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The Menzies Family of Minamurra House, Jamberoo

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The Menzies Family of Minamurra House, Jamberoo

Abstract

In January 1839 a young Scottish couple – Dr. Robert Menzies and his recent bride Margaret (nee Tindell) - arrived in Sydney aboard the **Earl Durham**. Like so many other free immigrants of the time, they had journeyed to New South Wales with the intention of settling on a farm and making a future for themselves and their family there. They had high hopes of perhaps even acquiring a small fortune within a decade or so, selling up at a profit, and retiring to their beloved family and friends back home in Scotland. However, such was not to be the fate of the Menzies', and their residence of a mere two decades in the Colony was to end in tragedy, despite an initial period of adventure and promise of a prosperous future.

Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Social and Behavioral Sciences

Publication Details

Michael Organ and Arthur Cousins, *The Menzies Family of Minamurra House, Jamberoo, Illawarra* Historical Publications, 1994, 55p.

The Menzies Family of Minamurra House, Jamberoo

Including a Transcript of the Journal and Letters of

Margaret Menzies and Dr Alexander Stewart

1822 - 1839

Compiled and Edited by Michael Organ

Including material by the late Arthur Cousins

Illawarra Historical Publications

1994

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Editorial Notes

Within the following work, the letters of Dr Alexander Stewart and Margaret Menzies are transcribed largely as written, though some punctuation has been added by the editor in the interests of clarification. Sections of individual letters by Dr Stewart have been torn away and are missing, with one or more pages of his 1830 letter from Hobart having suffered this fate. The manuscript Journal of Margaret Menzies posed a number of problems in transcription, including:

- * Some sections were unreadable
- * Punctuation was minimal, and paragraphs often omitted.
- * Full stops were commonly omitted, as were capitals at the beginning of sentences.
- * Dates referred to were sometimes confusing, as entries were recorded many days after an event.

Editorial changes have been kept to a minimum. Apart from the addition of full stops, commas, and capitals, any major additions have been signified by square brackets thus [...].

Michael Organ
22 September 1994

Introduction

In January 1839 a young Scottish couple – Dr. Robert Menzies and his recent bride Margaret (nee Tindell) - arrived in Sydney aboard the **Earl Durham**. Like so many other free immigrants of the time, they had journeyed to New South Wales with the intention of settling on a farm and making a future for themselves and their family there. They had high hopes of perhaps even acquiring a small fortune within a decade or so, selling up at a profit, and retiring to their beloved family and friends back home in Scotland. However, such was not to be the fate of the Menzies', and their residence of a mere two decades in the Colony was to end in tragedy, despite an initial period of adventure and promise of a prosperous future.

Robert Menzies was 27 and Margaret 21 when they stepped ashore at Sydney Cove on Thursday, 3 January 1839. They had been married for less than seven months, with four of those spent aboard ship en route to Australia. Their anguish at being isolated so far from their family in Perth, Scotland, was quickly replaced by the relief at arriving safely at Sydney, after having experienced a somewhat tiresome and stressful voyage. Their first views of the harbour, perhaps the most beautiful of all anchorages, put to rest many of their fears and apprehensions regarding their future prospects in this far away penal colony. Also easing their tensions upon arrival was the fact that they were not arriving in a completely strange country as many of their countrymen, and some close relatives, had taken the same path since 1788 - either of their own free will or at their Majesties pleasure. The welcoming committee in January 1839 most importantly included the uncle of both Robert and Margaret, Dr Alexander 'Sandy' Stewart, a retired naval surgeon and current medic aboard the **Hope**, a posting Robert Menzies had held in 1837. The **Hope** was fortuitously in port at Sydney at the time, with Captain Coombes, also a friend, its current master. Uncle Sandy had made numerous visits to the Colony since the 1820s and had developed many friendships and contacts which he would put to use in Robert and Margaret's favour.

After a brief stay in Sydney the Menzies moved on to Liverpool, where for two months they resided with the Hill family. Dr Hill was Colonial Surgeon and considered as good as a brother to Alexander Stewart. Whilst resident at Liverpool, Robert and Uncle Sandy (as Margaret affectionately referred to him) searched for a suitable property upon which the young couple could settle. After turning down land at Windsor, Robert eventually decided on 600 acres at Jamberoo, near Kiama, on the coast approximately seventy miles south of Sydney. The Menzies went on to name their property Minamurra after the Aboriginal term for the stream which flowed through it. The house they built there in the early 1840s still stands and is one of the oldest in Illawarra. It was constructed by local tradesmen under the superintendence of Robert and Margaret's brother Charles James Tindell, who had also travelled with them to Australia aboard the **Earl Durham**.

The story of the Menzies' voyage to Australia and first few months in the Colony is contained in the journal kept by Margaret Menzies between 1 August 1838 and early October 1839, along with two contemporary letters. They reveal a vivid picture of life in London in August 1838; the trials and tribulations of the long voyage to New South Wales; and the challenges facing a young wife in the loneliness of the Australian bush, far from friends and family. Whilst the letters and journal are like many others - descriptive of the landscape and people met with - they are distinguished by their frankness, both in the analyses of acquaintances and also in presenting Margaret's own feelings. She is revealed through them to be a practical, religious, somewhat conservative young Scottish lady, resigned to make the most of her 'exile' to the antipodes, sorely missing her family and friends back in Scotland, but content in her marriage to Robert.

Dr Robert Menzies is revealed as a hard working medic, of somewhat precarious health. His untimely death at the age of 49 in 1860 was perhaps foreseen, though Margaret's death the following year could possibly be attributed to heartbreak and the shock of having seen both her beloved husband and mother pass away at Minamurra Farm in 1859, the latter shortly after arriving in the Colony.

The story of the Menzies' life at Minamurra Farm between 1839 and 1861 is one of developing the land and making it pay, bringing up a family, and contributing to the local community. Whilst we

have only secondary sources to describe most of their experiences in Illawarra after 1839, up to that date we have the Journal and letters to set the scene. The Menzies story has been told briefly before in a small 1962 booklet entitled *The story of Dr and Mrs Robert Menzies and their home Minamurra House, Jamberoo, 1839-1861*, by Arthur Cousins, a local historian. Cousins also prepared a manuscript which retold their story in somewhat more detail through a discussion of Margaret Menzies' Journal and from his own personal research and knowledge as a resident of Jamberoo. Both documents have been used in the preparation of this work and a section of his unpublished manuscript is reproduced below. However this account of the Menzies at Jamberoo begins with a brief biographical outline of Dr Alexander Stewart and a transcript of his letters from the period 1822-29, including those pertaining to Australia. It follows with a transcript of the journal and letters of Margaret Menzies and an account of the couple's experiences at Jamberoo.

The Life & Letters of Doctor Alexander Stewart

Introduction

Alexander Stewart was born on 20 February 1793, the fifth child and second son of James Charles Stewart (1759-1829) and his wife Margaret nee Menzies (1752-1838). His elder sister Elizabeth (1789-1859) was to marry William Tindell (1780-1835) in 1815 and bear a daughter named Margaret two years later. It was to this young girl that Alexander would always be known as 'Uncle Sandy', and with whom he would spend the final years of his life. Alexander was also uncle to Margaret's husband, Dr Robert Menzies.

Nothing is known of Alexander's early childhood, though it is likely he was raised at Pitnairn, near Perth. On 4 May 1812 he entered the Royal Navy and received his Naval Board Warrant as Assistant Surgeon. His decision to join the Navy may have been influenced by the experiences of the famous Dr Archibald Menzies, surgeon and botanist aboard the **HMS Discovery** under Captain Vancouver. It is possible that Archibald was Alexander's uncle, though this link has yet to be proved. Robert Menzies may thus also have been related to this famous surgeon / botanist.

Alexander Stewart served on the Royal Navy frigates **Seahorse**, **Madagascar**, and **Glasgow** between 1812-16. In 1848 he was awarded a Naval General Service Medal for his part in the bombardment of Algiers on 27 August 1816 whilst serving aboard the **HMS Glasgow**. On 16 September 1816 he was promoted to rank of Naval Surgeon. According to information gleaned from his own correspondence, during 1822-3 he was stationed aboard the **HMS Bann**, patrolling at Gibraltar and off the Cape Coast. In 1825 he was transferred to the **HMS Pyramus**. By 1829 he had left the Royal Navy and was employed in the more lucrative position of surgeon superintendent aboard the convict ship **America**, bound for Sydney. In 1830 he likewise brought the **Southworth** to Van Diemens Land with a load of convicts. That vessel was captained by John Coombes. In 1833 Stewart was surgeon superintendent aboard the **Aurora**, with convicts bound for Sydney. Sometime around 1836 he was placed on the Navy's Retired List as being "unfit for Sea Service". His name last appears in the Navy List in the last quarter of 1855, the year of his death. During the period 1837-40 he was surgeon aboard the **Hope**, under Captain Coombes, said ship engaged in carrying cargo and passengers between London and Sydney, with visits to the east and west Indies, and South America. During one such voyage in 1837 he was either accompanied to Australia by his nephew Dr Robert Menzies, or Robert served as ship's surgeon in his stead.

According to the evidence of his own letters, during visits to ports the Doctor loved to travel, and was not adverse to setting off alone - on foot or horse - to explore the surrounding countryside whilst he awaited a new ship or departure orders. In 1829 he wrote a letter from Liverpool detailing his journey south-west of Sydney to Camden and Inverary. Another letter from Hobart Town in 1830 outlines a tour along the Derwent River, and comments upon the 'round-up' of the local Aborigines by 'volunteers Gentle and simple'. This was the infamous genocidal 'Black Line' campaign of Governor Arthur and John Batman, during which period many Tasmanian Aborigines were killed or jailed.

All Alexander's extant letters were addressed to his sisters and nephew back home in Scotland, outlining to them places he visited and people he met during his days as a naval surgeon, and referring them to his more descriptive journals, the location of which is unknown. It is unclear exactly when Dr Stewart left the sea, though in 1840 he purchased a block of land at Kiama. Whether this was for investment or to settle upon is not known. Perhaps he just wanted to have a base close to his beloved niece and nephew, and sister, at Jamberoo. Dr Stewart died at Minamurra Farm on 28 November 1855, and was buried in the family cemetery on the property.

The Letters of Alexander Stewart 1822-29

The following series of letters by Alexander Stewart to relations in England were brought to public attention during the 1990 auction of Minamurra House material at Jamberoo. Two letters by Margaret Menzies included in the auction have been inserted within the text of her Journal, reproduced below. The Alexander Stewart letters are as follows:

- 1 28 April 1822, Gibraltar - Alexander Stewart to Elizabeth Tindell
- 2 16 October 1823, Cape Coast - Alexander Stewart to Elizabeth Tindell
- 3 7 July 1829, Portsmouth - Alexander Stewart to Elizabeth Tindell
- 4 16 December 1829, Liverpool - Alexander Stewart to James Menzies
- 5 17 November 1830, Hobart Town - Alexander Stewart to Joanna Menzies

The letters are at present dispersed in a number of private collections.

Letter No.1

28 April 1822: Doctor Alexander Stewart to his sister Elizabeth Tindell, mother of Margaret Menzies. From aboard **HMS Bann**, under Captain Phillips.

Mrs Tindell
c/o High Street
Perth

H.M. Ship Bann
Gibraltar 28th April 1822

Dear Betsy

I most sincerely trust this will find you and your little one¹ well and thriving, as also the whole of my relations and friends. I myself was never better in my life than I have been for some time past, on leaving England the Rheumatics occasionally gave me a twitch, but since getting in to a warmer climate feel not the slightest symptoms of that horrible pest; we had a tolerable passage out here, but rather boisterous, having had a Gale for three days by way of initiating me into the pleasures of a Sea-life: on the 11th we anchored in the Mob of Gibraltar, the sight of which place brought to my recollection former times when Lord Exmouth's Fleet was so graciously received after the business of Algier.² These are pleasant reflections.

¹ Elizabeth Tindell was pregnant at the time this letter was written, and gave birth to a daughter Joanna on 15 May 1822. She would probably have received the letter after the birth date.

² Alexander was present aboard the **HMS Glasgow** during the bombardment of Algiers on 27 August 1816.

The Bann being hurried out of Dock in England, she was, during the Gale found defective, and has since arriving here undergone considerable repairs and we expect to Sail about the 3rd or 6th of next month by the way of Teneriffe to Sierra Leone with three Apes on board for the Island of Ascension.

A few days after going on shore I found out Mr Scott who has shewn me a great deal of attention. I have dined with him four times and he has frequently walked out with me to shew the many wonders that are to be seen on this most wonderful Rock. He introduced me to a Mr. Buchan from Perth, who was down there last Novr. and dined with Joanna [and] a Mr. Condiar. He has asked me to dine with him next Wednesday; I have got introduced to the Deputy Inspector of Hospitals - his name is Dr. Frazer, I think, from Argyleshire. I dined with him about a week ago and spent a very pleasant evening with his family consisting of his wife a very pleasant little Irish woman and his mother an elderly Lady of very easy and agreeable manners indeed. It was quite a homely party without any hum bug and nonsense.

On the 23rd inst. it being the Kings Birthday, the Troops fired a Royal Salute at 12 oclock, and in the evening a Ball was given to which the Officers of the Ship were invited. I among the rest attended dressed in full uniform such as I have never been before, with Cocked hat &c. &c. and I asure you cut no small appearance. I guess our Father and Mother would be delighted to see their son Sandy so Officer like. The Ball was quite crowded with the Beauty and Fashion of the Place. The former I cannot say much of. The Dancing, with the exception of the first which was an English Country Dance, was chiefly Spanish Country Dances, Quadrilles, and Waltzes, which were in general well executed. My Scotch blood not being roused by these foreign steps, I did not dance but remained an admiring spectator of those who tripped it along gracefully, although not quite so much so as at the Ball in Charlestom America.

I should wish much to give you some description of this curious, and impregnable little Rock, but the space of a sheet of paper is very inadequate to depict it in any way satisfactory, and therefore will leave it alone till my next return to Perth when you may have a reading of my Journal. I have visited every place worth seeing and regularly committed to paper my remarks and observations in the evening of the days travels which am vein enough to flatter myself are not uninteresting (poor William).

Capt. Phillips has been [on] a long excursion into the Interior of Spain in which I would have accompanied him if my purse would have allowed. Since his return we are in great hurry and confusion in consequences of the arrival of H.M.S. Driver whose Captn. is Senior to and wishing that we should both sail together being destined [for the same] station.

Gibraltar is at present very although suffering under great drought but very little rain with Easterly winds which are unfavourable for some months past; I am getting very sleepy having walked about a great deal to day laying in provisions for our mess. What would you think of the best Green Tea for less than 5/- per lb and beautiful soft Sugar for 4 pence a lb, from this you must not conceive that every other necessary of life are equally reasonable. With my Love to all relations and best respect to enquiring friends

I remain

My Dear Betsy

Your ever Affectionate Brother

Alexr. Stewart

Should you learn of any vessels to sail for Sierra Leone write to me at that place

A presand to Grand Mama

I received it yesterday morning

Letter No.2

16 October 1823: Dr Alexander Stewart to his sister Elizabeth Tindell, written on board the sloop **Bann**, off the coast of southern Africa.

Mrs Wm. Tindell
High Street
Perth

H.M.Sloop Bann
Cape Coast 16th Octr. 1823

My Dear Sister

On the 22nd of last month I wrote my Father,³ being at that time at Ascension, we remained there only one day when the Ship returned to Cape Coast. Since then the time has been very anxiously spent by the whole of us expecting daily the arrival of a Capt. to join us from England, accordingly he made his appearance last night in the Swinger Gun Brig and before breakfast he came on board and read his Commission, but he being the Senior Officer of the Squadron, he immediately after went on board the Owen Glendowen - the late Commodore's vessel - and gave himself an Order as Port Captain, appointing to this Ship a Lieutenant to Act as Commander, and two new Acting Lieutenants, so that the Bann has undergone another change of Officers, I being the only confirmed one on board, all the other being Acting i.e. not being appointed by the regular Authorities at home.

Am happy to say we continue very healthy, there is now no chance of the Ships going to England till her three years are out having received a fresh supply of Men this day, and [I] feel very much disappointed not being able to go home at present owing to the scarcity of Medical Officers on the Station. This is now the healthy season and trust that by the return of next rains an opportunity will offer of quitting this detestable station for ever. I have just been reading an account of our "Sickness in one of the English newspapers which is highly exaggerated. Our loss in all has amounted to 34 out of about 100 Cases of Fever, which is quite enough. In all conscience at this moment I enjoy the most perfect health but feel a good deal annoyed at the great man changes that are constantly occurring with respect to the Officers on board. We have had no fewer than five different Commanders, eleven Lieutenants, and three Pursers, since recommissioned in Novr. 1821.

The Slave Trade this year has not been near so extensive as last Season, only about 300 have been Captured. We expect to sail tomorrow on a months cruize, and hope will be fortunate to liberate a few more of these miserable mortals.

It is now a long time since I had the delightful satisfaction of hearing from you, (not since January) but I cannot blame you, as you cannot ascertain the period when vessels sail for this Coast. There may be letters at Sierra Leone for me and tis uncertain when I may receive them, however I am persuaded Sandy is not forgotten at home, and dare to say many an anxious thought has been given him, but you must keep your minds at ease for I feel persuaded that no ordinary cause will produce in me Fever, and look forward with the pleasing hopes of seeing you all by and bye. On the Ships arrival at Ascension from Rio Janairo, I had a letter from Dr. Tanish who was there in a Convict ship bound to Botany Bay.⁴ It was very short and assuring me that he was not there through any dishonorable or

³ James Charles Stewart (1759-1829).

⁴ Doctor Robert Tanish was surgeon superintendent aboard the **Earl St. Vincent** from Cork to Sydney via Rio during April - September 1823.

dishonest Act. You may imagine how I regretted not seeing him, I have never heard anything of the cause of his leaving and most sincerely do I hope and trust that no serious charge can be laid to him. Of course he has gone out as Surgeon of the Ship, which is the most lucrative situation for a Surgeon serving afloat.

I hope you are all enjoying the blessings of health and prosperity, and the little ones thriving. I suppose Maggie⁵ to be growing a fine and a good Girl as also her own little Archie. It gave me much pleasure to hear of their getting so well on in their education. How proud I will feel when I get among them again, but I am allowing my feelings to go so far for the paper and will as usual, close this with Love to all at Pitnairn and your own fireside not forgetting my best regards to old friends and acquaintances

I remain

Dear Betsy

Your Affectionate Brother

Alexr. Stewart

Docter Mr Alext.
Surgeon
Docr. Stewart N.S.

Letter No.3

7 July 1825: Alexander Stewart to his sister Elizabeth Tindell, written on board the **Pyramus**, docked at Portsmouth, England.

H.M. Ship Pyramus
Portsmouth 7th July 1825

My Dear Betsy

I wrote Joanna while in London mentioning my safe arrival there, and will now continue on my proceedings to this date. On Sunday the 3d. I left London and arrived here at 6 oclock in the evening passing through a most beautiful country, and having a delightful day, but being outside my face and lips have paid sweetly from the Suns rays, on the Monday morning I made my appearance on board, and had my name entered on the books. I was very glad to find the greater half of my Mess Mates had joined, and a comfortable Mess already formed, The Marine Officer acting as Caterer and as he is a married man there is every reason to suppose it will not be extravagant, and I trust it will be comfortable, as for my Mess Mates I cannot yet of course say anything about their characters, but they are all strangers to me.

The Captain I did not see till Tuesday he being in the country, his name is Gambier nephew of Lord Gambier and if appearance do not belie him he is the perfect Gentleman, he is married and has three of a family all of whom are living here Mrs Gambier has had a cold for which I was yesterday consulted and introduced to her. I was rather unfortunate in my first prescription for the nasty stuff having made her very sick, today I have prescribed some other medicines and hope they will prove of service. I will [?with] some others of the Officers dine with her tomorrow, but that is a mere matter of courtesy.

⁵ Margaret Tindell, born 24 January 1817 and later to become Mrs Margaret Menzies.

Our ship I understand is none of the handsomest she went into Dock on the 20th inst. and I have not been on board her yet, tis conjecture she will not be ready for Sea for three months, & vague report says the Mediterean is to be our station, of all others the most desirable, but there is no possibility at this distance of time, of saying where she may be sent; while in town I had the good fortune to meet in with my good friend Major Campbell he had just arrived from Scotland to join Head Quarters at this place you may suppose we were not a little pleased at seeing one another in England after the Ascension business I am sorry to say he is the only Officer now alive who was then attached to that Island, my old Mess Mate Aitchison of Greenwich having lately died at Cape Coast Castle; having completed every thing he had to do and waiting the arrival of a vessel to convey him to Ascension, he was seized with the Fever and died, his family who I saw are in great distress about him, you will recollect his brother Edward the Naval Lieut. he has got married. I am happy to say Mrs Tainsh and family are in good health and seemingly very comfortable; I think I will adopt my usual plan of writing Pitnaern, Joanna, and yourself time about, which will form a subject of a letter to those not receiving, and be a saving of Postage; Wishing you all every comfort and the same perfect state of health which I myself enjoy.

I remain

Dear Betsy

Yr. Affectionate Brother

Alexr. Stewart

P.S. I will glad to learn as soon as possible whether Wm. has returned to Beurdeaux that I may invite him

Mrs Wm. Tindell
St Johns Street
Perth

Letter No.4

16 December 1829: Alexander Stewart to his brother-in-law James Menzies, written from Liverpool, New South Wales.

Liverpool, New S.Wales
16th Decr. 1829

My Dear James

About two months ago I wrote your Mother a long letter giving a slight sketch of my passage out here as also some description of this country as it appeared to me; at that time I had travelled about 80 miles to the Southward since my last communication, I have taken another excursion to the westward in the County of Argyle and have been distant from this about 130 Miles; It was rather unfortunate that I had no travelling companion, however my Poney proved a good one and I found many kind friends along the Road; at the end of my first days journey I stopped at Mr. McArthurs farm the great sheep owner, one of his sons is living on it who received me wt. great kindness being introduced to him by my second brother Dr. Hill.

This is a very extensive property consisting of about 30000 Acres of excellent sheep Pasture. Here I saw the process of sheep washing. He has an excellent Garden, large Vinery and extensive cultivated field covered with luxuriant crops From thence I proceeded the following day over a

tremendous Mountain, where the horse was obliged to be led part of the way, and by 4 in the afternoon reached a tolerably comfortable Inn where I slept. After Breakfast mounted my horse and arrived at Throsby Park, a sheep farm belonging to Mrs Hills brother. At that place I passed 4 or 5 days waiting the arrival of Dr. Reid a Naval Surgeon who has settled here. During this period I was hospitably entertained by Mr. Throsbys Overseer who paid me a great deal of attention and shewed me every thing remarkable about that place.

Some parts of this district are very beautiful, of a light soil and not so thickly over grown wt. trees as in the lower districts, about ten miles are the most tremendous Ravines and Gullies I ever saw, the scenery very wild, but not at all so beautiful and romantic as some of our Scotch scenery; on Dr. Reids making his appearance I joined him and proceeded at a walking up the country arriving at our night lodging about 5 in the afternoon; this was an exceeding tiresome day, the day being oppressively hot, and travelling at so slow a rate I got quite jaded and sore; this was a private home but so situated that it was made a stage by most travellers, their being no Inns so far in the country. The inhabitants seem accustomed to the thing and think nothing of accumulating half a dozen on a shake down on the Pastour floor. Next evening travelling at the walking pace we arrived at Dr. Reids house called Inverary Park. It is situated in a fine open country about 2000 feet above the level of the Sea. The land is very fruitful of a light rather stone rock soil having a clay bottom. The crops here were exceeding good, and the climate so cool that they grow gooseberry, Apples, and many other english fruits which will not grow in the neighbourhood of Sydney.

After remaining a few days at Inverary I went to Lakes Bathurst and George two fine fresh water lochs, the latter being about the size of loch Tay, but the Banks not any thing near so pretty. What is very singular there are no fish in any of these neither are their any In or outlet. Through out this long journey the road are generally as good as any english road, and preferable so far as having no Tolls to pay they being kept up by Government Convicts many of them working in Chains. In travelling here the scenery is very monotonous as you are constantly surrounded by dense woods of high trees very void of foliage and not lively in colour, which obstruct all distant views, here and there are very steep hills, and you occasionally pass a solitary farm yard having the Trees for some Acres arround cut down.

After enjoying the hospitable board of Mr. Henry Hall at Lake Bathurst for several days, I returned to Dr. Reids bidding adieu at excellent people. I crossed the Northward for twenty miles Goulburn Plains a tract of country about 5 miles in length and 2 in width, which is perfectly clear of trees and bushes, being as smooth nearly as the Inches of Perth but not so pretty, and surrounded by gently rising hills covered to the summits wt. the Trees of the country, this plain would appear to have been the bed of a river in former days or a swamp, but their is very little vestige of either now remaining at the eastern extremity is the neat wooden Cottage of a Dr. Gibson of the Army who is a settler, and on whom although unacquainted I had the impudence of calling (but such is not uncommon in this Colony particularly in the Bush as the country is denominated) The Dr. was not at home, but his kind Lady

Jas. Menzies Esqr.
85 Gt. King Street
Edinburgh

Pitnaern by
Dunheld

Letter No.5

17 November 1830: Alexander Stewart to his sister Joanna Menzies, written from Hobart Town, Van Diemens Land.

Hobart Town V.D.Land
17th Novr. 1830

My dear Joanna

While lying in the Downs I wrote Betsy mentioning the Ship having sailed from Sheerness, we were detained by contrary winds till the 30th June when we finally sailed from England; for the first week the weather was stormy and little progress made, the greater number of the Prisoners Sea Sick and myself not much better. The weather wet and cold rendering us all very uncomfortable. The breeze now became favorable with a clear sky and all soon recovered the effects of our former sickness, we continued to have fine weather but adverse winds till nearly abreast the Cape of Good Hope where it almost constantly blows a gale of Wind, however they were fair for us and we rattled along at a great rate and rolling about with a good deal of rain and cold weather, on the whole we suffered but little sickness made a tolerable passage of 16 weeks, lost one Prisoner by death and had 2 Births. On the whole I was very comfortable and enjoyed better health than on my former voyage.

The Prisoners did not give me much trouble at Sea, but on arriving here some of them entered complaints against me which on being examined into by 2 Police Magistrates were found frivolous and vexatious. This at the time gave me a good deal of uneasiness being conscious of no bad treatment to any one, and a great deal too leniency to many; however, their is a mark against their names, and they will be Severely handled should they misbehave in future. From the little I have seen of this Colony I would give it the decided preference to New South Wales in every respect. Hobart town the Capital is well laid out, the Houses are built of Stones and Brick in the English stile, many are neat Cottages having a flower Garden in front similar to those in the neighbourhood of London; the Kitchen Gardens are also in excellent order. The soil good, and vegetation very luxuriant I have heard of Cabbages weighing 32 pounds and saw a Raddish which weighed 7 lbs. All the English fruits are in great abundance and large in size, particularly Apples, Gooseberrys, Currants, and Strawberries.

The Police establishment is very perfect, no irregularities are observed in the streets at night as in Sydney, and very few cases of robbery or house breaking occur, indeed so secure are the houses that the inhabitants might go to bed with unlocked door! The usual mode of entering houses here for felonious purposes, is by breaking into the back of the houses or pulling down the chimnies, many of which project beyond the wall of the house; I was very fortunate in meeting my Old Ship Mate in the America, the Officer of the guard who wt. his family are stationed here and shew me a great deal of attention.

Being desirous of seeing something of this wonderful country, and not being able to find a companion, I last week hired a horse, and was proceeding by myself to New Norfolk of which I had heard much talk, when on leaving the town I fell in with a gentleman on horse back, we looked at each other with an apparent wish to join company, when I asked him if he was going far, he answered, to New Norfolk. I told him I was going there also upon this he said he would be happy to keep company; I found him to be a very intelligent settler once a Major in the East India Co. his name Oax or Aux and had located here for about eight years; on his learning who I was and my intention, he politely asked me to his house which was about 6 miles beyond New Norfolk; this kind offer I gladly accepted, we thus jogged on as two intimate friends, he describing the different places as we moved forward.

The Country is very mountainous and covered wt wood, but the road is level and otherwise very good, running along the left bank of the Derwent; the Hills generally recede about a quarter of a mile from the river leaving a plain of rich soil, which in many parts are in a high state of cultivation. The scenery in many places put me in mind of that near Dunheld and up the, at twenty two miles from Hobart Town we passed through New Norfolk or Elizabeth Town, a small village most delightfully situated on a rising ground of Trees, and commanding a magnificent view of the Derwent wt the surrounding country; still proceeding along this interesting river we arrived at Mr. Oax where I had a cordial reception by Mrs Oax a very beautiful and interesting woman, and a family of 5 young children;

this last part of the road is not quite so good but the scenery far surpasses what I had seen.

The river there is fully as wide as the Tay opposite Pitnaern, but the banks a great deal prettier; I would compare this to Shathearn, except that the flat land is more devoid of Trees, but about every quarter of mile there is a neat white stone Cottage having a rich looking garden attached, well furnished with fruit trees and bushes, the ground is very fine and laid out in square fields which are now covered with heavy crops of Corn; these grounds were many years ago allotted to Convicts who had been on Norfolk Island, a Penal Settlement. Their industry has been very considerable, and many of the original settlers are still alive being hale and healthy in appearance and some of them upwards of 70 years, showing the Salubrity of the Climate; this extensive if I may so term it, is bounded on each side by Hills somewhat similar to your own, covered with wood and excellent pasture for Cattle or Sheep.

My friend has a comfortable Brick house in an extensive Garden well furnished wt fruit trees and bushes groaning under their load of fruit which is not yet ripe. After breakfast on the following morning, my host conducted me to Humphrey Vale, a distance of 6 or 7 miles farther up the Derwent; this is one of the finest farms in the Country, and laid out quite in the english stile wt sweet brier hedges of great growth. The House is exceedingly neat outside and furnished with great taste. This belongs to a Widow Lady who has just left off her mourning.

I was sorry we could not wait a sumptuous dinner which was preparing. Mr Oax having invited a neighbour to dine wt him, however we had the very nicest Gooseberry Wine, a lunch of which we drank three large glasses it was truly Nectar; on our road we passed over 3 extensive farms in a great state of cultivation all of them possessed by Scotchmen; The next morning after taking leave of Mr Oax with a pressing invitation to return. Mr O. accompanied me to New Norfolk and where we met the Surgeon of the District who held a comfortable situation, a delightful little wife, and 3 most beautiful children, I had been introduced to him the day before; I was anxious to proceed on the Hobart Town being a day over the time I had proposed myself, but I was forcibly detained by the Dr. nor could I get away next morning until I promised soon to return, such disinterested friendship from utter strangers you may be sure did no fail of producing in me a thrill of gratitude.

Up to this time I have been living on board the Southworth and will do, till she sails, after which I will take up my quarters at New Norfolk. I am uncertain when I can leave this being detained as a prosecution in a case of robbery which was committed on board, by one of the Crew breaking open a Portmanteau of one of the Prisoners, had this not been the case, I would be obliged to proceed by the Ship which conveys this, but I am not sorry for it as I will be enabled to see more of the country. A number of Vessels will Sail about January or February in one of which I must take my passage. I have heard of Major McLeod of Talishar (a friend of Balachine) he is in a very prosperous way, and was lately left considerable property by a Brother from India. He has a numerous family. Am afraid I will not have an opportunity of seeing him as he lives upwards of 100 miles from this on the other side of the Island.

Of late years the Natives or Aborigines of Van Diemens land have been very troublesome, committing murders and other depredations to the great hazard of the settlers. About six weeks ago the Governor took with him all the disposable Troops and many hundred volunteers Gentle and simple, and proceeded to the woods in quest of those people who are in tribes; it has been his intention to enclose these in a Peninsula formed by a narrow neck of land for this purpose he had formed an extensive line across the country, which by advancing he hopes to catch the blacks as in a Nett it is said that they have before them about a hundred or two, but it is by no means certain, for the last week it was reported that from day to day a grand movement was to be made, and decide the contest, but it has yet been delayed, and am afraid that this procrastination the natives will ultimately effect their escape, should this be the case, the Colony will be in a worse situation than before, as the minds of the natives will be more excited and courageous, the Volunteers are also beginning to get dissatisfied, being so long kept from their business and families, and I dare say if some decisive step is not soon taken they will be very apt to leave the enterprise.

On my arrival here the weather was very cold and wet, but wh. in the last week it is quite like an english Summer, and the fruits will be ripe in a few weeks, my Grapes being pretty well filled, I will now

conclude wt. my Love to you all and best regards to inquiring friends

I remain

My Dear Joanna

Your ever Affectionatr Brother

Alexr. Stewart

Mrs Menzies

Pitnaern

by Dunheld

Perthshire

[Postmarked 'G 16 My 1831' and 'India Letter Penzance']

Margaret Menzies' Journal of a Voyage to Australia and Associated Letters, 1838-39

Like many women and travellers of her time, Margaret Menzies kept a Journal from 1 August 1838 through to October 1839, recording details of her preparations for, and voyage to Australia, along with an account of her first few months in the Colony. Though relatively sparse, it is nevertheless an important historical document as we attempt to recreate the life and times and these early settlers at Jamberoo.

Whilst the Journal, which has formed part of the Ferguson Collection at the National Library of Australia since the 1950s, has been known and commented upon for many years, a full transcript has never been published. In 1952 Arthur Cousins compiled a 41 page manuscript based around the Journal, part of which was reproduced in the previous section. It contained excerpts and re-tellings from the Journal, along with descriptions of the people and places mentioned. This manuscript was partially published around 1962 as *The story of Dr and Mrs Robert Menzies and their home Minamurra House, Jamberoo 1839 - 1861*. Whilst Cousins' commentary was invaluable, this digested, much abbreviated version of the original Journal was far from the ideal form in which to present such an interesting and illuminating historical document. In 1983 American researchers K. & T. Henderson published further extracts from the Journal in their *Early Illawarra - people, houses, life*, along with an 1840s pencil sketch of Minamurra Farm and house by Abraham Lincoln, a local settler, and a map of Illawarra by Robert Menzies.

In March 1990 an auction was held at Jamberoo Municipal Hall in which a collection of letters, papers, photographs and writing boxes ex Minamurra House were individually offered for sale. This material had originally come from the estate of Charles James Tindell (Margaret's brother), and included papers belonging to both Margaret Menzies and Dr Alexander Stewart dating from 1822, amongst others of relevance to the Tindell and Tompson families. This manuscript material formed an important addition to the National Library of Australia collection of Menzies and Jamberoo related manuscripts, which at present includes:

- * Margaret Menzies' Journal 1838-39 (MS 3261)
- * Dr Robert Menzies' Journal aboard the **Hope**, 1837 (MS 3282)
- * The Papers of Reverend John Kinross (1848-1908), Margaret and Robert's son-in-law (MS 3346)
- * Robert Menzies' Sketch map of Illawarra (Maps Section F881)

A full transcript of the letters of Dr Alexander Stewart and Margaret Menzies are herein presented along with brief biographical notes and commentary.

The Journal & Letters of Margaret Menzies

1 August 1838 - October 1839

Journal

Left Perth⁶ on Wednesday morning 1st Aug 1838 at 7 O'clock. Arrived at Dundee⁷ at 10 and sailed via the Steamer "Dundee" at 2 oclock PM. After a very rough passage arrived in London at 6 oclock Friday evening,⁸ next day fixed on sailing in the "Earl Durham",⁹ Capt Cable.¹⁰

Sunday went to St Martins Chapel Saw Sir R. Dick there. Monday dined at Mr Grants. Tuesday went through the Adelaide Gallery Pantheon. Margaret and Dixson Grant dined with us at 9 Cecil Street & in the evening Alex Campbell accompanied us to Madame Trussaud's exhibition of wax work. Wednesday dined at Mr D Stewarts. Thursday Miss Fraser called - went to see the Earl of Durham and dined at 2 South Place. Friday went to the Colosseum. Alex C.¹¹ came down in the evening played draughts and stayed [to] supper.

Saturday Robert had his first sitting to Lewis Hennan for a miniature likeness - afterwards went with Mr Stewart to Normans & purchased a Piccolo cabinet pianoforte. Dined at 2 South Place. Sunday went to Chapel in the Strand. Mr Dowse and Dixson took tea with us & Alex C. popped in.

Monday wrote Maria.¹² Bob¹³ sat again for his likeness. Went in the evening to Hay Market Theatre. Saw Mr McReady in The Athenian Captive, a tragedy by Mr Serjeant Talford, The Artists Wife and New Notions - very amusing. Tuesday Miss Grant, Miss Goodsir, Mr Dowse and Alex Campbell with Robert & I left at 9 in the morning for Richmond. Went by steamer, passed Chelsea Hospital Kew etc etc. Dined on Richmond Hill. Drove to Hampton Court & returned by land at 9 evening. Wednesday went to Hoddesdon & returned Thursday afternoon. Friday Charles James¹⁴ and Jessie¹⁵ arrived from Perth. Took tea at Mr Stewarts.

⁶ Perth is located by the River Tay, on the eastern coast of Scotland. It lies approximately 25 miles north of Edinburgh and 15 miles west of Dundee, its major servicing port.

⁷ This three hour trip from Perth to Dundee was most likely by carriage.

⁸ The 2 days and 4 hours taken to travel by the **Dundee** steamer from Dundee to London was a rather slow trip, though undoubtedly caused by the stormy weather.

⁹ The 'Earl Durham' was of 383 tons and carrying passengers and merchandise to New South Wales. She was also called the 'Earl of Durham' by Margaret Menzies.

¹⁰ 'Cable' is elsewhere spelt 'Cabel' or 'Cabell'.

¹¹ Alex Campbell.

¹² Possibly refers to her sister-in-law Maria, wife of James Menzies, who in turn was brother of her Robert.

¹³ Throughout her Journal Margaret Menzies refers to her husband as 'Rob', 'Bob', 'R.' or 'Robert'. It is usually difficult to distinguish between Rob and Bob due to the vagaries of her handwriting.

¹⁴ Charles James Tindell (11 February 1820 - 1871), younger brother of Margaret Menzies.

¹⁵ The Menzies' maidservant.

[Just prior to boarding the vessel at Gravesend, Charles Tindell & Margaret Menzies got off a final letter to their mother Elizabeth:

Gravesend, 11 Septr 1838

My Dear Mother

I write you a few lines before going on board the "Earl Durham to bid you good by. She came down the river yesterday and will sail most likely tomorrow. We have been here since Sunday.

Jessie is on board getting the bedding put to rights. We have got very comfortable births, but poor Jessie will feel rather uncomfortable for the first while as there are 20 people in the same Cabin with her. The vessel is in terrible confusion just now what with sheep, dogs, poultry of all descriptions women and children mixed up most beautifully. The two terriers (Tay and Morven) were barking as if quite delighted with every thing about them.

We have got a nice room in the inn overlooking the river, and there are crowds of vessels constantly going up and down. We have music on the pier every night not 100 yards from us I saw Robert Dawson one day and introduced him to Robert. He has sailed but his vessel calls at Plymouth, so we will likely be on before him yet. Maggie is going to write you before we leave the river - do you know I saw Mr Robertson that had the British Liner Co. Bank in Perth. He is in the Searcher's Office in the Custom, house in London. When I was getting the Baggage cleared, he asked me where I came from, and allowed a box to be passed without Searching that we had taking out to a friend of Dr Campbell's. The man said it was very kind of him doing so. As Maggie says she will write a few lines here I must conclude with love to all friends and yourself My Dear Mother

Your Affectionate Son

I have got a light Jacket
and a Cap

Charles J. Tindell

(excuse my bad poem)

My Dear Momma

I shall write you a long letter by the Pilot when he leaves, as well, Robert to his Mother. We go on board at 1 oclock to day & expect to sail this evening or tomorrow morning I have enjoyed the change of being here since Sunday very much. We are just too late to see the Menzies however I cannot say I regret it for as we have already said good bye another would be only painful. My best love to every one. You may expect a long epistle soon & in the mean time believe me my dear Momma

Your sincerely attached
Daughter M. Menzies
& Son R. Menzies

[This was their last opportunity at such communication, and Margaret then returned to her Journal]

Journal of a voyage to N S Wales

Left London Sunday morning 9th September 1838. Arrived at Gravesend¹⁶ about 12 oclock.

¹⁶ Gravesend, upon the River Thames, was the main port and dock area servicing London.

Tuesday [Alex.] Campbell spent with us & on Wednesday at 1 we came off in a small boat to join the Earl Durham laying about 3 miles from Gravesend.

Capt Cable did not arrive on board until Thursday at 5 o'clock. Immediately he ordered preparations to be made for sailing under way. Sailed but the tide being against us and no wind we made no progress & were compelled to put down the anchor & remain where we were all night.

Friday 14th September evening - after several attempts at last were able to get on slowly and by 4 were about 20 miles beyond Gravesend. Very little motion in the vessel as yet. Passengers seem to be agreeable.

Saturday made about 30 miles. 2 ducks flew over board. Sunday no sermon. Miss Burrudge complaining etc, then more motion than before. Got a good way on.

Monday Pilot left at 6 o'clock morning off Deal.¹⁷ Captain went on shore and returned shortly. Wind very favourable. Passed Dover, Dungeness and Beachy Head. Very sick in the morning. Felt better in the afternoon. All but Miss Thomson complaining.

Tuesday 18th September.¹⁸

Friday 28th. Been very unwell since writing last. Confined to bed for 8 days. All the Ladies ill & some of the Gents. Saw a school of Porpoises. Weather very good. Had 2 days exceedingly rough & squally.

Beyond Lisbon saw a large vessel yesterday & this morning hailed her and found she was the Marion from London bound for Calcutta with troops. She left 36 hours before the Earl Durham & we are now ahead of her.

Robert in bed this morning with severe headache.¹⁹ Passengers generally in good health & agreeable.

Mr Taylor an intelligent man & very attractive. Mr Newton quiet, him in love. Mr Henlock pleasant. Mrs & the Miss Thomson very nice people. Miss Burrage plain looking good musician and singer. Mrs Macalpin an original. Thinks herself very ill puts abundance of Spirits down to keep her spirits up. Miss Mcalpin girl with no Other passengers very nice & good natured with some bright spirits. Captain a general-favourite very good tempered, very kind, very merry & very fond of music.

Had a little music last night il activere²⁰ Miss Burrudge choice of songs & plays with execution very

¹⁷ Deal is located just south of Ramsgate and north of Dover on the east coast of England. The sea off this coast is referred to as 'The Downs' and is the point at which vessels enter the Atlantic Ocean and head south for Africa.

¹⁸ It should be noted that Margaret Menzies did not keep her Journal every day, but made summary and back-dated entries at regular intervals. For example, on 18 September she summarised the events since arriving in London on the 9th. This method frequently leads to confusion in precisely dating events described in the Journal, though her letters and other sources may be used to clarify some dates.

¹⁹ Robert Menzies was to suffer ill-health throughout the voyage in the form of headaches and sea-sickness. His continued fragility was to result in his untimely death in 1860 at the relatively young age of 49.

²⁰ The Journal contains a number of passages in French, usually meant to hide Margaret's more personal comments and opinions of fellow passengers. The French is usually colloquial, and difficult often to translate. According to a letter of Dr Alexander Stewart's, Margaret's father William Tindell was at one point during the 1820s employed at Borbeaux, France. Whether Margaret learnt her French in that country or in a Perth school is unknown.

correct time.

Wednesday 3rd October 1838²¹

Becalmed on Saturday. Sunday got into the Trade Winds. The Marion got out of sight ahead of us. No sermon or anything to distinguish the Sabbath from any other day. Missionary preaches to the Steerage Passengers & some of the young men attend but get more harm than good from it, the Preacher being a impractical fool with great pretensions to religion.

Monday and Tuesday sailing about 7 nots an hour passed the Madeiras & Canaries. Very little breeze today. Have some music every evening. Miss Burrage & I being the only performers as yet. Mr Case plays the flute a little.

MM

Friday wrote Mamma a letter to have in readiness in case of an opportunity. Miss McAlpin practised a little yesterday - plays pretty well. Capt made a complete fool of her mother - her own fault. Saw the moon rise last evening in great beauty. What would they give at home to see the sun set & the moon rise in such splendour? How wondrous are the works of the Almighty!

Wind very unfavourable. A heavy shower of rain last night, the first since we left England. Weather becoming extremely warm. What will it be at the line. Miss Burrage translating from the French on the Poop last night. She is what I would call a very sensible young lady - rather too much so for me, mais chasun a son gout ["but each to his own"] - she & Mrs Macalpin often gabbering in French.

Monday 8th October 1838

The rain fell in torrents on Saturday afternoon. A Bonitta caught by one of the Sailors - a small fish about the size of a whiting. Amused the Captain with Scotch reels in the evening. Mrs McAlpin sang a song on the Poop much to our entertainment. Cannot imagine what she has been if not a housekeeper, at all events she is sufficiently vulgar to prevent anyone having much to say to her.

Tuesday passed in reading during the forenoon. Went on deck after dinner & after tea for a short time. Mr Thomson read a sermon by Rev Halloway. Monday still becalmed & very hot. I wish we could get on but wishing will not bring wind so we must be contented.

Am reading the 2 volume of Major Mitchells Australia - more interesting than the first. The principal rivers to the north are the Namoy and Gwydir - to the west the Lachlin - the Murrumbidge - the Murray, which joins the Darling, a large river flowing north east & south west. Wonder when we will be settled.

Beginning to lose conceit of Miss Burrage. She is so annoyingly matter-of-fact and extremely affected. Mr Jessitt also a silly sort of person. Mr Steel a downright sort of young man without affectation. Mr Case ditto. Got one half of my net colar finished. Anxious to have the other half done this week.

Margaret Menzies.

Thursday Evening 10 October - 11th Oct.

Wind got up on Tuesday and continues still to blow from the right quarter. Captain expects to sight the

²¹ The following entry covers the period 29 September to 3 October.

Cape Verd Islands tomorrow morning.

Yesterday was much alarmed about dear Robert who had a severe attack of headache. Am thankful he is better to day & trust he may have no renewal of it for some time at least.

Saw a number of the Bonitta to day and one flying fish which flew on deck & was caught. A pretty little creature with large eyes & small mouth resembling a herring with large wings. A black fish & two sharks seen by the "number one" party & the other passengers while we were at dinner. Dreadfully hot. Slept with both windows open in our cabin & thankful to have these.

Sunday 13th October

As expected we passed the Cape Verd Islands on Friday but did not see them the day being dull. Saw a large ship but could not learn her name. When first we saw her she was a good way ahead but we soon left her astern.

My piano unfit for playing on, the heat having swelled the wood and made dumb notes. Mrs & Miss McAlpin & Miss Burrage go on deck after supper sing songs and the two latter to dally with the Captain. My opinion is they would be better in their rooms and most of the Gentlemen think the same. Finished my colar it looks very pretty. Wish I had brought more work for Jessie who is almost run out.

[Affair of honour] Between Mr Henlock and Mr Case it took place from a very trifling circumstance in the afternoon & ended in pistols being brought on deck at 10 oclock and a duel being fought had not the Captain interfered. From all accounts H. has behaved as a cowardly villian. C. as a gentleman.

The affair is not ended but I hope there will be no more of it on board - it has divided us into 2 sets. The greater number on Mr Case's side. Indeed, all but his brother and Newton who seems no great things excepting some who remain neutral - on the whole it is a sad business and will be an example to the younger ones of the evil tendency of cards.

Friday have been becalmed for 2 days. Saturday - contrary winds. Sunday wind more favourable. Saw a pilot fish the other day, a very pretty fish striped white & red.

Thursday 25th October 1838

Have got into the South East Trades and not yet across the Line. Weather not nearly so hot as it was. We are extremely well as far as eating goes but otherwise have no inducement to wish a continuation of the voyage. Since the affair we are distinctly divided in two sets, both Ladies & Gentlemen which is disagreeable in the extreme. Indeed, the conduct of the 3 women, for I can scarcely honor them with the title of Ladies, is most indecent to say the least of it and makes me regret having come by the Earl Durham, however another 2 months I trust will see us near Sidney and then farewell to some of the party for ever & avec tout mon coeur ["good riddance"].

Jessie has finished the Blowse for Mr Menzies & I am at a loss how to find work for her. Reading Rob Roy. Like Diana Vernon's character much. Feel inclined to write home and yet cannot (tell what) I find out which of its dear Inmates I shall address first. I could write to all, however there is no opportunity of sending letters home. What would I give for a peep at them all much very much but many years will pass ere I see them again.²²

²² Margaret obviously had ideas of making money in New South Wales and retiring to family and friends back home in Perth.

Thursday 25th - much annoyed a vessel homeward bound came near us. I expected to get my letter sent home but was again deceived. She hoisted American colours & the 3rd Lieutenant with a boats crew came on board. Very fine looking men. Capt Cable gave him some English papers & in return he told how they left Norfolk in Virginia 6 months ago were cruising along with several other ships in search of a sand bank and then were going to Rio Janeiro. He was quite a smart looking Yankee, in uniform and contrast admirably with our Captains dishabile. She was the Peacock, an American Man of War.²³

Tuesday 30th October 1838

Crossed the Equinoctial Line on Sunday 28th afternoon. Neptune payed us a visit and went off in his car of fire. On Monday the sailors & young Gentlemen anticipated some fun but Mr Fuller 1st mate, thought it a pity to lose a day, wind being good & therefore forbade any amusement untill 10 oclock after R & I were in bed when they commenced throwing water at one another. Mrs McAlpine and the other two went out to see the fun and got a share of the water.

Squally yesterday. Now thinking of when we will get to the Cape of Good Hope.

Sunday 4th November 1838

Since Tuesday we have had a fine breeze and are now in 14 degrees south Latitude. A heavy squall on Thursday night & another this morning. We are anticipating some rough weather at the Cape. As yet we have had a most prosperous voyage. Saw a number of nautilus an extremely pretty fish. Sailing along, one caught in a bucket.²⁴ No vessels seen for some time!

Mrs Mc very sick and no wonder - elle prends trop de un liquor tres fort, elle est une sottie and I cannot feel for her. On Wednesday evening Richard Henlock had an alarming attack. Robert bled him & applied mustard poltace. He is again up & better. This last week have read the 1st & half the 2nd volumes of Dr Langs account of our adopted country - interesting but it strikes me many of his remarks are not written in the spirit of a Christian. There is so much sarcasm & spite throughout the works.

Another Sabbath day. Our 8th on board the Earl Durham. 7 weeks tomorrow since we left the Downs and 5 months since I was married. Am happier in the married state every day. God grant that it may never be otherwise, that there may be no tiring of each others society as there is with many unhappy couples.

Friday 9th November

Finished Lang's NSW and am now perusing Goldsmiths Rome. Made a for Robert and am again at my ... We are now without the Tropics and find it much colder having the Sun to the Northward. Very favourable wind from the North West however we have not made such progress this week as we did last.

On Tuesday the 28 Oct we crossed the Line & on the following Monday we were in Latitude 19o9 having

²³ The **Peacock** was one of the vessels attached to the United States Exploring Expedition under the command of Captain Wilkes. It would later visit Sydney during December 1839 and January 1840.

²⁴ Apparently Margaret pursued the study of Conchology throughout the voyage, when well enough. Refer her notes on the subject at the end of the Journal.

run 1150 miles in 8 days. Very good sailing. A Barque from Quebec "The Falconer" passed us quite close yesterday on her way to Batavia.

Mrs McAlpin was so I shall not say what on Saturday that the Captain ordered the Steward to give her no more Brandy. She is a disgusting woman and ought to be ashamed of herself. Miss B & her daughter retire earlier to bed than they did - if Mr Henlock does not intend to marry Miss Mc his conduct is most improper, sitting & reclining by her side. She reading to him the whole afternoon.

Jessie baked some oat cakes yesterday which are a great treat to we who come from the Land of Cakes. Sir Walter Scott's novels are in great [demand]. Captain Cabel Mrs & Miss Thomson & Mr Donald having each a volume at present. I do not like The Monastery as much as others.

[At this point in the Journal Margaret included notes on the rise and fall of the Roman Empire]

The Roman Empire was founded and Rome build 725 years before Christ and destroyed 476 years after the birth of our Lord by Romulus, Grand Son of Numitor, King of Latins. There were seven Kings of Rome! after the Government was lodged in 1, 2 or more persons who ... take the names of Dictators, Tribunes, Decemoiri &c &c. After conquering the neighbouring states, viz, the Labines, Etruscans, Latins, Iberia, Equi & Volcians, the Romans began to wish for foreign conquests. The Carthaginians were at that time in possession of Sicily and were the first with whom they went to war. A vessel from Carthage being driven on the Roman coast, they took a pattern by it & built a fleet which they crossed to Africa and after many battles in which they & the Carthaginians were by Jurus victorious they succeeded in destroying Carthage & so ended the 3 Punic Wars, as they were termed.

Julius Ceasar first Emperor. A succession of Emperors, some lived for there country's good, others a disgrace to humanity. Among the former we may class Titus, Vespasian, Trojan, Adrian, Titus Andronicus, & Marcus Aurdus. Among the latter Caligula, Nero, Domilian, Commodus, Caracalla and Heliogabalis. Constantine the first Christian Emperor. He built Byzantium or Constantinople and removed the seat of the empire from Rome to that City.

Our Lord Jesus was crucified at Jerusalem in the 18 year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius. Pliny the naturalist lived in the reign of Titus - he lost his life by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Plutarch the Philospher lived in the time of Trojan & was his Protector.

The Roman Empire was overthrown by incisive inroads by the Goths, Ibnnny & Vandals with other Casbans, tribes from the north. The effeminancy into which they had fallen prevented them from making a stand against these warlike invaders.

Earl Durham 10th November 1838

Tuesday 13th November

Tay had 5 pups yesterday morning - one drowned today. Nice little things. Captain going to have one of them. Will take one ourselves & call it Durham after our good ship. Saturday & Sunday very rough winds unfavourable & a heavy head sea. Again going in the right direction, & in the tact for Tristian Da Cunha. Weather sufficiently cold now & will be so untill we pass the Cape - obliged to take to my cloak again when on deck.

On Sunday a vessel as we thought for home. I spoke it but did not understand her answers - found that on getting astern of us she turned & followed us and last night again we spoke her & found she was the Anne Jane from Liverpool bound for Canton. Another ship in sight ahead.

Sunday 18th November

Since writing last we have had most favourable winds & yesterday finished our southing having got in 38 south latitude, we passed very near Tristian da Cunha but could not see it owing to the thickness of the day.

We are now running our longest side and expect to reach Sydney in 5 or 6 weeks. The weather is excessively cold. I am freezing. It reminds me of school when we were cold & dare not stand at the fire. We would give anything for a fire now & feel the cold more after the great heat 3 weeks ago. The Thermometer was 89 and today it is 55, a considerable difference at sea.

Robert was in bed yesterday morning with headaches (as was Charles), when he was called up to see Mrs Peat's servant, an old woman who had a fit of apoplexy. This is the third & was very severe. This morning she is rather better.

The Albetrosse, Boobies & Cape Pigeons have been flying about in numbers for some days & afford some amusement to the Gentlemen who have shot several. Finished my card yesterday & The Abbot - poor Queen Mary! In spite of thy follies I pity thee & had I lived in your time methinks I would have loved thee with the fervour of Catherine Leyton. Guilty, I can never believe thee.

6 Sundays of this year to pass and then if we are spared I trust we shall spend the 1st Sabbath of 1839 on shore and attend Church.

M.M.

"we did so! NSWales

Thursday 22nd November

Very dismal weather. Very cloudy with a good deal of rain. Have not been on deck for some days and feel quite wearied - begin another collar. Not so much wind as we could wish, going only about 5 knots an hour. Hope it will increase or this year will not see us at Sydney. We have yet about 7000 miles between us and the land of our adoption. The old woman better. Robert thought it was all over with her but she is wonderfully recovered & he hopes she will reach Sydney yet.

One of Peats children fell down the hatchway last night but was not much worse. Misfortunes seldom come alone. We have been having porridge for some mornings passed. Everybody likes sherry but Mrs and Miss Thomson Senior. My piano in good order again - generally play a little every day. Henlock in bed this morning with toothache - no wonder exposing himself to the cold as he does. Mrs McAlpin does not rise to breakfast but eats a very hearty one. Much quieter than she used to be but shows a little of the shrew occasionally. Captain never jokes with her now.

Sunday 25th November 1838

Yesterday we were abreast of the Cape and have had very rough weather for the last 2 days & nights. Sea very high. Waves dashing over the deck. One came last night into the cuddy. Strong winds. Made 265 miles yesterday which was a capital run & now I know something of rounding the Cape of Good Hope. We have not had such rolling before.

Miss Thomson fell on Friday and hurt her shoulder very much. She came into our cabin & lay down in bed till 8 o'clock when she went below & was not very able to rise yesterday. Did not rise to breakfast

yesterday we were rolling so much & I did not sleep as usual. All well! Heartily tired of the sea! M.M.

Tuesday 27th November 1838

Yesterday passed a Barque bound for Sydney from Limerick in Ireland with Emigrants. She had been 70 days as have we at sea. This morning we have lost sight of her & hope to reach our destination before her The deck was covered with people going to push their fortunes in a distant land - her name the "Charles Kerr".²⁵

Another quarrel to day. Mr Ralph knocked down Miss Burrages looking glass which was slightly damaged. Mr Jessit, wishing to make bad worse, divided the frame and defaced the glass saying Mr Thomson & Ralph had done it. Mr T cleared himself & Ralph made an apology to Miss B who would not receive any, & is as wrath as can be.

Oh this weary world - happiness must be found at home or we shall seek it in vain in the world.

10 weeks since we left the Downs. Robert had his finger severely bitten by one of the dogs. Pindier and Morven were fighting. Wednesday another very rough night Heavy sea today

Monday 3rd December 1838

We have had very severe weather. More stormy than we ever had it got creepy. The gale commenced on Saturday morning & continued increasing till 12 o'clock on Sunday night - we tried to fight against the wind which blew exactly from the quarter we wished to go until Sunday afternoon when we were obliged to lay to, that is take down all the sails and drift with the wind. There was an immense deal of lightning on Saturday night. A vivid flash about every 5 minutes for some hours. I lay in bed all yesterday the pitching and rolling of the vessel was tremendous & the sea high

A bad beginning to December & to our reaching Sydney this year for on the Captains taking the sun to day he punts we are now in 41o 47' South Latitude instead of 30 or 32 as we were on Friday. So much for adverse winds, however it blows again from the North West and we hope for favourable weather after this shower. Mrs Mc fell out of bed on Saturday & made such a [fuss] she meets with little pity.

Thursday - winds very favourable in 50 east longitude. Have 100 degrees to run ere we reach Sydney Heavy rain with thunder and lightning these two last nights - lost several sails from top mast etc but no danger.

Forgot to record that on Saturday last one of the many Albetrosse that have been shot was got on board. The wing was broken and the poor bird had to be strangled after undergoing the inspection of all on board. It was twice the size of a goose & turned its head most majestically. I thought it a fine bird but am told it was a small one. Had an immense thickness of feathers which renders them difficult to shoot & this down is extremely white and soft. The beaks long One of the old women got the carcass & made soup of it. It was salt & fishy. I could not have eaten it but the others must and thought it good.

Sunday 9th December

²⁵ The **Charles Kerr** reached Sydney on 8 January 1839, 6 days after the **Earl Durham**.

Since Thursday we have been going on admirably Wind could not be more favourable. Yesterday we made 237 miles & to day we expect it will be more We wish most anxiously for a continuation of this breeze which would soon shorten the distances, but must rest content if it should not last. Hitherto we have been mercifully dealt with & have great reason to thank the Almighty for our prosperous voyage, which I wish was over. All more anxious to do for in speaking of the weather how seldom do we think of that Great Being who has the winds at his disposal and allocatts all things according to his own good pleasure & for his peoples welfare.

I long to hear from home & am equally sure all there are as wishful to hear of us. We are all in the caring of the same Master, The all Wise God. May he be our Protector through this & through eternity.

Have finished my second collar and am now spraying a stock for Robert which I hope will be pretty. Reading a little book Aunty gave R. - Novels in Central America Dear Baldy - I must send him something when I can. He is a great hearted little fellow! MM

Still excessively cold and was obliged to put a pair of R's flannel stockings over 2 pair of my own. Wish I had a clean frock. Daresay they will have snow at home & a comfortable fire to point their toes at. Dear Scotland I hope to return and enjoy your cold and comforts both - The better for having mixed with the cold world & with greater to those who are my friends Jenny preparing some thing Christmas dinner at least speaking of it

Friday 14th December

Getting on very nicely indeed & pleasant sailing with all. To day we are in 85o 30' E. L. and I sincerely hope the 17 days remaining of this year may take us if not to Sydney at least very near it for never was I so tired of any place as I am of this ship and never was I so tired of people as I am of some folks here whose mean conduct is too despicable to take notice of and yet sufficiently annoying. On Wednesday we passed St Pauls Island but did not see it being too far south. Oh for a peep at home!

Sunday 16th December

In 94o 16' E L to day, & a famous breeze which I trust will last. Every day it gets more disagreeable The conduct of Henlock & Miss McAlpin is disgusting, standing at the door together for hours sometimes till 11 oclock at night & constantly with his arm around her - the Captain gave him a hint to day, that he had gone too far to recede & certainly he has but it never struck me he meant anything honorable and he never will act honorably towards her.

They sit often singing long after we retire & Miss B's songs are any thing then fit for a Lady's mouth; but we have had a prosperous & fine voyage which is the main point & we will soon please God get rid of our disagreeable companions & good bye with all my heart I shall not long for another sea voyage!

Have finished the stock & am hemming some handkerchiefs of B's. Captain will not read any more of the Waverly Novels because Robert told him he loosened the bindings. Extremely welcome to take the Pet if he thinks proper We have Mr Newtons Hurfax to thank for that, but it will take something more than that to annoy me. I guess as the Yankee says MM

Wednesday 19th

Forgot to mention that on Friday afternoon I saw 3 or 4 Finback whales which were the first I had seen

although several had been about the ship before. Yesterday we were in 103 & to day expect to be in 107 & the distance to go looks nothing now on the map when we look at what we have already come. Mr Case has taken charge of his pup & ours at present & is delighted with them. Thermometer 59 to day. Considerably warmer than it has been for some time past. Do not feel exactly well. Was in bed all Friday last, & have not quite recovered my usual perfect health. MM

Friday 21st December

Mr Tulloch's child died this morning at 6 o'clock. When they came on board it was one of the finest children I had seen but took ill some time ago of inflammation of the bowels & teething which soon brought the poor thing down. He was buried at 2 o'clock to day. The Missionary performed service.

It was a most melancholy thing to comit the poor child to the sea & his mother is much to be felt for, but what matters it where we are laid - the sea will give up its dead as will the earth & if we are prepared to die it is enough. May the incident not be thrown away upon any of us, but remind us that we know not the day or the hour when the Son of Man commeth - May we be found ready!

The wind has been southerly yesterday & to day we have been going southward & very little to the east but hope by the morning to have change of wind.

Henlock has deserted Miss McAlpin as was suspected & she poor thing cannot hide her grief - did not come to breakfast to day and looks very dull. She should be glad to get so well rid of such a fellow. He is a double distilled

10 o'clock at night just going to bed - good night to all my friends at home although it is not nearly bed time with them yet. MM

Sunday 23rd December

Have had such very foggy weather for the last 3 days that we have not been able to get an observation & consequently it is only guess work with the Captain when he says we are in 80 to day. That is 120. Delightful to think there are only 30 degrees now before us

Next Sunday I trust will take us very near our destination, [or] at least will be our last on board the Earl Durham. The haze has cleared away this afternoon & we have a fine breeze which is blowing. Was on deck a good while this afternoon. Miss Mc and Henlock walking together now. Poor Mrs Tulloch is pretty well. She has met with a severe trial spared tomorrow.

Pack up my book and be ... bring up my things by to have them in readiness that I may enjoy the Land when it appears. They are making a chair of the water barrel for our stepping into the boat to convey us to shore, & have got the boat painted & swung on the side of the vessel. A lovely evening now rather warmer

Margaret Menzies

[At this point in the Journal Margaret has included a collection of notes on the study of Conchology]

Tuesday 25th December

Christmas day - well last year at this time I was wondering where I would be this year & here I am on board the Earl Durham & married Happy enough but not so merry as I was last year. Well tis pleasant to

look back to those merry days. Our two delightful Balls at 'Neirn on the 28th and at Castle Menzies on the 2d January - with dinners etc & parties besides & Ralph Reilly - poor youth & and John Kelly. How I wonder what they are all doing at Pitnearn & Perth today - thinking of us I am quite sure & perhaps Marie & Jane preparing for the Balls again. I Wish I could be with them but 'tis no use wishing. I must be thankful & contented where I am.

If we are all spared and well by next Xmas day I hope we will be in our own house & happier than we are today. I mean that we will not have the disagreeable companions we have now & consequently will be more at ease, heighho! I heave another sigh when I think of being so far from home and many I hold dear but I always look with hope to meeting them again & spending many happy years among my native hills. Fine breeze carrying us along to New Holland. On Sunday were in 127 Capitol running. Hope it will last. We are in 131" 52' today & if we carry on at this rate will be in Sydney on Monday.

Thursday 27th

Still a fine breeze & beautiful weather - much warmer & a clear blue sky - occasional showers of rain which always help us, coming from the direction in which the wind lays from the west - tomorrow if all's well we hope to see Land - what a joyful sight it will be. King's Island is the first land we come near I shall call it Happy Island .

Yesterday & the day before we packed all our books & to day Jessie & I counted over the soiled clothes & arranged them properly. Feel much better to day than I have done for some days past. Have rid of a pain in my chest, which is a relief. MM

Saturday 29th December

Yesterday we entered Bass Straits as expected. The day was uncommonly foggy The Captain & two of the sailors imagined they saw King's Island but were not certain, however were convinced of it when this morning at 4 oclock Wilson's Promontory was visible to all

I got up earlier than usual to see the long wished for sight & was much gratified for although this part of the coast of New Holland is extremely bleak & barren it was delightful to see land of any kind after 3 months with nothing but the deep blue sea to feast our eyes on. I could agree with Byron in loving the sea for a short while but by this time I am heartily tired of it.

We are again out of sight of land and passed the most dangerous part of the Straits luckily by day light. The coast here is rocky & barren. Some wood of an inferior description covered the tops of peaks but otherwise there is no appearance of vegetation. On the night we passed an rock Island which is not unlike the Bass Rock of Scotland but considerably larger. The distance between this rock called Roudondo & the coast of N H is 5 miles so that we had land very near us on each side.

The wind is delightful. We have every reason to be thankful & please God we hope to be at Cape Howe tomorrow morning & at Sydney on Monday Evening so that I still hope to begin a new year in a new world.

1838

Sunday morning 30th December

Have had a splendid run all night. The vessel seems really to fly through the waters. Since yesterday at 12

oclock we have made 224 miles. It is now 10 oclock - an immense distance to sail in 22 hours. Cape Howe is in sight now. It looks more prepossesing than Wilson's Promontory although still barren, but the clear sandy beach still looks pretty.

I have not seen it well for Robert is in bed this morning with a sick headache which I sincerely hope will go off soon. We have but 225 miles to go now to Sydney of nothing & should this wind continue we will be there tomorrow morning, making a passage of 15 weeks or 105 days from the Downs. We have been most favourably dealt with & should be very grateful to that Almighty power who has guided us through the seas in such safety.

Probably shall not scribble here again until I am in Sydney & "the land of the plenty" as the Captain says. What a bustle we will be in tomorrow packing up all our goods & chattles. I trust our coming here is for our good, if dear Bob only keeps in health I will be happy - we are in good hands. Everyone in great spirits at the prospect of getting on shore.

Margaret Menzies
Ship Earl Durham

[Saturday] January 5th 1839 at Sydney

On Wednesday 2d January we arrived in Sydney Cove having been 107 days at sea - & most happy to see the habitations of man once more. I was much struck with the beauties of Port Jackson & the Cove. The soil is extremely barren & sandy but studded with nice houses with numerous rocky islands & promontorys. [It] is highly picturesque.

Robert came on shore that evening but I did not. He secured lodgings however & on Thursday previous we left the Earl Durham with extreme good will, & most happy was I to set my foot on shore & find myself in 4 large though empty rooms. Sydney is not what I expected & yet I cannot say I am disappointed - it is the most irregularly built town I ever saw & such a wretched set of inhabitants. It is quite fearful to be among them.

Immediately on arriving Capt. Coombes of the Hope came on board & to our delight told us Uncle was still here - I wrote him to Liverpool & yesterday morning he came down - he is looking well. Has got 2 places in view but is uncertain if either will answer us. Yesterday we dined at Mr Miller's - like Mrs M very much. A pretty little woman rather. On Monday we go to Liverpool Charles remains here with Jessie.

Monday 7th January. Left Sydney for Liverpool. Found Dr & Mrs Hill very kind. Jessie came up the week following & Charles also. Uncle & Robert went to look at Mittagong. Mrs Roe wished us to take the farm land which was out of the question so they did not agree of course. Then went to Windsor to look at a farm there which was very bad and are now on their way to Illawarra in search of some land for sale & I hope will be successful.

Liverpool 29th January 1839

[A letter by Margaret to her mother, dated Liverpool, 17 February 1839, adds additional detail to the account contained within the Journal:

Liverpool Sunday 17th Febry. [1839]

My dearest Momma

Uncle was to have sailed to day but the Ship is again put off till Tuesday so he came here last night to say good bye again & leaves tomorrow morning so I must write a few lines more - on Wednesday we went to Sydney by Parramatta a pretty town - got there about 10 and Robert immediately went with Uncle to a sale of Government land.

The 100 acres I wrote about before he could not purchase 300 acres at the public sale & 300 by private bargain for little more than £600 & in the district of Illawarra. Every one thinks he has been very fortunate & although the land is in a state of nature - the soil being good - we hope to make something of it, in a few years & are extremely glad we have fixed before Uncle's departure.

R & I were very busy on Thursday getting groceries, furniture &c &c & returned here that afternoon. On Friday Bob, who is very happy as you may suppose, started to see his property & make some arrangements about building a cottage &c. I expect him on Saturday & hope that next week we will all be able to remove there. We will be within 7 miles of the sea, so can get all our goods by water, which is no slight comfort & saving of expense. I hear we will not be alone - 10 miles from Mr Henry Osborne who is a friend of Uncle's & Dr Hill's & Mrs O is a very nice person I am told, & that we are very fortunate.

We were at Mr Millers while in Sydney to every thing but bed & really both are very kind people. I wish his sisters could see her - she is a most unaffected person as you ever saw & quite a Lady. Her eldest daughter is a nice little girl & well brought up & little Mary Miller a fine child but has been ill of influenza I begin to suspect that when Uncle returns he may find an addition to our small family - however as it is the first time I cannot be quite sure - however in case should like you to send me some pieces of muslin &c & pray do not say a word about it because I may be mistaken you know & if so would be very foolish In the mean time should it really be the case I shall apply to Mrs Miller for a few necessaries.

I cannot tell you the name of our place yet (it would be a nice landstrip at home would it not) Uncle says if the native name is pretty we should keep it & perhaps we may, but I wanted to call it Mount Stewart or something like that for Uncle's sake, & you shall hear by & by. Surely we shall hear from you soon. Jessie wrote her brother but has received no answer & I think it likely he may be far in the interior with Cattle & will not hear of her arrival for some time. She is well & seems happy. Charles must soon become active for he will have plenty to do. There is no idleness among in this country & I hope he will prove useful to Robert. My love to Aunty and all the dear children at home, & with love

I remain my dear Momma
your very affect. Daughter
Margaret Menzies

[Margaret did not return to her journal until 18 April, when she had arrived at Kiama and was somewhat more settled]

Kiama 18th April 1839

On the return of Uncle & Robert from Illawarra they proceeded to Sydney. I accompanied them to look at Furniture etc & remained 2 days & at that time Robert purchased 3 hundred acres from Government & 300 from Dr Thomson adjoining the government land in Illawarra.

We had one bed at Mrs Parsons & were not at all comfortable. Spent the day at least so far as dinner & tea was concerned with Mr & Mrs G Miller who were extremely kind & returned to Liverpool getting a terrible jostling on the road.

Robert again went to Illawarra to look at his purchase & make arrangements local before his return.

About the end (22d I think) of February dear Uncle Sandy sailed in the Hope for England We shall all most anxiously look for his return which we hope will be in less than a year. A few days afterwards Charles & R went to Sydney to get things in readiness for removing to Illawarra and on R's return Jessie followed to Sydney & sailed with Charles & all our goods & chattels on Saturday 29th February.

Robert & I left Liverpool on the 28th after experiencing Dr & Mrs Hills kindness for nearly two months & rode to Campbell Town a distance of 13 miles where we remained all night & next day started at 6 o'clock. Reached Appin 11 miles to breakfast - meeting Mr H Osborne on the road & left there at 10.

After a tiresome ride arrived at Wollongong 25 miles at 7 O'clock evening quite overcome - but notwithstanding my fatigue was much struck with the Oriental appearance of the Mountain separating Illawarra from the sandy wilderness we passed through. Saw some beautiful heaths, numerous birds, the Palm or Cabbage Tree, and a richness of soil & freshness of verdure which was a most pleasing contrast to that part of the country I had lived in the last 2 months.

Pass a very uncomfortable night at Wollongong. Suffocated with spirits & tobacco and eaten up by bugs.

On Sunday called at Dr John Osborne's. Rather a Gentleman like man but not so sterling as Henry & Mrs John the most unlady like Lady I had seen for a long time. The child very bad, in want [of] civilization sadly.

Proceeded in the afternoon to Marshall Mount 15 miles to Mr H. Osborne and met a very hearty welcome. Mrs Osborne a very gentle nice woman, hope to know her better & Mr O one who I think will be a valuable neighbour to dear Bob. They wished us to remain but I felt anxious to finish my journey & we left next morning calling at O'Mera's on the way whence I had my first meal in a log hut & enjoyed it very much.

Arrived at Kiama about 5 afternoon 3rd March heartily glad my journey was at an end, but surprised the "Alexander McLeay" had not reached this harbour before us. We remained in great anxiety respecting it untill the Monday following when she arrived & our cargo living & lifeless in safety but the former quite sick of the sea. That evening & next day the 12th March got all our goods on shore & took possession of our 3 rooms which we rent from Smith at £2 per week.

Robert had been to the Farm the 2d day after our arrival here & saw our huts commenced. He & Charles have been going every second day since but Connor the Carpenter being given to drink gets on very slowly and has us anxious about being settled there before winter sets in.

Robert is very much pleased with his Property which we have named Minamurra from the rivulet which bounds it in part & every one says he has been very fortunate. Were we only there which I trust we will be soon I have no doubt we should with the blessing of God get on very well.

Charles went to Sydney a fortnight since & hired a Farm servant who arrived here last Saturday and on Monday he & Charles went to Minamurra & commenced erecting a hut for themselves which they took possession of last night & intend being busy erecting out houses & putting in some garden sheds etc etc.

John Cusack is a strong & seems willing man, an Irishman. Hope he will turn out better than Garrick Lynch our first servant who was sent to Wollongong to bring back the horse that I rode, got drunk, was put in the watch house & did not return till a day after his time, so was dismissed. His had been for his bad conduct & most happy I was to get him off having disliked him from the beginning.

Robert went to Wollongong yesterday. I expect he will return tomorrow evening. Feel lonely when he is absent having little variety of work to amuse me.

Kiama is a very pretty place to be sold in town allotments & will be most convenient for our sending our crops to Sydney, the Harbour being such as to admit of small vessels. The coast is very romantic [with] numerous pretty Bays & diversified rocks. Indeed had we only ruinous castles & valiant knights there could not be a more romantic country. You may lose yourself amidst the vines & creepers of an interminable forest & in five minutes if you be like minded throw yourself from a precipice into the Pacific Ocean.

There is no society here & I sometimes feel that we have left a great deal behind us. There is some chance of our becoming savages but while dear Bob is happy I ought to be so too & certainly the great improvement of his health more than makes up for many comforts enjoyed in Scotland which we cannot expect here.

Intercourse with well bred people! One! Mrs H Osborne is the only Lady near me I expect to enjoy.

Went with Robert one day to Mr Hindmarsh's Alne Bank. Mrs H. a regular dowdy & a currency. Kind & well enough but quite a money making couple seemingly. Now although money is all very well & certainly the chief cause of our coming to N S Wales it ought not to be the sole aim of creatures born for nobler purposes & I trust neither R C J or I will ever so far debase ourselves as to make that the chief aim of our existence which should only be sought in so far as it may increase our own comforts & the means of doing good to our fellow creatures in need.

Had a walk this afternoon Took Morven and Tay with me.

When shall I be on the Banks of the sweet sounding Jeny again? I do not like to be so long alone it only makes me think of & long after home & its dear Minister & all to no purpose. I wish I had a letter from Mumma or some one else. How many changes may have taken place since last September.

Friday 19th April.

Robert returned on Saturday afternoon having slept at Marshall Mount the 2 nights he was away. Very glad to see him again & think of going to spend a day with Mrs Osborne this week when he is obliged to return to Wollongong; Charles James came down on Sunday & dined with us.

Natives brought me a fish on Saturday - a mullet, for which I gave a little tea and sugar. Some of the natives are useful for sending from place to place & deliver their message distinctly. One brought me a lb of lard from Mick Mara's wife at Jamberoo the other day - a good looking fellow. He had a brass medal round his neck which told he was William Roberts king of Jamberoo & a piece of scarlet cloth across his forehead. He told me he was going to Shoal haven & would call for the basin on his return but he has not gone yet. Some more blacks came up & this morning 2 or 3 women came with some cray fish & got sugar from Mrs Smith & Roberts gave her 2/ for 1/4lb tea & 2lb of sugar & understood perfectly the quantity he should get for his 2 white monies It is astonishing how fond they are of tea & sugar. They kindled a fire in the wood & after all partaking of their repast the women & children with 2 men set off again to Shoalhaven but his Majesty I saw still about the place. They are generally ugly and yet very picturesque when seated round their fires & the little children like imps are running about, & some of them have a gait that would serve a duchess.

Some weeks since 3 emigrant families arrived in the harbour to take a clearing lease on Mr Robbs farm: They are from the north of Scotland & only 2 of them can talk English - poor creatures they have been badly off since coming here, living in the Bush & before they got a hut erected suffering from the rain which commenced about that time as well as from hunger having brought no provisions expecting to receive them from their employer & finding they could exist no longer in that way have procured places elsewhere. One man goes to Mr Stevenson, the Mackenzies to Mr Osborne's & the Smith's as yet undecided whether to go to Mr Osborne, Capt Collins, or come to us.

We took one of their boys James who is just beginning to understand what he has to do & his Father takes him to Marshall Mount which I am sorry for, and am uncertain about taking his Brother who is a smarter boy but of inferior dispositions being pert & not given to tell the truth I fear; However if he comes I will try to drive that out of him.

Last night Mrs Dawson came down with her daughter who swallowed a pin while eating bread at tea - Robert tried to see it but could not, being candle light; & before they returned this morning he was gone to Minamurra.

Expected a dray today & yesterday to take some things to Charles which I suspect he is in want of but it has not come Hope Robert will hear something of it & wish he would come home to dinner

Tuesday 23rd April 1839

Robert returned after seeing Captain Collins and paying him for some flour Charles got. He has a number of new projects in his head & believe himself is to do wonders - if we judge from what he has already undertaken with no great success, he had better let him alone.

Charles has got 30lb of Beef from the Keevors which is not good. Am sorry he took it as ours is very good indeed - but if the Bullock driver comes on Monday he will help them eat it. Bullock driver came & was sent away again, Mr Osborne having requested Bob to leave them till his ploughing was over.

Thursday 25th April. Robert and I set off to Marshall Mount. Remained at Minamurra 2 hours while the rain lasted and reached Mr Osbornes by 6 o'clock. Was more pleased with the hut at the Farm than I expected and only wish it was finished. Charles and John Cusack living in primitive simplicity working hard.

Robert left Marshall Mount on Saturday taking a Timor Pony with him which he exchanged with Mr Osborne for old Charlie & very glad R was to get rid of the lazy beast.

On Sunday Dr Alick Osborne & family dined at Mr H O's and on Wednesday Mrs O & I went there to dinner. They seem a nice family much more agreeable than Dr John Osborne's at Wollongong. Mr H O went on Tuesday to the Kangaroo ground with Mr Brown.

When we arrived in the Colony the country was in a dreadful state for want of water and from that time - 2d January - till about the beginning of April we had scarcely a drop of rain excepting occasional thunder showers which did not at all benefit the ground. Complaints were loud from all quarters of the want of water for man & beast & even in this district which is truly a Paradise when compared to other parts was parched & the grass withered up. Everything rose tremendously in price & dreading there would be no wheat crop next year ships were to be sent to foreign parts for supplies. First flour is now 46/ per cwt & second do. 43/ an immense price & actually ruinous to those who like ourselves are newly arrived and have to lay out money for everything. We ought to be thankful for having the need fed and trust next year may be better

The rain came on about the 1st April & we had several days of continued & heavy rain which has done an immense deal of good. It is truly wonderful the change that has taken place. I could imagine I saw the grass growing & although we have had some very dry days since what before was a field of black earth is now covered with green grass & although short affords a good picking for the horses.

Winter commences next month & I trust we may have yet abundance of that most necessary article, rain which would quite change the present aspect of things & make us all look cheerful, & when Mrs O and I returned on Wednesday from Daisy Bank we found Robert had returned with a sprained ankle got from a fall off the new Poney. I was a good deal alarmed but after resting 2 days it was much better & on Saturday we returned to Kiama & I was very glad to be home again although I could not have experienced more kindness than I did from Mrs Henry Osborne who is a very nice woman & one I hope to know more of. She has 6 children oldest 9 years of age & is soon to have another.

Mr O had not returned from his journey when we left. Bob bought a chestnut mare from him which is still there and would be for some time.

Saturday 4th May 1839

Monday 6th May; The first dray load of things went to the Farm; house nearly finished.

On Friday 10th Mr Tait dined with us on his way to Shoalhaven & on Sunday Dr Alley, Mr Brown & Mr Annesley came about 11 o'clock, the two latter gentlemen to see the district. They lunched with us & returned same afternoon. Monday saw Mr Tait again. Robert went to Minamurra & in the afternoon was called to see a man at Shoalhaven who was said to be dying. He set wind with the messenger. Had some tea here in passing & did not reach Shoalhaven till 2 o'clock; found the man not so ill & came home next day very much knocked up - hope he will not be called away again 'tis a nuisance & he is not fit for the exertion.

Before R returned on Tuesday evening a whole cavalcade had arrived here from Wollongong consisting of Lady Franklin, the Governor's Lady of Van Diemens Land & companions Rev. Mr Meares Capt Plunkett & daughter etc. They returned again this morning to Wollongong

Another dray load away - the 5th expected to get up tomorrow but will be disappointed one half our goods being still here. Heartily wish we were there. It would save expense and of greater importance still be less exertion for dear Bob who is almost broken up going & returning so often [along] the same road.

May 15th

Left Kiama 18th. Robert came to Minamurra 2 days before & was much engaged with a Man at the Mills who had his hand dreadfully lacerated, so that when Jessie & I arrived here we found no one to welcome us & the hut in sad confusion.

Set about making tidy & by the time Bob came from his Patient had tea ready. Only 2 rooms finished then. One served as kitchen & Jessie's sleeping place and the other as our bed room sitting room etc etc.

Charles slept in a place off the store erected by himself & John Cusack. Very busy afternoon unpacking china etc & soon managed to make ourselves comfortable in the one room where we remained for 4 weeks.

Had 2 visits of Dr O'Brien of Dr Alley & 2 from Mr Tait during our stay there & could not have believed some time ago that we could have put up with so little accommodation & at the same time have things tidy about us. Found our sofa most convenient for sleeping on, it was made down every night & up in the morning and was really useful.

Mr Tait remained a night with a Mr Reid from Greenoaks & fortunately our fresh bed room was so far finished as to admit of his sleeping in it. Fancy that a Minister should sleep the first night in it.

We are now 24th June fairly settled & comfortable in a nice sitting room 22 feet long containing a side board, Piano, Book Case, Sofa, large table & 8 chairs & a snug bed room off it where we have many mercies & comforts to be thankful for. Getting a Porch made at the door. Weather excessively cold.

5 assigned man arrived on the 23d much to Bobs joy who will now get on with his operations James Ainsworth we have taken as Cook & house servant & William Jarvis as Groom. The 3 others work under John Cusack & all under Charles' superintendence & he under Roberts who has now his hands full of business. Ploughing commenced 4th July.

Dr Ally dined on Saturday with us & on Sunday afternoon Robert rode with him to Wollongong & was to proceed per Steamer on Monday afternoon. Had Marmaduke the Gardener making flower borders round the house on Friday, Sat and today; not finished yet. John sowed the acre ploughed on last week, today the 8th July with wheat. Hope it will grow tall.

Robert left Wollongong on Tuesday by Steamer arrived at Sydney Wednesday morning. Mrs Millar had a daughter that day doing well. R left Sydney on Thursday. Slept at Dr Hills that night & returned here on Sunday afternoon with dreadful cold having had to wade across Jordans creek.

Mr Tait brought a packet of letters from home on Friday but would not deliver them to me as there was a black seal on the parcel so that I did not get them till Sunday when dear Rob came home I found it contained a letter from his mother and mine, Amelia Neist, Susan Atkins & Mary. All well I thank God and happy excepting poor Mrs Nolan whose death was expected. Mr Levis left Perth. Miss Rell married.

Charles went to Wollongong Wednesday 17th. Wrote Marie at same time.

White cow died Tuesday, obliged to buy milk again. Much good we have delivered from Mr Osborne's cows Truly - we know what we know. During Robs absence had Gardener here putting flower borders in order and sowing vegetable seeds in small kitchen garden Behind the house vines planted round the walls & 4 fruit trees.

Dr Alley fixed on coming to Farm in our neighbourhood. Hope they may prove pleasant neighbours. Jessie put her wages in the Savings Bank. Tay had 5 pups. One died. Received a third letter from Mrs Hill on Saturday. Wrote Phillis Tompson & Mrs Miller by Robert. Robert brought back that for P Thompson not being able to find her brother.

Friday 26th July. Dr Alex Osborne, Mr Henry O & Mr Holden called here. They invited us to a dancing party on the following Monday. Got loan of a horse from Mr H Osborne & went. Very tired & passed a wearisome night dissatisfied of half the Party Left about 5 morning - went to Marshall Mount & slept for a few hours intending to return home in the afternoon but prevented by rain. Came home Wednesday morning & think I shall not leave for some time again. See no place like home.

On Sunday 11th August James Ainsworth & Allen were pleased to take to the Bush. Charles saw Allen in bed at 9 o'clock & James was in at Prayers at half past 8; next morning both were missing. They were caught at Appin on the following Thursday Robert goes tomorrow to see them tried at Wollongong

Been very busy. Had a bullock killed last week & another this week. Have now plenty of Beef in the store. Dr Alley & family came down last week. Have not yet seen Mrs Alley being unable to walk to far & Foraslea having strayed. Hear the Dr is to do wonders with his people. Suppose he will know more about it by and bye.

Thursday August 18th.

Robert went as intended, to appear against our runaways on Friday 19th. They were sentenced to twelve months work in an iron gang & to be returned here at the end of that time. R returned on Saturday afternoon.

Following Wednesday 28th Kendall came, the 6th assigned man received; seemingly a discontented rascal. Next day took Jarvis into the house. He is more active than James was & does things more tidily. Received a kind letter from Mrs Miller who wishes me to pay her a visit now but I shall be more at home at Minnamurra - not the less indebted to her however

Friday 30th commenced ploughing for the Barley crop, finished it on Wednesday 4th September

Saturday afternoon - Mr Mackay called a Settler 30 miles to the southward of Shoalhaven. A Scotchman, nay, a Highlander and Brother of the Revd. Dr Mackay of Dunoon, editor of the Gaelic Dictionary. We prevailed on him to remain all night. I played him some Scotch music with which he seemed much pleased. He is a nice elderly man with the decided highland accent & knew all the Perth Clergy.

By the by Dr & Mrs Alley called on Thursday. She is not the person I expected - very short and extremely embonpoint [Stout, fat] quiet, et je ne crois pas tres heureuse [and I do not think very happy]. She says they are very uncomfortable which I can well imagine car il a des ideas tres etranges -je ne l'aime pas de tout [because he has some very strange ideas - I do not like him at all].

Primrose or Dolly calved on Monday 2nd September & promises to give a good deal of milk. 4 years that day since poor Betsy died Tis strange we do not hear from home again. They are either lazy or unfortunate in their opportunities - hope to see Uncle in a few months

Minnamurra 4th September

Took a walk on Sunday with R & Charles and saw some beautiful creepers. One a scarlet or crimson flower very splendid & another little purple thing as graceful. Wish the folks at home could see them!

[?1839]

Received letters dated December from home by Mr McDonald on Monday 15th July. Wrote Maria Tuesday 16th July.

Expenses attending an assigned female servant
Bridget O'Shannessey came to Minamurra 28th October²⁶

	£	s	d
Paid for her passage down		12	6
Sent man & horse to meet her		-	
Breakfast for him & feed for horse		5	
Value of days work to him		2	
Gown for her		7	6
Cotton for 2 chemises		4	9
Stuff for petticoat etc		3	6
Pair of shoes		7	6
Man going to Wollongong to report her absence		8	
Paid Ann for weeks work		5	

Left the Downs Monday 17th September 1838

Passed the Cape Verd Islands Friday 12th October

Crossed the Equator on Thursday 28th October

Passed Tristian da Cunha on Saturday 17th November

Abreast of the Cape of Good Hope Saturday 24th November

Passed the Island of St Paul on Wednesday 12th December

Entered Bass' Straits on Friday 28th December

Abreast of Cape Howe on Sunday 30th December

Arrived at Sydney NSW on Tuesday 2nd January 1839

²⁶ Margaret Menzies gave birth to a daughter Elizabeth Joanna the following day, 29 September 1839. It appears Miss O'Shannessey was meant to assist Margaret following the birth.

[The final pages of the journal include notes on the history of the Roman Empire from its founding to its fall, dated *Earl Durham, 10th Nov. 1838* (refer above); the words of three Scottish songs: *Oh Nanny, wilt thou gang wi me, Cam ye by Athole*, and *Oh dinna ask me gin I lo'e ye*; extracts from Hodark and maw's *Introduction to the Study of Conchology*, accompanied by a list of 14 genera of Bivalves, 14 genera of the first division of Univalves, and 5 of the second division; some recipes for puddings; children's scribbles; and a note re mail, dated about December 1839]

In her Journal Margaret Menzies made no detailed mention of the birds of Illawarra. However later she made a list of them on two sheets of note paper. They are reproduced below as contained in the Cousins manuscript:

Birds of Illawarra

Birds of Prey

- 2 Eagles - Black or wedge tailed
White breasted or fishing
- 5 hawks - Spotted whistling
Large brown or swamp
White, Parrot, Sparrow
- 4 Owls - Masked, Bush, Cuckoo
Small spotted owl

Birds that Perch

- 4 Swallows - Blue billed or spotted swallow
Red breasted or house
Australian martin
Australian swift
- Large billed butcher bird
- Satin bird or bower bird
- Cat birds
- Australian crow
- Magpie
- Laughing Jackass or brown kingfisher
- Cinamon breasted kingfisher
- 2 Wrens - Blue wren or superb warbler
Red wren
- Bald headed friar bird
- Blood bird
- Diamond bird
- Silver eyed warbler
- Red bill
- 4 Thrushes - White or slate coloured
Ant or short billed crow
Ground
Blue
- 2 Robins - Yellow, Red breasted
Coachman, ground hen
- 3 Fly Catchers - White fronted
Black throated

Fantailed

Australian tree climbers

2 Larks - Ground

Sky

Razor grinder

Black and white pee-web

Dollar bird

Cuckoos - Bronze (and Cuckoo hawk, already mentioned)

Slander billed honey eater

Yellow breasted wattle bird

Blue and buff ant eater

3 Cockatoos - Crimson tailed

Black

White and yellow crested

11 Parrots - Red crested

Scarlet breasted or King

Crimson Laurie

Purple Laurie

Ground or Zebra

Blue Mountains

Blue rosella

Yellow rosella

Blue, buff & yellow grass

Crimson fronted paroquet

Green beak paroquet

Birds that Scratch

Lyre birds

Brush turkey

7 Pigeons - Emerald amaranth

Flock

White necked

Green dove

Brown or pheasant tailed

Wonga wonga, or Blue

Bronze wing or Forest

Birds that Wade

3 cranes - Blue

White

Nankeen or heron

Brown bittern

Red-necked avocet

Stone curlew

Australian sand lark

2 Plovers - Spurwinged

Golden

Birds that Swim

Australian Pelican

Sea gulls

Ducks - Black

Wood

Pink eyed

Australian Teal

Musk

The Menzies' At Minamurra

From the Journal and letters of Margaret Menzies and Alexander Stewart we can glean much of the family connections and personal concerns of the Menzies/Stewart clan of Perthshire, Scotland. However as Margaret's Journal basically ends at September 1839, it therefore reveals little of her and Robert's subsequent experiences at Jamberoo, of which we are most interested. The following account, based upon Arthur Cousins' 1952 unpublished manuscript, deals with this period and events leading up to it.

Robert Menzies was born on 25 April 1811 in Scotland, the son of Archibald Menzies (1757-1820) and Joanna Stewart (1786-1846). He graduated in medicine and joined the Royal Navy, apparently making at least one voyage to Jamaica. On 5 June 1838 he married Margaret Tindell, the daughter of William Tindell (1780-1835) and Elizabeth Stewart (1789-1859). Both Joanna and Elizabeth Stewart were the daughters of James Charles Stewart (1759-1829) and Margaret Menzies (1752-1838) and sisters to Dr Alexander Stewart (1793-1855). Together the couple travelled to Australia, and their story is narrated in Margaret's Journal.

The 300 acres at Jamberoo which Robert eventually brought from Dr Thomson had been originally purchased from the Government by a Mr J.L. Spenser in September 1837, sold to H. Fisher in November and to Dr Thomson in December of that year. Dr Menzies bought it on 21 February 1839, when he also acquired another 300 acres from the Government. It therefore appears certain that when he purchased the land none of the Government land had been cleared and only a very small part of what he had bought from Dr Thomson; also, if any building was then on the property it was nothing more than a cabbage tree hut.

The estate lay on the north side of the Minamurra river or rivulet. To the north and west of it was the large 2560 acres estate of Dr Foster, known as Curramore. On the south were the properties of Mr Cullen, Mr Hyam and Malcolm Campbell, the last to be soon bought by Mr J. Marks and Mr Waugh. Just below the junction of the Minamurra and Turpentine Creek the northern bank was practically a cliff and the stream ran through great boulders. Then came an easy gravel crossing where Minamurra Lane now is, and further on the rivulet passes what became the site of Minamurra House, going on easterly through the duckpond and Terragong Swamp to tidal waters and the ocean at Kiama.

The land around Jamberoo valley is hilly and when secured by Dr Menzies was covered partly by dense cedar brush and partly by forest. At the top of the cliff-like river bank were many beautiful rock lilies. The area bought from the Government contained a valley bound by a semicircle of cliffs, the valley being full of cedar brush, the clifftops similarly adorned by rock lilies. Over the cliffs ran two small streams which became picturesque waterfalls in rainy seasons. There exists a watercolour view from the 1840s of Menzies Falls, by friend and fellow Illawarra settler Captain Robert Marsh Westmacott which is perhaps one of these. Above the cliffs, on the east side was a hill covered with beautiful wattle, so useful at a time when all leather needed its bark in tanning and so lovely when in bloom. In 1881 a band of surveyors camped there making a trial survey for the Illawarra Railway, to find if the line would go Jamberoo way. There were plenty of wallabies on that hillside and dingoes too, while the curlews made the evenings eerie with their mournful cries.

The estate did not reach Albion Park so connection was made by a private road. In 1839 there was, on Michael Hyam's property, the Harp Inn as well as a tannery and a boot making establishment. The village of Jamberoo did not come until 1841 when Hyam cut up part of his property to form Jamberoo village. However on the north side of the Minamurra, on what is now the road to Albion Park, were the extensive Woodstock Mills for flour and timber. They were then using water power and the immense chimney stack was apparently being built, for in 1840 steam was used. In the early forties a

brewery was added. An 1848 lithograph by Captain Westmacott is the only extant view of these mills.

The erection on the Menzies' property of a temporary wooden house of four rooms with porch, many outbuildings, flower garden, vined orchard and vegetable garden is described in Margaret's Journal. The timber evidently came from the nearby Woodstock Mills and probably a track was cut through the bush for that purpose (refer dotted line on attached map). Of course the wooden cottage was only a temporary abode. It was not long before more accommodation was required, especially as Margaret had given birth to a girl, Elizabeth Joanna, on 29 September 1839. Mrs Menzies' sister Miss Tindell also arrived in 1843.²⁷ Dr Stewart returned to Australia at the end of 1839 and bought for £88, Lot 151 at Kiama's first land sale. This was next to a lot secured by Michael Hindmarsh on which was erected a building used in 1841 as Kiama's first post office under the charge of Mr Hindmarsh's brother George. However Dr Stewart continued to serve in the Navy and on private vessels as a surgeon, making repeated journeys to and from Australia. He eventually retired to Jamberoo where he died on 28 November 1855.

It is almost certain that Minamurra House was built in the early forties, probably before the arrival of Miss Tindell towards the end of 1843, making it one of the oldest houses in Illawarra.²⁸ Like so many colonial buildings in Illawarra, it was built of rubble plastered inside and outside. Not only private houses were so built, but also Kiama Courthouse, the Public Schools of Kiama, Jamberoo and Gerringong as well as all of the churches in those places except the Church of England, Jamberoo, it being built of brick. The schools, however, were not plastered outside.

The rooms of Minamurra House are large and lofty, the staircase a very wide one, the window frames, doors and fittings of cedar, while two mounted pieces are of marble brought from Italy. The nails were all forged in the blacksmiths shop, the timber cut at Woodstock Mills, the shingles split on the premises, the sand carted in bullock drays from Kiama, and probably the lime was burned on the premises, using shells carted in bullock drays from the mouth of the Minamurra or Shellharbour. The carriage drive, the beautiful garden, the vines and trees and the many outhouses, made Minamurra House a home of which anyone might be proud. Dr Menzies, while visiting Jamaica, admired the coral trees there, so he had some brought to Australia. These were planted to form an avenue on the carriage drive. Some were also planted to form posts for a fence and at the same time provided shade for the cattle in summer.

In October 1839 Dr Menzies bought from Mr McKenzie (apparently Dr McKenzie of Wollongong) 300 acres to the north of the 300 acres bought from Dr Thomson. This seems to have been part of the great 2560 acres Curramore Estate of Dr Foster. It reaches out towards the Whispering Gallery, a semicircular, wide open cave with sound carrying properties similar to those of the Whispering Gallery in the tower of St Pauls Cathedral. The 300 acres that Mrs Menzies in her Journal says her husband bought from the Government do not appear in his name in Government records, as in 1839 the property was bought by Mr Grace from the Government. Still, it seems to have been regarded as Dr Menzies' property for on 2 May 1840, in an advertisement appearing in *The Australian* of the sale of 100 acres to the east of it, Mr Stubbs the auctioneer states that the westerly boundary of the 100 acre lot was Dr Menzies' farm. This would make it seem that in some way Dr Menzies was interested in the land. In 1860, shortly after the death of Dr Menzies, it was sold to a Mr Low whose daughter married Mr James Wood. It is said that Mr Low gave this land to his daughter as a wedding present. In the seventies Mr Wood and his family occupied this land, one half of which was let to a tenant. Now the southern part is owned by Earl Brothers and the northern by Mr Dare. As some members of Dr Menzies family in Scotland were financially interested in the properties bought from Dr Thomson and Mr McKenzie there was a long delay in dividing it. Of the former, Mrs Stewart and her sons owned Minamurra house and the adjoining 70

²⁷ This was either Mary Tindell, born 3 March 1825, or Grace, born 16 February 1829.

²⁸ Cousins is possibly in error here, for Marshall Mount House (circa 1839) and Michael Hindmarsh's Alne Bank most likely predate Minamurra House by a couple of years.

acres in the early 1960s, and the rest of that 300 acres was divided into two farms, one of which was owned by Miss E.J. Kinross and the other by Mr E.J. Swan. The other 300 acres became mostly the property of the Dymock family and is now owned by several families.

At first Dr and Mrs Menzies had no congenial neighbours, apart from the Osbornes of Marshall Mount. However in 1840 the Marks and Waugh families settled at Terragong and Waughope, between Kiama and Jamberoo, and in 1843 came Mrs Dymock. Mrs Waugh's widowed sister with her family also settled in Jamberoo.

Both Dr and Mrs Menzies took a keen interest in church and school work. They regularly entertained the local Presbyterian minister the Reverend J. Tait, and arranged that their barn be used as a place of worship. Then in 1842 they helped to build and establish at Jamberoo the first school church in southern Illawarra. This was used on Sunday as a church and Sunday School and as a day school on week days. It was also made available to the Church of England and Wesleyans. Dr Menzies conducted services in turn with other elders when an ordained minister was not available. Both he and Mrs Menzies did their share of work in the Sunday School.

On 25 July 1840 Robert Menzies was proposed as a Magistrate by the then Wollongong Magistrate in a letter to the Colonial Secretary. On 9 January 1844 Dr Menzies, then 32 years old, and Mr Mackay Gray of Omega were appointed Justices of the Peace, the first in southern Illawarra, and later that year they presided over the first Magistrate's Court in Kiama, many years before the present Courthouse was built. In the fifties Dr Menzies, Mr Mackay Gray and Mr Michael Hindmarsh used to ride to Shoalhaven to preside over the Court there. Dr Menzies was also the first coroner in southern Illawarra.

Robert took a keen interest in agricultural affairs. In 1844 he served on the first Committee of the Illawarra Agricultural Society, whose headquarters were at Wollongong, and in the following year won the most important event in the ploughing matches held on Mr George Brown's property at Dapto in connection with Wollongong's first show. This was to plough half an acre in four hours with a team of six bullocks and a driver. Such a competition in those days was a social event. In spite of the weather, which was inclement, *...a great number of people were present, equestrians and pedestrians, from the humble equipage of a bullock to the four wheeled carriage.* When the Kiama Agricultural and Horticultural Society was formed in November 1848, Dr Menzies became the first Secretary and Treasurer, and during the fifties he was President for some years. In fact Robert took a leading part in all matters for the advancement of the district, however as Margaret Menzies' Journal points out, he was not physically a strong man and he died, after a long illness, on 20 January 1860, at the early age of 48. He was buried in the private cemetery on the estate, which already contained the remains of his two infant sons and one daughter, as well as those of Miss Tindell and Mrs Menzies' mother, who arrived at Minamurra in April 1859 and died there a couple of weeks later on 5 June.²⁹

Margaret Menzies was born in Scotland on 24 January 1817 and therefore 21 years old at the time of her marriage to Robert. As her Journal reveals, she was seriously minded even when young, and it has been recorded that she had strong and abiding religious convictions which she carried out in practice and which sustained her in death. Not only in church matters was this true, but in all her conduct. She was indeed a gracious lady and was loved by all who knew her.

Margaret Menzies died on 20 March 1861, at the age of 44, and was buried beside her husband, mother and children in that private cemetery above the cliff-like border of the Minamurra, with its beautiful rock lilies as a last remembrance of the works done by her and her husband.

²⁹ Unfortunately the January 1860 numbers of the *Kiama Examiner* are not extant, therefore Robert's obituary notice, which was certainly printed, is not available. However within the records of the Kiama Presbyterian Church there is a note recording a motion moved by Mr D.L Waugh testifying to the outstanding work done by Dr Menzies.

Four daughters survived Dr and Mrs Menzies. The eldest, Elizabeth Joanna, married the Reverend James Kinross, the Presbyterian Minister at Kiama from 1857 to 1875, and was loved and respected by all who knew her. In 1873 he was Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales. He became the Reverend Dr J. Kinross, and in 1875 was appointed Principal of St Andrews College, the second to hold that office, continuing there until 1907 when he retired. He died in 1908 and was buried in the Minamurra private cemetery on the cliff edge, as was Mrs Kinross when she passed away.³⁰

Another daughter, Mary Alexandria, married the Reverend J.W. Dymock who was first a farmer with his widowed mother in Jamberoo, then on a farm of his own. He joined the Presbyterian ministry and held charges at Sutton Forest and Broughton Creek (Berry), the latter for many years.

A third daughter, Grace Maria, married Mr D.L. Dymock, who became Kiama's leading auctioneer. He was an able man and one of the prime movers in establishing the South Coast and West Camden Co-operative Society. He also helped materially to establish co-operative butter factories. He went to England and Europe in 1883 to inquire into the latest methods of making butter and introduced the Laval Separator into Australia.

A fourth daughter, Phillis, married her cousin, Mr George Tindell, son of Charles James Tindell mentioned in the Journal.

Mention has already been made of the fact that Dr Alexander Stewart ("Uncle Sandy") bought a half acre lot at Kiama in 1840, but continued to serve as a medical officer in the Royal Navy. Later he bought his mother and sister to Australia and had a cottage built for them on Dr Menzies' property.³¹ Both died there and were buried in the Menzies' private cemetery. The cottage was later moved to the village of Jamberoo, where it was still standing in the early 1960s.

Charles James Tindell, Margaret Menzies' brother, married Miss Philadelphia Thomson on 4 September 1845. Apparently the two were shipmates on the **Earl Durham**. He secured a property near Woonona where he established a dairy farm and raised his family.

Some time after the death of Mrs Menzies in 1861, her sister Miss Tindell opened a school for young ladies, using Dr Stewart's cottage as a class room. This was in the 1860s. It was really a boarding school for young ladies, some of whom were attracted from such distant places as Wollongong, Goulburn and other centres. Apparently Miss Tindell's sister, who accompanied her mother to Australia in 1859, assisted in this work. Eventually both of them were buried in that cemetery by the cliff-top. Dr Stewart's sister Miss Gracie Stewart was buried there also.

What wonderful changes have taken place at Jamberoo since the deaths of Dr and Mrs Menzies. The very year the doctor died that great Woodstock flour and timber mill, then also a brewery, was closed down and now not a single sign of it remains. In spite of the lapse of over a century, the excellent Minamurra House stands as a monument to the memory of the good work done by Dr and Mrs Menzies, as does that beautiful cliff from which such an excellent view can be had right up the Minamurra Valley, over to the village of Jamberoo and all the lovely country west, south and east.

The Woodstock Mill which used to be the most outstanding feature of this scene has been gone for many years, but the view, with its gentle slopes, beautiful shade trees, happy villages, lush grass and well conditioned cattle is a charming one. And on the mountain side in summer time those blazes of flame - the Illawarra Flame trees - add unexpected beauty to the borders of Jamberoo, which name the writer [Arthur Cousins] was told by a Black 75 years ago, means *Stand up straight like a Soldier*.

³⁰ The John Kinross Papers in the National Library of Australia (MS 3346) were donated to that institution by a grand-daughter Miss Menzie Smith. They contain references to the menzies family and kinross's time at Kiama and Jamberoo.

³¹ According to Margaret Menzies' manuscript *List of the Family Births, Marriages & Deaths*, Alexander Stewart's mother Margaret died on 4 March 1838. However his sister Grace (born 2 January 1799) did come to Australia.

Appendix 1: List of Family Births, Marriages & Deaths

The following listing is taken from an original manuscript in a private collection. It is written almost entirely in the hand of Margaret Menzies, and was most likely compiled sometime during the 1850s.

James Charles Stewart	born 1759	Died 20th July 1829 Married 19 May 1785
Margaret Menzies	born July 1752	Died 4th March 1838
Joanna	born June 17 1786	Died 19th October 1846
Jannet	" Jany 25 1788	Died 28th Septr 1788
Elizabeth	" August 17 1789	Died 17th June 1859
William	" August 6 1791	
Alexander	" Feby 20 1793	Died 28th Novr 1855
Robert	" Jany 29 1795	Died 18th July 1795
Grace	" Jany 2 1799	

Archibald Menzies	born Sept 10 1757	Died 15 May 1820 Married 11 Sept 1805
Joanna Stewart	born June 17 1786	Died 19th October 1846
James	born June 20 1806	Died 3d April 1849
Margaret	" November 10 1807	Died 11th May 1808
Robert	" April 25 1811	Died 21st January 1860
Archibald	" April 18 1814	Died 22d November 1845

William Tindell	born May 3 1780	Died 6th December 1835 Married 13th Feby 1815
Elizabeth Stewart	born August 17 1789	Died 17th June 1859
Elizabeth	born October 21 1815	Died 3d Sept. 1816
Margaret	" Jany 24 1817	Died 20th March 1861
Jannet	" May 4 1818	Died 31st March 1820
Charles James	" Feby 11 1820	
Joanna	" May 15 1822	Died 26th April 1823
Archibald	" April 25 1823	
Mary	" March 3 1825	
Elizabeth	" Feby 19 1827	Died 2d Sept 1835
Grace	" Jany 16 1829	
William Henry	" March 21 1832	

James Alexander Menzies born 27th May 1835

Livinia Schnider Married June 1858

Catherine Eleanor born 25th April 1859

John Kinross born 10th September

Elizabeth Joanna Menzies 29th September 1839

Married 6th December 1859

Appendix 2

The Menzies' of Minamurra House

Chronology & List of Extant Documents & References

- 1790-95 Doctor Archibald Menzies (1754-1842) journal aboard the HMS Discovery, under Captain Vancouver. Dr Menzies was a Royal Naval surgeon and botanist [NLA MS155, ML FM4/16, 260pp]
- c1793 Holy Bible - the property of Margaret Menzies' mother Elizabeth Tindell (1789 - 1859).
- 1811 25 April: Robert Menzies born, son of Archibald Menzies and Joanna (nee Stewart).
- 1815 1 January: Pidocke Arthur Tompson baptised.
- 1817 Margaret Tindell born, daughter of William Tindell and Elizabeth (nee Stewart).
- 1822 28 April: Dr Alex Stewart (uncle of Margaret Menzies, and brother of Elizabeth, Joanna and Grace) writes a letter from H.M.S. Bann, Gibraltar, to his sister Elizabeth ('Beth) Tindell.
- 1823 8 October: Dr Alex Stewart writes a letter from H.M.S. Bann off the Cape Coast to his sister Elizabeth ('Beth) Tindell.
- 1825 7 July: Dr Alex Stewart writes a letter from H.M.S. Pyramus to his sister Elizabeth Tindell.
- 1829 16 December: Dr Alex Stewart writes a letter from Liverpool, New South Wales, mentioning a visit to Mr Macarthur's farm at Camden.
- 1830 17 November: Dr Alex Stewart letter from Hobart to his sister Joanna Menzies.
- 1837 Log of Robert Menzies aboard the ship **Hope**, 1837. National Library of Australia. The Hope, a 377 ton barque under Captain John Coombes, left London on 1 January and was at Sydney from 7 May - 12 July, before departing for Calcutta.
- 1838 Tuesday, 5 June: Robert Menzies and Margaret Tindell marry in Perth, Scotland.
- 1838 1 August 1838 - October 1839: Journal of Margaret Menzies. National Library of Australia, MS3261. Covers the period from leaving Perth, Scotland; a visit to London; the journey to Australia aboard the Earl Durham; and the first few months at Liverpool,

Kiama, and then Minamurra Farm.

1 August: Robert and Margaret Menzies leave Perth and catch the Dundee steamer to London.

7 September: Charles James Tindell and servant Jessie join the Menzies in London.

9 September: the group leave London for Gravesend.

11 September: board Earl Durham.

11 September: Charles and Margaret Tindell letter to their mother, Elizabeth Tindell, prior to departure from England.

14 September: Earl Durham leaves Gravesend.

12 October: pass Cape Verd Islands.

28 October: cross the Equator.

17 November: pass Tristian da Cunha.

24 November: abreast the Cape of Good Hope.

12 December: pass the island of St Paul.

25 December: enters notes on Conchology.

28 December: enter Bass Strait.

30 December: abreast of Cape Howe.

1839 2 January: Earl Durham arrives at Sydney. Col. Sec. report on arrival and passengers.

7 January: the Menzies and party leave Sydney for Liverpool to stay with Dr and Mrs Hill. Dr Hill is the Colonial Surgeon.

Sunday, 17 February: Margaret Menzies writes a letter to her mother from Liverpool.

21 February: Robert Menzies buys 600 acres at Jamberoo.

23 February: the Hope leaves Sydney with Dr Alex Stewart aboard.

28 February: the Menzies leave Liverpool for Kiama, via Appin and Wollongong.

3 March: arrive at Kiama and take up residence in local hotel.

1839 12 March: 'Alexander McLeay' arrives at Kiama with personal effects. Charles Tindell begins building Minamurra House.

- 18 April: Robert Menzies applies for servant (convict). Wollongong Police Office, Outward Letter Book, IHS Collection.
- 6 May: part of Minamurra House completed. First dray load sent to Minamurra farm.
- 15 May: Margaret Menzies encounters Lady Jane Franklin and party at Kiama.
- 18 May: the Menzies leave Kiama to take up residence at Minamurra farm.
- 4 September: last entry in Margaret Menzies diary
- 29 September: Elizabeth Joanna Menzies born - first child of Robert and Margaret. Baptised 1 November 1839.
- 1839-40 'A Map of Illawarra' (from Shoalhaven to Bulli), manuscript by Robert Menzies. National Library of Australia.
- 1840 21 February: the Hope returns to Sydney with Dr Alex Stewart aboard. It departs for New Zealand on 9 May.
- 20 July: Robert Menzies proposed as Magistrate at Illawarra. Wollongong Police Office, Outward Letter Book, IHS Collection.
- 1841 21 January: Robert Archibald Menzies born - first son of Robert and Margaret. Baptised 2 March 1841.
- 6 March: Letter from John Waugh of Jamberoo mentions the Menzies. Mitchell Library A827, p.40 (CY812).
- 8 March: The following Census returns are extant:
- 522 Robert Menzies, Minamurra.
- 523 Charles Tindell, Minamurra.
- 531 James Grilles, Jamberoo. Property owned by Dr. Menzies.
- 20 March: Robert Archibald Menzies dies at Minamurra Farm. Age 3 months.
- 31 October: Robert Menzies letter re Kiama Road Trust. Wollongong Police Office, Outward Letter Book, IHS Collection.
- 1842 18 March: Mary Alexander Campbell Menzies born - second daughter of Robert and Margaret. Baptised 16 May 1842.
- 1843 9 September: Grace Maria Menzies born - third daughter of Robert and Margaret. Baptised 1 December 1843.
- 1843 Margaret Menzies' sister, Miss Tindell, arrives at Jamberoo.

- c1843: Artist Abraham Lincoln, a settler at Jamberoo between 1840-44, sketches Minamurra House. Mitchell Library C305.
- 1844 9 January: Dr Menzies appointed a J.P.
- Robert Menzies on committee of Illawarra Agricultural Society. Minute Book - Mitchell Library A3217-1.
- 1845 8 March: Phillis Menzies born - fourth daughter of Robert and Margaret. Baptised 21 April 1845.
- Charles Tindell (brother of Margaret Menzies) marries Philadelphia Thompson (1818 - 1890).
- 1847 1 March: Will of John Bradney, Minamurra Farm.
- 1848 November: Robert Menzies first secretary of Kiama A. & H. Society.
- 1853 Death notice of P.A.Thompson.
- 1856 Commercial Bank of Scotland bill for £450 sent to Robert Menzies.
- 1859 April: Elizabeth Tindell, mother of Margaret Menzies, arrives at Minamurra House.
- June: Elizabeth Tindell (b.1789) dies at Minamurra House.
- Elizabeth Joanna Menzies marries Reverend John Kinross.
- 1860 20 January: Death certificate of Robert Menzies, 60 04114. Death notice *Illawarra Mercury*, 2 April 1860.
- 1861 20 March: Death certificate of Margaret Menzies, 61 03104.
- 9 October: Mary Alexander Campbell Menzies marries Reverend J.W.Dymock.
- 1862 Inventory of Minamurra House.
- 1864 6 November: Grace Maria Menzies marries D.L.Dymock.
- 1866 29 November: Documents by D.L. Dymock re sale of Minamurra House - purchased for £500 along with 20 acres.
- 1873 8 January: Phillis Menzies marries George Tindell.
- 1875 28 September: ES&A Bank receipts.
- 1892 16 November: Richard Miller letters to Mrs Tindell.
- 1897 Probate document of George Tindell.

- 1890s Will of Philadelphia Tindell (nee Tompson).
- 1908 Reverend John Kinross (1833-1908) Papers (1848-1908), NLA MS3346. Contain numerous references to the Menzies and other early residents of Jamberoo [Guide C548].
- 1920s `Charles Tindal, Ramourie', Francis McCaffrey Papers, Wollongong University Archives, D92/76.
- 1948 *The Garden of New South Wales*, by Arthur Cousins. History of Illawarra which mentions the Menzies and Minamurra House.
- c1952 The Menzies of Minamurra, manuscript by Arthur Cousins. Wollongong City Library, Reference Collection (M/MEN).
- 1954 D.L. Dymock, *Land Annual*, 13 October 1954.
- 1962 Arthur Cousins, *The Story of Dr. & Mrs Robert Menzies and their house Minamurra House, Jamberoo. 1839-1861*, Jamberoo, 1962.
- 1963 Abraham Lincolne's Sketches 1840s, *Illawarra Historical Society Bulletin*, November 1963. Includes reference to Minamurra House.
- 1968 Minamurra House, *Walkabout*, May 1968.
- 1969 Minamurra House, *Newsletter of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Sydney, April 1969.
- 1983 *Early Illawarra - people, houses, life*, by K. & T. Henderson, Canberra, pp.103-115.
- 1985 Minamurra House and the Stewarts, *Illawarra Historical Society Bulletin*, April 1985.

Appendix 3

Genealogies

The following are brief genealogies of the Stewart - Tindell - Menzies families. Robert Menzies and Margaret Tindell were second cousins. Dr Alexander Stewart was the uncle of both Robert Menzies and Margaret Tindell.

Tindell

William Tindell	=	Elizabeth Stewart
b 3 May 1780		b 17 August 1789
m 13 Feb 1815		
d 6 Oct 1835		d 17 June 1859

1. Charles James	2. Margaret	3. Miss Tindell
m. Philadelphia Thompson	m. Robert Menzies	

Archibald Menzies = Joanna Stewart

b 1754
m
d 1842

Robert Menzies

Robert Menzies = Margaret Tindell

b 25.4.1811
m 5.6.1838
d 20.1.1860

b 24.1.1817
d 20.3.1861

1.Elizabeth Joanna = Rev. John Kinross

b 29.9.1839
m 6.12.1859
d

b 10.9.1839
d 1908

2.Robert Archibald

b 21.1.1841
d 20.3.1841

3.Mary Alexandrina Campbell = Rev. J.W.Dymock

b 13.3.1842
m 9.10.1861
d

b
d

4.Grace Maria = D.L.Dymock

b 9.9.1843
m 6.11.1864
d

b
d

5. Phillis = George Tindell

b 3.3.1845
m 8.1.1873
d

b
d 1897

6. Archibald

b 4.10.1846
d 15.10.1846

7 Little Daughter

b 15.12.1847
d 4.2.1848

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