified. One thing that I regret very much is that I know nothing about any of the people that Clare and Lee met in New Zealand and Australia. Bob and Bunty themselves are just names to me.

If I find out more, perhaps a second edition will be forthcoming. Please send me any corrections or additions.

Clare's first interest is in the gardens and the wild plant life. Gardening was clearly a point of contact between her and the many friendly strangers she met on the Tour. She is also quick to note the domestic arrangements in New Zealand, coming away with several recipes noted at the back of her journal. Social life on the liners fascinated her, and she also shows an interest in the technical cleverness of it all, the time-adjustments, the steering and the working of the locks on the canal. There are one or two sociological observations which surprised me slightly; I wondered if Tony's influence had been at work.

One thing that surprises me is how little Clare says about Lee, and about his reactions to what they did and saw. She seems to have been worried about his health, and he was not as good a sailor as she was. She quotes one remark of his near the beginning, but from then on it's as though he was not there. When we knew them Lee was always self-effacing, and seemed determined to make the whole house revolve around Clare.

On her return Clare gave a talk to the Women's Institute about the Tour, and the text has survived and would be worth transcribing—another little project. In the

journal her reactions to New Zealand are all pretty positive, enthusiastic even, once she got over the absence of dainty tea-shops. The gardens are lovely, the homes are beautiful, the people charming. She doesn't contradict this in her talk, but on reflection she has come up with some reservations which, in the enthusiasm of the moment, were kept in the background. She wonders whether the New Zealanders are perhaps a bit smug; she finds the young people almost pagan, more interested in sport than culture; and she feels the society is becoming Americanised, with the emphasis on labour-saving and luxury goods. She notes that the service given by tradesmen and delivery-men is inferior to what she was used to in England, and suggests that it is because labour is scarce. I suspect that what she really missed, did she but know it, was the deference of 1950s England.

In her talk she described a very revealing episode illustrating both the lack of deference and new world technical wizardry. In England at that time the visit of the chimney-sweep was a major event, requiring everything to be covered up, and with a major clean-up job to follow. You would book the sweep in advance so that everything could be got ready for him. You would put on your overalls, and probably tie up your hair in a turban. Clare was amazed to find that in New Zealand the sweep would turn up unannounced, and if you sent him away he wouldn't come back until your turn came round again. She was horrified when this calamity, as she saw it, occurred just as her hostess was preparing a dinner party. What she found, however, was that the operation was carried out quickly and unobtrusively, with not a speck of dirt escaping into the rooms.

Another passage in the WI talk qualifies slightly the enthusiasm we see in the Journal for the gardens and flora of New Zealand:

Auckland being semi-tropical, every kind of fruit and flower grows in the gardens. The beautiful jacaranda blooms side by side with the red gum, and the pohutukawas with their flaming red flower line the roads and grow right down to the sea. But – and it is an important 'but' I think – the NZ Bush is evergreen, which means that there are no woods of black wintry trees, so lovely with the red sunset behind them, no miracle of a hedge turning green almost overnight, no quivering young beech trees, so that they miss the 'green gauze of April's fragile garments'.

The talk ends with the words: 'lovely Sussex and Home once more.'

Many thanks are due to Heather and Glenda for preserving these documents and photographs. They taught me a bit about New Zealand and quite a lot about Clare.

Julian Crowe
May 2010

Tilbury to Wellington via Panama

6 October Left Willingdon at 10.15. E, D, Linda and Mrs Watkins to bid us bon voyage. Lin and Peggy awaiting us at L.S.¹ Quickly through customs and onto boat.² Lovely to look at and lovely to live in. Charming cabin. Flowers from the company and carnations, roses, ??? and crys. from Richard. Telegrams from Tony, Heather, Mr and Mrs S and Murdochs and Johnstones. Card from Sadlers. Started moving at 7.30. Moving out of dock and into river very interesting and very lovely with all the shipping ablaze with lights. To bed at 10.30. Lee the best night for weeks! Terrific pace and very noisy.

7 October Morning. Now 7.30. Just had morning tea. Lee doing exercises. Both just off for bath and shower. Sun just through, still in channel.

Very grey all day. Walking, knitting in morning. Sleep in afternoon. Walk, dress, dinner. Cinema - 'It's Cheaper by the Dozen'³ - good. Lager and sandwiches. Bed. Now heavy Atlantic swell with much more rolling.

8 October Morning. Tea, apple and orange. Just off to bathe. Salt water, no lather, very hot. (Too much lager overnight!)

A little brighter, but on the whole dull. Still heavy swell, but possible to promenade decks. Small bird - we think greenfinch - struggled on to boat and fell exhausted. Revived later and flew about. Lee thought it was 'Lucky' following us! First sign of any life since Friday evening. Kwells doing their good work. Lee eating well at every meal. Concert in Evening. No service owing to inclement weather (Padre heavy cold).

9 October Rain at first. Fitful sun later turning sea into a glorious sapphire blue with white and turquoise feathery tipped waves. More wind - much warmer. Azores tomorrow. Housey-housey and dancing in evening.

10 October Passed Azores during morning. Lovely islands bathed in sunshine, the largest Terceira.⁴ Warmer - summer covers put on chairs. Cinema in evening, 'Come to the Fair'.⁵

¹ E and D: Ethel and Dorothy, Lee's sisters. L.S.: Liverpool Street.

² The Rangitoto

³ *Cheaper by the Dozen*, 1950, directed by Walter Lang, starring Clifton Webb and Myrna Loy.

⁴ Terceira at 156 square miles is the third largest of the Azores, the largest being São Miguel, 293 square miles.

⁵ All I can find on the movie database with this title is a 6 minute 1949 Canadian Film Board short. Clare may mean *So Long at the Fair* (1950), directed by Anthony Darnborough and Terence Fisher, starring Dirk Bogarde and Jean Simmons.

11 October Warm and sunny but still windy. The whole ship's officers and stewards dressed in white. Awnings up, bathing pool filled, deck games in full swing. Ices at 11 instead of hot soup and toast. Dancing on deck at night, and getting much warmer. Beautiful mauve and red sunset.

Twenty children and young people on board emigrating under the Child Welfare Scheme. Except that they must not invade the lounges and feed alone they have the run of the ship and are having the time of their lives.⁶ About 60 babies and children travelling also. Too many!

12 October Another lovely day. Saw quantities of seaweed from the Sargasso Sea. Very warm. Quiz in lounge at night. More and more amazed at the amount of sea in the world! Passed hurricane centre 50 miles away in night.⁷

13 October Quiet uneventful day. Hot with Tropical storms. Cinema to be held on deck had to be shown inside. Dreadful film! (Keys of the City?)⁸

14 October First day of 2nd week. Still putting clocks back 30 minutes each night so that it is getting dark at 6 o'clock. Although we do little but talk to folk, read, etc the days pass all too quickly. Very sticky heat, so not much energy. Dining room and lounges very light and airy with artistic coloring, pictures and cushions. Except for throb of engine it is difficult to realise that one is not in a Hotel lounge. Gala dance on the deck. Girls' frocks, fairy lights, balloons and ship's officers in their white evening clothes make a pretty picture. Another ship sighted. Beautiful sunset.

15 October Very hot today. Service in Lounge. This ship has a lovely built-in altar which disappears behind panelling when not in use. Passed between the Windward and Leeward Islands of the Guadeloupe Group, the largest Guadeloupe proper and Antigua.⁹ Only the young had any

⁶ Clare is no doubt right in her observation that most or all of the children enjoyed the journey on the Rangitoto, and it didn't cross her mind that their prospects were uncertain, and that some of them would be badly treated. For 100 years emigration had been regarded as a solution to social deprivation at home.

⁷ This was probably Hurricane Jig which started as a tropical storm in the mid Atlantic on 11 October and travelled north on a path some 300 miles east of Bermuda, strengthening to 120mph. 1950 was one of the worst seasons on record for Atlantic hurricanes. I think *hurricane* is the only spelling mistake I have noticed in the journal.

⁸ I can't find a film with this title. It may be *The Keys of the Kingdom* (1944), directed by John M Stahl, written by Joseph Mankiewicz and Nunnally Johnson, starring Gregory Peck. If so, I wonder why Clare disliked it so. It's about an American Catholic missionary in China. Lee approved of missionaries in principle, and Clare's dislike may be due to disapproval of Catholic ritual rather than of missionaries.

⁹ Not sure about the terminology here, but it's clear enough what is meant. The Gaudeloupe group of islands straddles the line between the Windward and Leeward Islands; Antigua is one of the Leeward Islands, but probably not part of the Guadeloupe group.

energy. The hottest day we've had. Community singing on board¹⁰ in evening and everybody loath to go inside to bed. One or two brought their blanket and pillow on board. Cold sea bath twice a day now. Swimming pool too crowded and sea bath very refreshing. Many old folk on board returning from their first and last visit 'home'. One we spoke to today had 7 sons and 4 daughters, 22 grandchildren and 36 great-grandchildren all farming in one part of NZ. Quite a township in themselves! Clocks back 20 minutes.

16 October Reached Curacao at 5 o'clock. Barren island but first glimpse of 'tropical' island. Palm trees, huge cacti, hibiscus trees in beautiful bloom. Very interesting to watch the ship docking. All colored labour. Very hot without ship's breeze.

17 October Off early to Willhamstadt¹¹, the township of Curacao, about 10 miles from docks. Beautiful American cars of latest type driven by colored men. Most interesting town in Dutch architecture painted in gay colors. Colored population well dressed and women most colorful. Floating market. Shops very expensive with the exchange against us. Infuriating attitude towards English money - many refusing it. Only American dollars needed! (Dutch guilders the currency.) Very hot with following wind - most enervating. In afternoon passed Aruba, another oil island belonging to the Dutch. All the islands flat and barren and very volcanic. Some look like the Loch Ness Monster in the distance. Too hot to write - hands stick to paper.

18 October Uneventful day. Race meeting on deck in the evening.¹² Amusing.

19 October Reach Canal Zone at 4.30 in the morning. Town lit up with neon lights flashing, lightship and harbour lights. Summer lightning. Pilot, native crew and some passengers came aboard soon after 5. Did not sleep all night so watched everything from port-holes. Entered first lock about 7.30. Marvellous engineering and interesting to watch. Scenery in Gatun lake¹³ like the Rhine. Heavy rain from 11-12.30. Cooler. Passed Darien and Gamboa. Pretty houses with lovely flowering shrubs. Cacti everywhere. Looked for crocodiles in the Culebra and Gaillard Cuts.¹⁴ No luck. Reached Panama about 3 o'clock. Went into the town about 4 o'clock.

¹⁰ Clare sometimes says 'on board' when she means 'on deck'. I think.

¹¹ Otherwise Willemstad

¹² Race meetings were a popular entertainment and gambling opportunity on ocean liners. Crew members would move wooden horses (or dogs) round a track on a felt-covered table according to numbers read out by the purser.

¹³ Artificial lake which forms a major part of the canal.

¹⁴ The Culebra Cut was renamed the Gaillard Cut in 1915.

Hired taxi and were driven all round the town, to old Panama, to the new country houses and had a very good view of everything. Luxurious Buick car with colored driver in pure white nylon shirt (£3) and new panama hat. Dreadful slums, naked children, corrugated shacks, braziers brought outside to cook on. New tenements being built as quickly as possible. Inspected every week. If not kept clean tenants turned out at once. Chauffeur's reason for many children.¹⁵

20 October Up early and visited the shopping centre of Panama. Wanted to buy vests and a thin frock. Chose them and then stirling and travellers cheques refused! Shops empty! Speaking to an American afterwards we learned that the shopkeepers have been so spoiled by having American troops and American tourists line up to buy goods that they have not re-adjusted themselves to the new slump conditions. They have paid very little tax but in the new year must pay 20%. Girls and everyone very well dressed. Girls sitting by the street-side selling lottery tickets or toys dressed better than I, with good looking jewellery. Very lovely with their dark skins and white lace blouses or gay colors. Specially struck with the school-girls in white sailor blouses and white skirts. Off again at 11.30. Nice to be at sea again. Cinema on deck in evening - 'The Glass Mountain'¹⁶ and a Mickey Mouse. Cool. The whole length of the Canal guarded by American troops with rifles.

21 October Lovely cool day. People most energetic, playing off matches which had been neglected. Played my first round of TT and won. Dance on deck in evening. Nice to watch.

22 October Crossed the line at 4am. Very cool with no sun - refreshing. Morning service well attended, also community singing in evening. Passed the Galapagos Isles in morning but too far away to see much. Unusual flora and fauna. Now kept as a bird sanctuary. Flamingoes and then flying cormorants.

23 October Still refreshingly cool. Many flying fish. Passed the Rangitata on her way home. Saw the 'Crossing the Line' ceremony in afternoon. Quite amusing. Housie-housie at night, also Racehorse auction.

24 October Uneventful, cool, lovely day. Cinema on deck at night ('Blanche Fury'¹⁷). Backcloth of cloud, moonlight and stars.

¹⁵ Not clear what this means, unless the chauffeur was making the point we sometimes hear nowadays, that people have children in order to qualify for social housing.

¹⁶ 1949, Directed by Edoardo Anton and Henry Cass, starring Michael Denison and Dulcie Gray, and Tito Gobbi as himself.

¹⁷ 1949, directed by Marc Allégret, starring Valerie Hobson and Stewart Grainger.

- 25 October** Grey English morning. Quick walk for 45 minutes after breakfast. Children's fancy dress party in afternoon. Parade on deck. Dining room decked with flags, balloons and streamers. Lovely iced cakes and a marvellous spread.
- 26 October** Grey morning. Sun shining by 9 o'clock. Passengers busy preparing dresses for Evening Dance. Many lovely and amazing costumes. Difficult to judge. A very jolly evening.
- 27 October** Lovely day. Sea a glorious sapphire blue. Lovely moonlight night and calm sea. Race meeting in evening. Stayed on board watching sea and moon until 1 o'clock.
- 28 October** Passed Henderson Island in morning and reached Pitcairn about 4. Three boatloads of men and women came ashore¹⁸ with fruit, flowers, beads and baskets and walking sticks etc. Speak good English. Seventh Day Adventists so Saturday their Sunday. Would not sell but took what was offered (in theory, though some would not part with goods unless enough offered). They neither smoke nor drink. Boats brought cases of fruit for ship and took back tar, a piano and many packages. All barefoot and women good looking. After about 2 hours boats cast off and were rowed away into the sunset - men and women singing as they went. They hoisted sails and Rangitoto started, leaving the boats as tiny specks in a very short while. Dancing, Bridge and whist in evening.
- 29 October** Quiet Sunday. Bright all day. Cool and grey in Evening. Morning Service and Community Hymn singing at night.
- 30 October** Dull morning. Passed Ile Rafea at midday, but too rainy to see it well. Also passed Marotiri, a group of rocks, uninhabited, looking like icebergs. Taken over bridge and shown how ship is steered - radar - loading etc. Steered ship. Very interesting and wonderful. Cinema in evening, 'Mr Prohack'¹⁹ Chilly. No sun all day. Still putting clocks back every night. All clocks on ship - about 36 - worked by a master clock in chart room. Press button at midnight and all clocks stop automatically for 30 minutes on outward journey. On homeward journey all clocks race round until they gain 30 minutes at midnight.
- 31 October** Dull and cold - sunny later. Cool evening. Blankets back on beds. Conversation all about packing up and getting "home". Cable of welcome from Bob and Bunty.

¹⁸ I assume Clare means they came *aboard*.

¹⁹ *Dear Mr Prohack*, 1949 film based on novel by Arnold Bennett, directed by Thornton Freeland, starring Cecil Parker, Glynis Johns, Hermione Baddeley, Dirk Bogarde, Sheila Sim

- 1 November** First really cold day. Ship's crew and stewards back into black and dark uniforms. Soup instead of ices for elevenses. Amazing how it is known the exact day it will be cold. Very sunny.
- 2 November** First albatross - 6 lovely, graceful birds. Taken over engine room - very impressive. Diner adieus in evening. Prize giving and dance.
- 3 November** Friday missed out altogether.
- 4 November** Dull and chilly. Packing most of day. Very rough by lunchtime. Puddles (?) out and teapots scattered at tea. Ship dismantled - deckchairs packed away, swimming bath emptied - all looking wet and forlorn. Concert in evening.
- 5 November** Bright sunny morning. Parade before Doctor at 10. Sighted NZ South Island about 11. Very rugged volcanic looking coast, rather forbidding and unwelcoming. Entered Wellington Harbour at 4.30. Lovely harbour, but weather dull and sea rough.

New Zealand and Australia

- 6 November** Breakfast early and ready to disembark by 9.30. Very cold wind, turning later to cold rain. Shops well stocked and lots of home-made cake shops, but service rough. No dainty tea shops. After lunch checked in our luggage to Auckland and then went for a 2 hour drive round the coast of Wellington. Too dull to get the full beauty of the magnificent scenery, but enjoyed drive. Raining hard on return. Had tea - sat in station until train at 6.40. No dining car on train. Left at 7.15. Soon dark. Read - had attendant make beds early and slept well. Had long talk with an interesting N Zealander working on rehabilitation (Frank Baker).
- 7 November** Met by Bob and Bunty looking very well and received a most hearty welcome (bless them). Also Anna Burrows on station to meet us. Drove "home" by taxi fitted with wireless telephone (like police car). Bob and Bunty's home absolutely charming. Wooden - painted outside green and all the walls and woodwork inside off white - a lovely cool effect. Old furniture and charming taste. Bedroom all white except for a bowl of colored flowers. Flowers everywhere sent by friends so that the garden shouldn't be denuded and would look its best. Buttonhole of orchids sent by friend for me. Huge box of chocolates awaiting us from Anna Burrows. Garden absolutely beautiful with orange, lemon and grapefruit trees exuding a wonderful scent. All kinds of tropical trees and shrubs. Roses and pansies, cacti and hydrangia, gladioli ... snapdragons of all colors, gerbera (S.A. daisy), salvia, balsam, ..., flowering sages. ... growing almost wild in a mass of color, stocks, geraniums, begonias, love-in-the-

mist, scabious, daisies, nepita, giant bluebells, pyrethrums and many brilliant ones I've not seen. Brett Avenue very lovely with the sea glimmering at the end of it. Quite fell in love with house, garden and position. Went to bed tired out with excitement - not even hearing the opossums scampering over the roof.

8 November Went to Auckland - fixed up visit to Rotorua. Nice shops. Lunch in town but glad to be back in lovely garden for tea. Women very well dressed, shops more expensive than home. No grey shoes! Met many friends of Bunty's who had heard of our coming and invited us to their homes. Paper towels in all toilets. Washing machines and laundries in most houses - many ironing machines and fridges in all homes.

9 November Quiet day. Washing and ironing and walk on beach. Friends in to coffee. Lovely day.

10 November Auckland to enquire about Cabins on Stratheden. Shopping.

11 November Bus journey and picnic at Torbay. Saw many little beaches and bays. Weather mixture of bright and dull. Lovely country.

12 November Dull day. Packing for Rotorua.

13 November Coach to Rotorua. Scenery quite pleasant through farming country until Hamilton, then more rugged and imposing and volcanic. Wattle trees in full bloom - sweet scented. Ti trees also blooming, like white broom.²⁰

14 November Launch trip round Rotorua Lake and Mokoia Island in morning. Spent afternoon with Mr and Mrs Harrison who had motored from Taurunga to see us. Radium bath at night.

15 November Tour of Paradise Valley Springs and trout farm and round and up the Mountain of Ngongotaha Mountain (2554 feet). Marvellous view of the whole country as far as the eye could see from a lookout at top of mountain. Taken by Mr and Mrs Mann in afternoon to see Blue and Green Lakes, through the Tikitapu Bush and to Lake Tarawera. Lovely day. Back for thermal bath before dinner.

16 November Taken by Mr and Mrs Levy to Tikitere. Fantastically boiling hot springs and furiously boiling mud - one of the most active areas in the district, known as Hell's Gate. Afternoon drive through native bush and through a long avenue of native fuchsia to Lake Okataina, the most beautiful Rotorua lake. After tea short launch excursion on Lake. Beautiful country.

²⁰ Ti tree: name applied to several unrelated trees. Most likely this is Kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*), the picture in Wikipedia suggests white broom.

- 17 November** Day excursion to Mount Tarawera. Motor to Waimangu, morning tea, then wonderful walk through the Waimangu thermal valley formed by the great eruption of Tarawera in 1886. Boiling lakes, hot springs – all most weird and wonderful. Launch on Lake Rotomahana where there are steaming cliffs and hot streams rising through the water from lake bed. Another short walk, then launch trip on Lake Tarawera.
- 18 November** Letter writing in morning. Ohinemutu Maori village and Church in afternoon. Hot swimming pool, food cooking on steam vents. Piped water to wash tubs. Boiling water in bath and stone slab for scalding and skinning pigs. Lovely carvings in Church. Dull day.
- 19 November** Wet morning. Presbyterian Church – nice service. Too wet to go out all day.
- 20 November** Still very wet. Shopping in morning. Too wet to visit Akers Falls in afternoon.
- 21 November** Dull but started off to Orakei Korako on the banks of the Waikato River. Wonderful geysers, boiling springs, colored pools of boiling mud, silica terraces etc. Beautiful cave – deep water of beautiful blue. Horohoro mountain, the Witch's Rock, Peaks, forest and Waikato Rapids – very lovely. A splendid trip.
- 22 November** Off early to Tauranga. Met by Tom Harrison and driven round the countryside. After lunch another drive, and very attracted to the countryside and houses. H. house very charming. Peter joined us for dinner. All look very well and happy.
- 23 November** Spent day at the Mount, a lovely part of Tauranga by the sea. Harrisons have caravan on a 'section' there and we picniced and had a very nice day, beautiful weather. Back to Rotorua at 4 o'clock.
- 24 November** Early start for Lake Waikaremoana – the Sea of Rippling Water. Lake 2000 feet above sea level and very beautiful. Lake House 2250 feet, most comfortable and in a lovely position overlooking the lake. Journey through native bush, magnificent but perilous roads.
- 25 November** Sunny day and so a climb up the Ngamoko mountain for 1¾ hours up and 1½ hours down – difficult climbing through native bush and most enjoyable. Afternoon resting and walking by the Lakeside. Bell-bird chorus at dawn.
- 26 November** Another lovely day and off by truck to Aniwanuiwa Landing where a pleasant walk of 2 hours leads up to Waikare-iti. Tea made by guide in billy cans and sandwiches and then a cruise of the lakelet by launch. Seven islands in Waikare-iti and on one there is yet another lake – an unspoiled and practically untouched wilderness. A marvellous cruise.

Return by same route and then a visit to the Papakoriti Falls - very beautiful. On again to the Moka Falls - lovely spreading expanse of foam. Very beautiful sunset of blues and grey.

27 November Whole day travelling from Waikaremoana to Rotorua - Rotorua to Auckland. Brilliant red sunset.

28 November Washing and unpacking.

29 November Ironing and to tea with Mr and Mrs Griffiths. Lovely garden but rather set.

30 November Walking in morning; out to dinner in evening to a lovely house in Auckland owned by Dr and Mrs Hudson. After dinner a drive to the highest point of Auckland, Mount Eden, to see the whole city spread out before us. A wonderful sight with lights slowly appearing and the ships in the harbour floodlit. Back to chat and tea - exceedingly nice people. Dr and Mrs Hudson, married daughter and her husband, and Dr and Miss Owen - most pleasant evening.

1 December Met Anna Burrowes who took us for scenic drive to Waitakeri Hills for picnic lunch. Fine views of the Harbour. Back to tea with Miss Rathbone.

2 December Cocktail party in evening. Great fun. Met many nice people. Mr & Mrs Wiseman, Mr & Mrs Gorry, Mr & Mrs Williamson, Mr & Mrs Goldwater, Mrs Mohan, Mrs Dryden, Claire Baxter, Mr & Mrs Clay, Mrs Mulligan, Miss Golse, Mrs Fotheringham and Mrs Mann, Mrs Lengurt, Mr & Mrs Matthews.

3 December Church in morning. Mr Wiseman called to take us out for a lovely drive. Back to tea at house overlooking harbour. Magnificent views with blue sea and many yachts.

4 December Day in Auckland town. Fixed up journey to Ashburton and back to Sydney

5 December Day at home washing and ironing. Mr Harrison (Englishman) to dinner.

6 December Lovely day. Taken on picnic by Mrs Goldwater. Beautiful little bay of Waiwera - soft sand and warm water for bathing.

7 December Writing etc. in morning. To dinner with Mr and Mrs Clay in the evening. Charming house built in early colonial style

8 December Trying to write, but callers etc intervene. Early afternoon to hairdressers in Auckland, and afterwards to dinner with Mr and Mrs Seller. Beautiful appointments and dinner, and lovely old house.

- 9 December** Writing in the morning. Cocktail party at 5 o'clock at Mr and Mrs Gorry's
- 10 December** Drive in Dr Matthews' car. Back to tea at lovely old house. Another drive in afternoon – scenic drive
- 11 December** To town early, shopping and off to Waitomo Caves. Lovely drive and first cave in evening. Myriads of glow worms, a marvellous sight.
- 12 December** Visit to two more caves – the Ruikuri – meaning the Cave of mad²¹ dogs, and the Akanui cave (after a Maori of that name). Very awe-inspiring in their age and beauty. Lovely drive back.
- 13 December** Morning tea at Mrs Mahon's house – beautiful position and lovely view of the sea and 'Rangitoto'²². Afternoon tea at another old house with beautiful view, Mrs Mulligan's. Most enjoyable day.
- 14 December** Garden party in the afternoon. Wilson Home for Crippled children.²³ Beautiful situation. Children were very happy. There is a lot of illness in N.Z. also insanity. (Very good work is done with spastic children.)
- 15 December** Day out with Anna Burrows. Waterfront drive – picnic lunch, One Tree Hill, Savage memorial,²⁴ finishing with visit to War Memorial Museum.²⁵ Lovely day
- 16 December** Wet day. Drive in afternoon but too wet to see much. Very sad, but the gardens needed rain badly. After drive, back to Dr Owen's to dinner. Charming old house and marvellous dinner cooked by lady of 75 (Miss Owen). Stuffed lamb, onion sauce, potatoes, beans peas, kumera. Orange pudding, fruit salad with a lot of passion fruit, cream, meringues and mince pies
- 17 December** Lovely day. Cocktail party at 5 o'clock
- 18 December** Shopping in town all day.
- 19 December** Washing and ironing, bathe – lovely day
- 20 December** Another lovely day. Busy shopping etc – bathe.

²¹ The tourist web site says RuiKuri means the Den or Cave of the dogs, kuri being the Maori for dogs. The diary says originally '2 dogs' but this is crossed out, with the Cave of ??? Dogs' inserted above the line. It might be '400 dogs' rather than 'mad dogs'.

²² Presumably the island, not the ship.

²³ Takapuna, Auckland

²⁴ Memorial to Michael Joseph Savage, first Labour prime minister (1935-1940), Bastion Point, Auckland.

²⁵ Principal museum of national history and natural history.

- 21 December** Getting ready for Kawan.
- 22 December** Journey to Kawan.²⁶ Car and then launch. Lovely day and pleasant journey. Kawan very beautiful and 'Brentwood' charming, in lovely surroundings
- 23 December** Picnic and bathe
- 24 December** Washing [or walking] etc.
- 25 December** Christmas Day. Joined in Christmas Tree party at the Silks. Afterwards walked to Two House Bay to visit more friends. Home to bread and cheese. Rest in afternoon. Dinner in evening. Bed at 9.30!!! Very homesick and missed the fun and jollity of usual Christmas
- 26 December** Picnic and bathe
- 27 December** [blank]
- 28 December** Very wet all day
- 29 December** Fine again
- 30 December** Wet day
- 31 December** ditto

1951

- 1 January** By Silks' dinghy to Lidgard's Bay to watch regatta.²⁷ Fine at first but very wet by lunch time. Ate lunch with rain dripping off our noses. Back to Brentwood to sit in front of a wood fire. Enjoyable experience
- 2 January** Still very wet
- 3,4 & 5 January** Walking, swimming etc
- 6 January** Rowed over to other side of harbour in two parties. On return journey fell in sea!!
- 7 January** Better weather
- 8 January** Better weather. Bathed
- 9 January** Perfect day. Had a very good day out picnic-ing, bathing etc. Cooked lunch and enjoyed day enormously. Bryan Silk showed us baby wallaby they were trying to rear, queer little creature.

²⁶ Kawan, now known more commonly as Kawau Island

²⁷ The New Year's Day Regatta on Kawau still seems to be a fixture. I can't find Lidgard's Bay on the map, but there is a Lidgard House on Smelting House Bay. The Lidgards seem to be an old boating family in New Zealand.

- 10 January** Lovely day. Picnic and bathe
- 11 January** Return to Brett Avenue. Thundery.
- 12 January** Shopping – very wet morning.
- 13 January** Washing and ironing. Walk along sand in evening
- 14 January** Church. Daphne to dinner
- 15 January** Packing!
- 16 January** Auckland – hairdresser. Daphne to lunch at Gold Barn and back to her flat for tea. Cocktail party at Commander Evans’ house. Farewell to “Jackie”.²⁸
- 17 January** Farewell to Auckland! Comfortable night journey to Wellington.
- 18 January** Mr Levy met us with car. Breakfast at their home, then lovely drive all round Wellington. Sunny day. Back to late lunch, rest, afternoon tea, another drive and embarked on the Rangitira for Lyttleton.²⁹ Good night though rough through Cook Strait.
- 19 January** Met at Ashburton by Reg. Warm welcome by Nan [?] and Maude. Drive in district. Shown Arthur and Daphne’s home.
- 20 January** Beautiful sunny day. Off early to Timaru. Picnic by sea. Attractive seaside place with many charming homes and beautiful gardens. Snow on the Southern Alps.
- 21 January** Walk in morning. To Felix Mulligan’s farm in afternoon. Very wet but driven round farm. Flax grown. Old Maori Pa.³⁰
- 22 January** Day in Christchurch. Very English city. Colleges and river like Oxford. Nice shops. After lunch went for drive to the top of the Port Hills via Sumner Road (originally the Bridle Path used by the first settlers in Christchurch). Had tea at the Sign of the Takahe³¹, a building built and decorated entirely by hand craftsmen, like the old Churches etc. Marvellous view of many miles of the famous Canterbury Plain. Visited

²⁸ Not clear who or what “Jackie” was, nor why, if a person, his or her name is put in quotation marks.

²⁹ On the South Island. Not sure about the name of the boat. Clare wrote *Rangitera* and when she mentions the boat again it looks like *Rangitiri*, but I’ve not identified ships of those names. There was at this time a famous *Rangatera* on the passage between Wellington and Lyttleton, whose 1933 record time for the crossing is still unbroken. (There was a SS *Rangitera* in the 19th century.)

³⁰ Pa: a Maori fortification. At this time the word was used to describe a Maori village, but this more general usage went out of favour in the 1960s. (Wikipedia)

³¹ One of the roadhouses based on the design of English manor houses, built between 1918 and 1948. The dining room is a replica of Haddon Hall, Derbyshire. (Wikipedia). The takahe is a flightless bird.

museum where relics of the first settlers in Christchurch were displayed. Models of the first houses, gowns³² etc. Interesting. Back to Daphne Stephenson's parents' farm for dinner. Lovely old house and gardens.

23 January Damp morning. Washing and tootling round. Drive in afternoon, and tea at Pat and Leyton's home. Clever boys. Arthur's hobby carpentering etc, Leyton's gardening.

24 January Very wet day. Sat before fire all day. To Mr and Mrs Scott's in evening.

25 January Hair do in morning. Packing and off in afternoon. Sad farewells all round. Embarked on the Hinemoa about 7.30. Nice boat, better than Rangitiri.³³ Heavy swell all night. Not much sleep.

26 January Wellington at 7 o'clock. Dull windy day. Not much to do at Wellington. Met Mr Leroy for lunch at Kirkcaldy's. Embarked on the Monowai at 1.30. First step towards home. Very comfortable boat. Up anchor at 3 o'clock. Big crowd on quay to see friends off. Very very rough sea. Worst storm I've seen. Most people ill. Very uncomfortable. Kwells no help for Lee!³⁴ Steadied a little by 7 o'clock so I was able to eat a good dinner. Much steadier by 11 o'clock when wind abated, and slept well.

27 January Fine morning. Read, rested etc. Cinema in evening.

28 January Dull morning, but warmer. Morning service. Cinema in evening.

29 January Lovely day. Race meeting in afternoon. Short ceremony to commemorate Australia Day in evening - an address and singing of Australia's National Song.

30 January Sydney at 6am. Through Customs etc and off ship by 9am. Enjoyable trip. Attractively served food. Sydney Harbour very fine and bridge impressive. Launch trip round Harbour in afternoon. Lovely weather and enjoyed seeing the little bays and vegetation in Harbour. Realised how thrilled Captain Phillip must have been to have found such a wonderful land-locked harbour.³⁵ City splendid with lovely shops and fine buildings, and well dressed people, women specially. Stayed at 'The Australia'. Comfortable. All meals out - Cahills.³⁶

³² The word looks like *gowns*. The Canterbury Museum web-site refers to a collection of costume and fashion.

³³ Not found a boat called Rangitiri. This is probably the Rangatira, referred to on 18 January. The Hinemoa was a sister ship of the Rangatira.

³⁴ Footnote added by Lee: 'who, nevertheless, managed to eat a light supper in the cabin.'

³⁵ Captain Arthur Phillip first reached Sydney and established the city in 1788.

³⁶ 'The Australia', built in 1889, closed in 1971, known as the 'Hotel of the Commonwealth'. Located in Castlereagh Street, as was Cahill's Restaurant, originally an Italian Coffee shop, said

- 31 January** Met Mrs Brent and Miss Price for lunch. Afterwards to zoo over Sydney Harbour. Well organized zoo. Specially enjoyed seeing little Koala Bears. Enjoyable day.
- 1 February** Coach trip starting at 9.30. Through suburbs like any city and on to Parramatta and then through lovely scenery with the Blue Mountains in view. Dropped down to, then by ferry across Lane Cove River to Bobbin Head for lunch. Left coach and took launch to — — and Palm Beach on Hawkesbury River. Ku-Ring-Gai Chase, National Bush Reserve - very lovely. Found coach at Palm Beach and return to Sydney via French's Forest.
- Spent evening at Miss Price's house, and taken for drive round outer suburbs and bays. Bondi and Coogee. After dinner drove through famous Surry Hills slums - large flats being erected as quickly as old houses pulled down.³⁷
- 2 February** Shopping in morning. Embarked for Stratheden³⁸ at 2 o'clock. Miss P and Mrs B to see us off. Left punctually at 4 o'clock amid great excitement.
- 3 February** Pressing and mending clothes and getting used to ship.
- 4 February** Melbourne. Met by Leslie - drive round boulevards, St Kilda's etc. Home to lunch. Drive to Dandenong Mountains in afternoon. Picnic tea. Some very nice scenery, more English than any we've seen before. Plane trees, oaks, willows, poplars, elms etc. Back to high tea, talk and return to ship.
- 5 February** Lunch in Melbourne with Gertie after shopping. Drive in afternoon along the coast to Frankston, Flinders and Arthur's Seat. Picnic tea and return through pasture lands. Names of towns very English: Brighton, Chelsea, Burnley, Richmond etc. Dinner on board, all enjoyed it.
- 6 February** To City to collect food parcel. Back to lunch. Rest and to G & L to high tea. Farewells and back to boat to witness the most excitable scenes. Scarcely see wharf for streamers - people shouting and laughing and Scots band playing. Moved off at 11.5 and so to bed.
- 7 February** Big wash in morning! Reading, walking and ironing.
- 8 February** Adelaide. Hottest day we've had. Went for tour to Lofty Ranges where panorama of Adelaide was seen. Lunch at Crafers, oldest hotel on

to have introduced coffee and continental dining to Australia.

³⁷ Surry Hills was a slum area from the mid-19th century; attracted immigrants after 1945; gentrified in 1980s.

³⁸ Probably should be *embarked on*. Stratheden the place is inland of Sydney. There was a P&O cruise ship called Stratheden which was on the Australia run after the war.

the Ranges. On through National Park, among orchards and market gardens. Back through suburbs with lovely houses and gardens. Everything very scorched up. Adelaide flat and disappointing – probably owing to great heat, 100 in shade.

- 9 February** Turned cold in night. Rough sea and high winds all day, crossing the Bight. Left Adelaide at 6 o'clock am. Hair do, washing, reading, ironing, and to Commander Slim's [?] cabin for cocktails at night. Mrs Grounds and son Martin, Mr and Mrs Poinden[?] – sheep farmers, very nice. Jolly time, but cocktails too strong!
- 10 February** Dull grey morning – heavy swell. Knitting and reading. Lee missed dinner. Wind rose in night whipping up sea. Steward knocked us up in night to close portholes.
- 11 February** Still very grey. Morning service (badly organised). Land in sight again about 12.30.
- 12 February** Perth. Charming city, very green with beautiful houses and gardens. Built beside Swan River, so water everywhere. Many Parks and Reserves. Impressive University where all who matriculate can have free education. Main hall seating about 1000. Enjoyable day. Off again at 3 o'clock.

Perth to Tilbury via Suez

- 13 February** Quiet day. Warm.
- 14 February** Quiet day. Cinema in color 'Midnight Kiss'³⁹
- 15 February** Quiet day. Race meeting at night.
- 16 February** Very hot. Tropical showers.
- 17 February** Very hot and hot damp wind.
- 18 February** Morning service. Still hot damp wind, no sun.
- 19 February** Beautiful sunrise, golden haze and many little dhows⁴⁰ sailing in the sunrise. First sight of Ceylon! Exciting. Very hot, but nice breeze. Reached Colombo at 11.30. Car tour of City and Surrounds. Tea at Mount Lavinia. Beautiful. Back for shopping. Amusing and sad. Many bullock carts and rickshaws, all very picturesque. Evening on board, cool lovely

³⁹ *That Midnight Kiss* 1949, musical directed by Norman Taurog, starring Kathryn Grayson and Mario Lanza

⁴⁰ The word *ghats* is inserted above the line here. Not clear why. Ghats are riverside steps or landing-places, and are referred to later (22 February) in Bombay.

evening. Strathmore moored about 100 yards from us but in quarantine so could not see Neale.

- 20 February** Slack day, sunny with good breeze. Mad Hatters Dance in evening. Wine.
- 21 February** Watched Sports finals. Hot day. Prize giving and film in evening – *Fancy Pants*.⁴¹ Funny.
- 22 February** Bombay. Soft grey coloring in morning heat mist. Off at 9 o'clock on sight-seeing tour. Fine city with many good buildings. Great contrasts of rich and poor. Three hours much too short to get a real impression of City. Housing shortage acute. People sleeping about everywhere. Saw Dhoby ghats with washing spread out. Lucky with weather. Cool breeze. Off again at 1 o'clock. Met Mrs Barker on board. Many fresh passengers.
- 23 February** Cool fresh day. Swim.
- 24 February** Warm day. Swimming.
- 25 February** Morning service. Baby baptised. Swim.
- 26 February** Aden. Lovely sunrise. Fun bargaining, but pleasant service. Camels drawing water carts etc. Off again at 11 o'clock. Enjoyed morning.
- 27 February** Fancy dress dance. Cocktails with Captain Slim. Lovely day but colder.
- 28 February** Cold morning. Dark suits on crew. Back into woollies!
- 1 March** Suez at 11 o'clock. Tied up all day and not allowed ashore. Warm afternoon. Left at 8 o'clock. Very disappointed at going through Canal at night. Bitterly cold so to bed early.
- 2 March** Up at 5 o'clock to see the end of the Canal before reaching Port Said. Glorious sunrise over desert, but very cold morning. No camels! Many Arabs and Egyptians working on railway etc. Reached Port at 7 o'clock. Ashore at 9.30. Shopped at famous Simon Artz. Warned not to go far away from ship. Feeling not too friendly to British. Sailed again at 2 o'clock. Race (dogs) meeting in evening.
- 3 March** Cold bright day. Passed 'Gavdo Islands'⁴² in afternoon. Film 'The Wooden Horse'⁴³ in evening.

⁴¹ *Fancy Pants* (1950) directed by George Marshall, starring Bob Hope and Lucille Ball.

⁴² Gavdos and Gavdopoula, the southernmost Greek islands; sometimes identified as Calypso's island where Odysseus was held captive, so the wooden horse was perhaps appropriate.

⁴³ 1950, directed by Jack Lee, based on true story by Eric Williams

- 4 March** Very cold wet morning. Service. Reached Messina Straits about 6 o'clock. Snow on Italian Hills (mountains). Italian and Sicilian coast very interesting, but visibility not too good - heavy clouds and mist with patches of light. Passed Reggio and Messina and hundreds of little villages and towns. Winter woollies once more! English weather.
- 5 March** Cold. Started to pack! Passing down coast and between Corsica and Sardinia.
- 6 March** Marseilles. Off by 9 o'clock on sightseeing tour to Cassis and Coral?? where drank local wine. Good - potent. Enjoyed seeing mimosa, almond blossom and daphne. Grape vines very disappointing to see as they are pruned back to mere stumps. Impossible to imagine them bearing fruit this year. Back to city and to lunch at nice restaurant. Tasted Bouillabaisse, the famous Marseillaise soup made with lobster. Not like much. Meal very expensive. Back to ship at 3 o'clock. Off at 4.
- 7 March** Cold and sunny. Passed Balearic Islands. Very lovely with snow clad heights. Wind freshened to half a gale at night but boat very steady. Race meeting at night.
- 8 March** Cold and sunny until afternoon. Passed St Vincent Point and ran into rough weather - boat very unsteady. Beautiful rainbows. Prize-giving, dance and singing at night.
- 9 March** Lovely morning. Basked in sun in morning. Sea calmer. Passed Finisterre and into Bay of Biscay. Luckily sea getting calmer all the time. Passed '???' who radio'd that they had had a very bad crossing of Bay. Enchanting sunset - red, gold, purple and green with great dark clouds.
- 10 March** Cold, dark and grey morning but calm. Passed Ushant in morning. Start Point at 3.30 and picked up Pilot off Brixham at 4.30. Still cold and a little foggy so could see nothing. Party in Captain's Cabin at 7.15. Auld Lang Syne dance in Evening.
- 11 March** Tied up at Tilbury about 6 o'clock. Grey, foggy morning. Derrick awaiting us after breakfast. Easy customs and away at 1 o'clock. St Pancras at 3 and home at fivish after a wet journey.