

The Ballad of the *Albion*

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Documents

The Ballad of the *Albion*

On 11 June 1819, the brig *Albion* discharged 180 passengers from Cardigan, in Wales, at Saint John, N.B.¹ Late in July, approximately 150 persons proceeded to Fredericton, where they took up tickets-of-location for forest land “between Madam Keswick and the Nashwaak”, founding almost certainly the first Welsh settlement in Canada, at Cardigan, on what is now the Royal Road from the Saint John valley to Stanley.² The emigrants appear to have been drawn exclusively from West Wales, primarily from the region known as Teifiside (essentially the watershed of the lower Teifi River), with one group of families from the parish of Trelech in Carmarthenshire. While the general features of post-Napoleonic distress were experienced with particular severity in the area, emigration was also prompted by Nonconformist discontent with religious and political restraints. West Wales was a stronghold of the anglicized, Anglican, Tory squirearchy. Since the 1790s, when the first wave of modern emigration from Wales occurred, the libertarian dream of “America” had penetrated deeply a Welsh-speaking society whose language had no status in law. Paradoxically, this gave to the Atlantic quest the quality of nationalistic assertion, and many Welshmen left their own country seeking to maintain their Welshness. Debt, land-hunger, unemployment, enclosures, and the famine of 1817-1818 undoubtedly turned the screw. Nevertheless, the *Albion* ballad demonstrates that these emigrants were not a desperate and dispossessed rabble, despite the very real extremities of their circumstances, but possessed a powerful and coherent sense of communal identity.

The only known copy of *Cân Sef Hanes Y Brig Albion, Gan Cabden Davies, 1819* (A Song/Ballad Concerning the Brig Albion By Captain Davies) is in the form of a typescript found at the home of Mr. Edgar Thomas, of Aberfan, Glamorganshire, about twenty years ago.³ This typescript is now deposited at the National Library of Wales. Neither the original printed copy nor the transcriber has been traced. The transcription, furthermore, is clearly corrupt and the ballad’s attribution to “Captain Davies” may be speculative on the part of the copyist. As the heading of the text-proper makes plain, the copy was made from a second impression of the poem (printed after 1866, when *The Cardigan and Tivy-side Advertiser* commenced publication). The date of both the first publication and the ballad’s composition are thus highly conjectural.

1 *Royal Gazette* (Fredericton), 22 June 1819.

2 *Ibid.*, 10 August 1819, 15 February 1820.

3 I am most grateful to Miss Muriel Bowen Evans, of Trelech, for presenting me with her copy of the transcript, directing me to Edgar Thomas, and responding so kindly to my ill-informed enquiries concerning the social history of the parish.

Five holograph verses, entitled *Hanes Mordaith yr Albion* (History of the Sea-Voyage of the Albion), signed "E. Evans" and contained in a farm account-book of Evan Evans, Llanarth — about 20 miles north of Cardigan — are also deposited at the National Library of Wales.⁴ This fragment concludes with the *Albion* yet to sail, and there are grounds for supposing that it may have been an attempt to recall a complete poem from memory, rather than an original composition. Dated 1841 (with the signature), these verses permit some speculation concerning the first printing of the *Albion* ballad. If it was indeed the original published edition Evan Evans read, or heard, and if the first footnote of the transcript was also included in that first printing, it must have appeared between 8 February 1840 — when David Davies, Esq., bought Castle Green⁵ — and the end of 1841.

The date of composition is bound up with the question of authorship. The ballad hovers between two functions: that of folk-remembrance and the vigorous promotion of the *Albion*, Captain Llewelyn Davies, his crew, and the whole idea of emigration to New Brunswick. In the later stanzas, as land is neared, fidelity to the record gives way to the hard-sell. "Upwards of *Two Thousand* persons" entered Saint John in the ten days prior to 16 June 1819, including 530 discharged soldiers of the Royal West India Rangers, from the transports *Buerdon*, *Abeona* and *Star*.⁶ Even within the context of the ballad the notion that the citizenry of Saint John, swamped and fearful as they were, would shower money and jobs upon a ship-load of sickly, largely unintelligible, strangely dressed Welsh is absurd. Furthermore, the destitute condition of the *Albion* party is confirmed by weekly accounts in the Fredericton *Royal Gazette* after their arrival in the capital and by the Minutes of The Cardigan Society (later The Fredericton Emigrant Society). Yet the Welsh did receive favourable treatment in the swift allocation of their land. According to the ballad, they were assisted by a "Leader" who was "a famous Welshman" (st. 63), being "a gentleman from Flintshire" (n. 32). It was the newly-arrived Surveyor-General, Anthony Lockwood, Esq., who took the Welsh under his wing, provided their tickets-of-location and actively promoted their interests in Fredericton. Why he acted so quickly to aid the *Albion* party, which arrived in New Brunswick less than two weeks before himself, is not yet clear.⁷

The highly favourable account of life in New Brunswick argues for a very early date of composition, quite possibly on the return voyage. Another

4 Accession 9383A, National Library of Wales [NLW].

5 "Conditions of Sale, Castle Green" [auction-bill], Glanpaith Mss. [estate-papers], Accession 273, NLW. The purchase is confirmed by the 1841 Census for Cardigan.

6 *Royal Gazette*, 16 June 1819.

7 The preferential treatment of the Welsh caused much resentment, especially in Saint John. See *Royal Gazette*, 3 and 24 August 1819, for an editorial exchange on the subject with the Saint John *Star*. (The pertinent issues of the *Star* have been lost).

Cardigan vessel, *The Fair Cambrian*, brought a further 81 emigrants to St. John on 11 August 1819, and the *Active*, owned by the same Davies family as the *Albion*, made the crossing every summer between 1819 and 1822 — carrying 69 passengers from Cardigan on the latter occasion,⁸ one of whom made the return-journey in the same year, after visiting Cardigan Settlement.⁹ There is no mention of the Settlement in the ballad; indeed, there is no hint of the move up-river to Fredericton. At any time after 1822, at the latest, friends and relatives on Teifside certainly had news of the Settlement and what emigrants to New Brunswick might expect. Most telling of all, perhaps, is the discrepancy between the final stanzas — to say nothing of the treatment of the master, ship and crew throughout — and the knowledge that the *Albion* sank on the Arklow Banks, off Wexford, on or about 11 November 1819, with all hands.¹⁰

My hypothesis is that the ballad was composed between 14 July 1819, when the *Albion* left Saint John, and her departure for the fatal voyage which ended four months later. The Davieses were a large, intricate maritime family, dominating the port of Cardigan in the early nineteenth century. The author of the ballad was most probably a member of the family in the *Albion's* crew, with a stake in promoting the vessel and emigration. Llewelyn's cousin William married his widow, was the right age, and himself became a master-mariner — suggesting a suitable possible combination for hagiography and hucksterism. A similar question resides in the authorship of *Hanes Mordaith Y Brig Albion O Aberteifi* [History of the Sea-Voyage of the Brig Albion of Cardigan], a prose narrative of Llewelyn's 1818 voyage to Perth Amboy, N.J., with emigrants from Caernarfon. Published in 1820 (Peter Evans, Caernarfon), this account may share its authorship with the ballad. Internal evidence very strongly suggests a Davies crew-member, perhaps the *Albion's* mate. This document could have been delivered to Caernarfon in the fall of 1819, when the *Albion* was either taking on cargo there or en route to Liverpool (her main trading port). The ballad, however, may have been suppressed when she went down. Its publication in 1841 was possibly connected with the promotion of the biggest emigrant ship ever to leave Cardigan, the *Triton*, which left for Quebec in 1842. Her owner was that same David Davies, Esq., of Castle Green, by then indisputably the richest and most powerful figure in the family.

On one point the ballad's nationalistic zeal may be treated with controlled scepticism but not dismissed. While claiming (st. 62, n. 31) that the *Albion* party

8 *Royal Gazette*, 17 August 1819, 3 June 1822; the *Active* also carried 60 passengers from Cork to Saint John in 1819 (*Royal Gazette*, 30 June 1819).

9 An account of the journey to Cardigan Settlement by Dafydd Phillips and "some members" of the Blaenywaun Baptist Church (near St. Dogmael's in Pembrokeshire) is contained in *Llyfr Eglwys Blaenywaun* [The Book of Blaenywaun Church], Accession 506B, NLW. Phillips intended to return to the Settlement in 1823, with his family, and become the Baptist minister. The plan was abandoned when two of his children died.

10 *Lloyd's List*, 30 November 1819.

was received with special favour by virtue of the rights of discovery invested in them by Prince Madoc ap Gruffydd, who reputedly colonized "America" at the end of the twelfth century and sired a race of Welsh-speaking Indians, the balladeer was certainly using the Madoc myth as a rallying-theme for those who stayed at home. But Madoc had very wide acceptance during the period,¹¹ and his story was printed twice in New Brunswick (under the heading "Welsh Indians") during the first weeks of the Welsh party's arrival.¹² Madoc certainly moved from Saint John to Fredericton with the *Albion* people — or was there already, needing only the Cymric flame to rise again.

All footnotes to the ballad text are contained in the typescript. Square brackets indicate editorial additions. The asterisk (st. 43) marks annotation evidently omitted by the transcriber. I have not hesitated to alter the eccentric positioning of footnote numerals in the transcript.

The translation from Welsh was prepared by Deian Hopkin of University College, Aberystwyth, who sought a literal rather than poetic rendering.

PETER THOMAS

11 "In the last years of the century, something of a Madoc fever broke in the USA and belief in Welsh Indians became universal". Gwyn A. Williams, *The Search for Beulah Land* (London, 1980), p. 37.

12 *New Brunswick Courier* (Saint John), 14 August 1819; *Royal Gazette*, 7 September 1819.

The history of the second voyage of the Brig *Albion* from Cardigan, together with its mariners, to North America, in the year 1819.

Commander: Captain Davies

A second impression of this song has been published and printed at the request of many people and by the express authority of the Author. O.N. Thomas, "Advertiser" Office, 39 Mary Street, Cardigan.

1. O listen, my gentle friends,
Amiable, tender, very dear,
I shall give an accurate, warm account
Of our voyage, morning and afternoon,
In the pleasant, remarkable Albion.
Captain Davies¹ was our leader;
We bid farewell to Cardigan,
Till we might come together in the white heaven.

1 Llewelyn Davies. He was the son of Captain John Davies, Trefdraeth [Newport], and cousin to D. Davies, Esq., Castle Green, Cardigan.

2. On the ninth day of April,
A large crowd gathered
Where a meeting had been called
At Castle Pool in the open air,
Where Eben Morris, able man,
Was giving profound counsel;²
Then Morgan Jones, Trelech, followed,
And spoke, in excellent manner, with deliberation.
3. There were large crowds of people,
As you know, all around,
Many wanted to hear,
Many were fearless.
After the worship was over,
They made their way to *Pwllcam* [the inner harbour],
Without ever expecting to see again
Brother, sister, father nor mother.
4. On Saturday we were all there,
Everyone together, in accord;
We waited on a wind that we might sail,
All of us, across the ocean.
At ten o'clock on the Sabbath,
Several made their way to town,
Where we were able to join in communion
With our brothers there.³
5. In the afternoon there was a service,
After arriving on board the lively Albion,
Prayers and preaching,
And singing praise to God;
And requesting from the Lord
His blessing on our journey,
Before we went out to the ocean
To begin our long passage.
6. On Monday, at nine in the morning,
We set out across the Bar,
And at ten o'clock the following morning,
We were moving on the blue ocean.
We failed to find a good wind,

2 He preached from the following text: "Many intentions lie in the heart of man; only one advice stands, the Lord's."

3 A considerable number in the ship were members of the Nonconformist and Baptist churches.

Cross winds, not at all fair,
And tried to pull against them,
But then we had to turn for Fishguard.

7. The following morning we set out again
To face the great depths;
We looked at the lands of Wales
Several times each hour;
And soon after we had set out,
The wind began to blow across us again,
Many of our dear family
Were sick throughout the day and night.
8. When we got up the following morning,
We saw land on both sides;
We could see the land of our birth,
And could also see Ireland at a distance.⁴
Then the wind rose again,
And every member of the family was unwell;
It was good to turn towards quiet Kinsale
In Ireland, presently.
9. On the Sabbath morning, when we arose,
We were standing off-shore,
And the inhabitants, the poor wretches,
Staring at us from all around;
We kept the Sabbath respectably,
Those are our Rules:⁵
Praying, singing and preaching
According to our custom.
10. We remained there six days,
Very quietly in that place,
Hundreds of friendly inhabitants
Watched us closely in the town;⁶
And every possible kindness
Was shown to us, though we were strangers;⁷

4 We could see St. David's Head, in Wales, to the south; and the high ground near Wexford, in Ireland, to the north.

5 We arranged eighteen Rules for conduct on our journey on board ship, and penalties attached to the breaking of them.

6 When some of the womenfolk went to town, the appearance of their clothes, especially their headgear, caused some children and idle persons to follow them along the road as though they had been Indians.

7 When we visited their homes,* they gave us a good welcome; but we were very surprised to find

We could not expect more
Had we been at home with you.

11. Then on Saturday, at the end of that week,
A fair wind rose behind us;
The sick among us were happier
And they began to recover;
So we ventured fearlessly
To cross the vast ocean,
We expected that within days
We would arrive at the end of our voyage, in good health.
12. We came out at ten in the morning;
We had gone a long way by afternoon;
We passed Cape Clear
Quite early that evening;
Farewell, Britain, farewell Ireland —
Our blessings on all of you, from the heart,
King George on his throne!
13. The following morning it was Sabbath;
The weather was very fine;
We had a service in the morning.
Captain Davies, a keen man,
Is very industrious in his work,
Our welfare is always his pleasure,
Here and for eternity.
14. We worked hard as physicians
To try to heal the sick among us;⁸
I don't think you'll ever find
A better Captain than this one;
As a good physician our bodies' welfare mattered,
And there was always good advice available;
That welfare, when achieved,
Enables us to face God in the Eternal world.
15. I can't think of anything unusual,
Which took place on those days.

they had nothing to eat but potatoes, and this was offered at every mealtime.

[* There is some ambiguity in the text at this point. Literally translated the phrase runs "When we went to their homes in the country". This might simply be a redundancy or suggest an important distinction between urban and rural life.]

- 8 We didn't have a single medicine on board to alleviate sea-sickness and that kind of illness, except to fight against it, eating food, working the body. Time is the best medicine for getting rid of this sickness.

Bad weather, very changeable,
High-sounding winds,⁹
The wind was most often against us,
Great rainstorms day and night,
Many families
Now stayed in bed all the time.

16. But on the Saturday at the end of the week
When we left Ireland,
A storm arose in the afternoon
Which caused great fear and fright;
The noise of the huge winds blowing,
And the sea boiling terribly,
Such that the sailors themselves
Had never seen anything like it.
17. Seeing the waves like mountains
And like great tatters crashing down,
Great waves washing over us,
And beneath us a great depth,
We had to tie our sails to the mast,
Lest they should be torn by the wind;
We had to leave the wheel alone as well,
Allowing it to run freely.¹⁰
18. We were borne along by the winds
For the best part of three long days;
That is the reason why we
Still hadn't reached the end of our journey;
But no one put any cost on time,
In our great tribulations, that's for certain;
We would be perfectly satisfied to be alive
Even if we were a year on the sea.
19. There was a great deal of shaking,
And promises, should things get better,
If God spared our lives,

9 The bad weather made the sea rise in great commotion, which caused the ship to become agitated, shuddering to such an extent that one woman cried out, "Hold the ship, people! O hold it so it doesn't shake so much!"

10 This is the last resort for mariners; that is, in their idiom, "lying on her own," the ship borne along by the motion of the sea, wherever it wishes to take it. The circumstances in which we found ourselves were a fine example of that state of affairs described in Psalms Cvii: "They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man and are at their wit's end."

- And brought us safely to the distant shore;¹¹
Others said we presumed too much
When we came forth to the sea.
We lived perfectly adequately at home,
And we had plenty of everything there.
20. We were poor in our circumstances,
Some days we went without a fire,
And though hunger is unpleasant,
The truth must also be put down in the song;
After we were shut up below decks,
Without any access to husband,¹²
Everyone was quiet, without agitation,
Keeping silent without noise.
21. You would be worrying
Far more than we were,
If a great storm was blowing
Across the sea at you;
If you possessed wings,
And hastened to us,
You would have heard sweet songs
In the dark, black night.
22. The brave Albion withstood it all
Despite the frequent assault on her;
Sometimes down in the trough
With the waves covering her completely,
Yet she lifted her head despite it all,
Escaping upwards,
Because a strong, able hand
Worked rigorously with her.
23. The gentle, capable sailors told us
Very reassuringly, in truth,
There are no dangers in a storm,

11 By this time the ship was full of repentance, from one end to the other — some men claiming that their wives had forced them on the journey, some women claiming the men had nagged them to go, otherwise they wouldn't be in all this danger. Some said dolefully, "I would rather build a hedge [stone wall?] for a penny a day for the rest of my life, if we can find some land soon, than be here." Others said, "It's hardly surprising people don't come back from America; I won't ever be coming back once I've got my feet on dry land!"

12 One said, rather homesick, "O would I were beside Ffynonbach, Garregwen [Little spring, of the white rock — a farm name], in the parish of Trelech, how invigorating it would be, to have its waters to drink!"

When we are far from land;
 Many on board acknowledged¹³
 The Able Hand above,
 He who walks on the waters,
 Who created heaven and earth.

24. There was an opportunity here for faith to work,
 To trust in God's redemption,
 To expect things from Him only,
 And to thank Him for keeping us alive;
 I would hope that He would bless
 These occasions on behalf of some,
 To teach them always to expect from Him,
 And to acknowledge Him for our sins.
25. But when the storm passed,
 Some were ill and some well,
 But everyone was fairly comfortable,
 Little by little finding things to get better:
 Then for several days
 We saw ships all around us,
 Some travelling in our direction,
 Others returning from the far off Indies.
26. We saw one ship coming home
 From the West Indies, far away,
 Sailing towards Bristol,
 And hoping for a better wind;
 It came close enough,
 For us to speak from the deck,
 But the wind was blowing,
 So it quickly passed us by.
27. We would have liked them to tell us,
 Why they were going home,
 We were all so happy going
 To our appointed place;
 Then we saw a school of large fish¹⁴

13 I believe there were many among them who were silent because of the gaze of Him "whose ways are on the seas and his paths the great waters." To Him the stormy winds in their tribulation, and the wild seas, are conquerable. To His will they now bowed themselves, whatever His stewardship over their fate augured.

14 The fish [dolphins?], in shoals, looked very strange racing through the sea in a great crowd after their food. The Creator is so wise and competent to be able to provide for all these, as he does for man. O how great is His Providence, looking after the fish of the sea and they looking to Him for

- Swimming in the dark waters,
As large as the largest horses
Ever seen at home.
28. God clearly showed
He could have drowned us all;
He expects praise
For keeping us alive so long;
He showed us quite clearly
That his words are true,
“The wages of sin are death,”
On sea as well as on land.
29. Death came to our territory
On the third day of May;
One was taken from us,
Our number today is less;
Two years old was her age
When she left this earth;
It is strange to see old sinners
Being tolerated for so long.
30. It was the little daughter of Iona Morgan,¹⁵
From the parish of Llangoedmore;
In the afternoon she was buried,
In an appropriate way, under the waves;
Captain Davies, grieving,
Performed this service;
He read the chosen text
As she was buried in the waters.
31. A noisy Sabbath followed,
Very much like its predecessor,
The wind blew terrifyingly,¹⁶
And the sea and the waves were ugly;
The great sprays were drenching,
So that it was impossible to be on deck,
Though we dearly wished
We could be there to hold a service.

sustenance. “As you give, so they gather.” Why do we doubt His capacity to provide: here is evidence of His care for the fish of the sea — soulless creatures.

15 This child was ill with whooping cough when she came on board, and by the end of the voyage most of the children had caught it.

16 A high cross-wind continued; and the sea washed over the decks and into our quarters; but we [had] largely recovered from sea-sickness and [were] eating substantial meals.

32. But this short storm
Was over by early afternoon,
Without making very much difference
To our fundamental experience;
We now looked all around us,
Saw nine or ten ships,
Sometimes less, sometimes more,
When the weather had become fair.
33. In our midst there were several people sick
For days and days;
Some men were brave and strong.
Let me pay tribute to William Jenkin,
He is the most ill among us;
Indeed, there is very little hope
That he will ever recover.
34. Here is sad, doleful news,
To tell the district of Trelech parish;
He lost his senses
For five or six days
Despite every kind of medicine;¹⁷
He was closely confined to bed;
He had every comfort
From his friends, day and night.
35. On the fifteenth day, at eight o'clock,
His hours came to an end;
No more shall he be seen
Anywhere here beneath heaven;
In the evening he was buried
Deeply in the great depths,
There to lie hidden
Until the great Resurrection.
36. We were there at his funeral,
Everyone sad in his countenance,
Dolefully singing and praying,
As we laid his body in the watery grave.
He had thought when he came from home

17 His neighbours say he had a great desire to go to America; but once, when he was coming home from Cardigan, he caught a cold, and this began his ill-health; here he had a fever for about twelve days before he succumbed. The preacher says, aptly, "There are many aspirations in the hearts of men, but the Word of the Lord will prevail."

That he would arrive at the end of the journey fit and well,
But instead of his wish
He went to the great Eternity.

37. Though Nany is deprived
Of her relation now,
Because her dear husband is buried
In the deep, great ocean,
Nany is better off than many,
Who might have been in her position.
If she doesn't want to stay,
She can return among you.
38. Today we saw a school of fish,
Very many more than before,
And the look of them was so frightening,
That it's worth recording it in this song.
The following day we had a lovely Sabbath,
Very welcome fine weather;
We worshipped God without interference,
Both morning and afternoon.
39. This fine spell lasted,
Throughout that week,¹⁸
Fine weather, a good wind,
Everyone happy and cheerful;
We agreed to hold a thanksgiving service,¹⁹
On Wednesday afternoon,
To acknowledge God and thank Him
For His sweet goodness.
40. O! It was so delightful here!
And the ship making excellent progress across the lake,
The children playing joyously,
Just as they did on the hills of home.
We didn't see any of these sick,
The ones under ten to about three years old.
Everyone was healthy, and everyone as cheerful
As they ever were.

18 Everyone was generally getting better, reducing food-stocks eagerly, for as long as the fine weather lasted.

19 Most of the time we had bad, contrary weather, but now it has changed; and there is great obligation on us to give praise and thanks to the Lord; and we wish to devote our time to His service and be thankful to Him.

41. Oh, how idle is the talk,
 Among you across the land,
 Saying, "We will go to America,
 So long as we can have land under our feet."²⁰
 It's just as well we have a sea to swim,
 And a ship to bear us across;
 We would come home ten times,
 If there was cause, never fear.
42. On Saturday morning, comfortably,
 We continued sailing in a grand manner;
 Nearby we began to see the banks
 That lie south of Newfoundland;
 There was fog and low cloud
 Fully to the west of us,
 And great thunder roaring
 Terrifyingly throughout the afternoon.
43. On the Sabbath morning when we arose,
 We saw a great island of ice;*
 Many wonders there have been
 On our journey to America;
 So wondrous is it to see such great castles
 Of ice coming from the far north,
 Larger by far than the greatest palaces
 Which you have in your country.
44. I heard one making this comparison:
 This is the nearest thing I have seen
 To the parish church of Cilirhedyd,
 Back at home.
 A great deal more was revealed
 To our gaze, truly,
 Yet we had no idea how much was below,
 Concealed under the water.
45. But when it was ten in the morning,
 We began the work
 Of worshipping together,
 The only Lord, He who made us.
 We are always together,

20 I can't help thinking many people would have emigrated westwards, if it wasn't for the terrors of the voyage; and, indeed, it is pretty terrifying for we country folk until we become accustomed to the sea. We recognize great value in such a durable and comfortable vessel, a wise and capable leader, and mariners who are so careful, gentle, and competent with us.

Keeping to our prayer meetings,
Praying for His mercy,
And for our own safety at night.²¹

46. It was so strange that it should be so cold,
And on the banks where we were,
Even in summer it's far colder
Than at Christmas with you.²²
Ice and snow is most frequent
In these parts now,
And the ice coming just like mountains,
Coming down from Greenland.

47. We are nearer by several degrees
To the sunshine than you are,
Why then, is it so cold?
This is beyond our understanding:
Great crowds of birds,
Of many colours, large and small,
And the sea is full of fish
In these parts.

48. We were for several days
On these cold banks,
Without seeing anything around us
Except unhealthy, white fog.
We saw some ships fishing
At anchor nearby,²³
We passed through them quickly
On our way to the pleasant lands beyond.

49. We could hear the horns blowing,²⁴
Bells ringing day and night,
Signals for us to keep away,
Not to come too near.
It was dangerous here,
In between the ice and the ships,

21 So great is Providence in protecting us, lest we strike against those things and be shipwrecked. O for strength to praise the Lord and not forget all his goodness!

22 It's generally as cold as this until the end of July and the beginning of August.

23 Though the fog was thick, we were able to see the ships resting at anchor on the banks, some English, some French, and many from the United States of America. The mariners had to keep, as they put it, "a good look out".

24 By sounding on the horns, it was possible to establish the location of ships at anchor, so as not to come upon them.

It was necessary to keep watch
Carefully day and night.

50. It remained cold enough,
For the most part that week;
On Sabbath morning it began
To be less vigorous weather, healthy, happy;
We held a service together,
That morning; we had a happy countenance;
In the afternoon we buried a little child
Beneath in her watery grave.
51. Listen, gentle friends from Clydau,
I have news now for you;
The child of William Richard died
That day at mid-day.²⁵
The sweet mother grieved,
To see her buried under the waves;
Yet there is nothing to do;
We must be content with this order of things.
52. Betty Henton, poor thing,
Was pretty weak here, to be sure;²⁶
She cried, and complained,
“O my little people! We will not see land.”
She continued to shout thus,
Lying confined to bed.
She then miscarried,
As many others have in their time.
53. The goodness of God is gentle medicine,
That has kept her alive again.
O that she may not henceforth cease
To live in praise of her Lord God.
We hope to see her again,
After the season that remains,
Learning to walk the pains of life
And leaving aside all foolish emptiness.

25 This little girl had been sick for a long time with whooping-cough and lung trouble. She had some medicine which cleared up the lung trouble, but death overtook her.

26 This lady kept to her bed for virtually the whole voyage, because of sea-sickness; yet when we arrived at St. John she was as lively as though she had been well all the time. It is quite plain that the greatest tribulation, and the greatest deliverance, is too small to change man, unless he's been blessed by the Lord, in which case he becomes strengthened.

54. I want you to know that
When it is mid-day here
With you it is at least
Three o'clock;
As much as the sun has arisen
Earlier in the morning than it has with you,
It also sets
A great deal earlier.
55. We had several days
Which were cold, foggy and very wet;²⁷
Sometimes the sun shone,
With very clear skies in the afternoon.
The first Friday, in the morning,
We rose at dawn,
And we did see, to our surprise,
The great and strange Leviathan.
56. Now it rode along the waves,
We observed it from afar;
We couldn't understand what it was
Until we got much nearer;
It had been killed and it was dead,
Yet it floated on the waves.²⁸
It's far too much to contemplate everything
We find on these frontiers.
57. Now we had a good wind
For two or three days,
Cutting through the sea and lifting onto it.
Enthusiastically the Albion sailed,
Quickly it moved through the dark waters,
Magnificently on the waves,
Swiftly bearing us away from danger,
And landing us at the town of St. John.
58. We were six long weeks
On these waters without seeing land,²⁹
But this Sunday morning,

27 Although we had gone north to the Banks of Newfoundland, there were yet more Banks between us and Nova Scotia and on these a thick fog is often found.

28 Many sea-birds could be seen on the great corpse, and on the surface of the water; eating, we presume, the carcass.

29 By now many families were going very short of food, although the law had required that they should prepare themselves for twelve weeks. Some of these brought shortage on themselves,

We could see Nova Scotia clearly;
 We went past Halifax and Shelburne,
 Pleasant land, very fair;
 We came past the cold weather;
 Here it was lovely summer.

59. The gentle, sweet inhabitants
 Came to us in a hurry,
 And bearing great barrels of fish,
 Which they sold to us cheaply;³⁰
 They took some of us away
 On their own behalf;
 They gave us every encouragement
 To join them, all of us.
60. We proceeded quickly
 South of this land;
 We entered the Bay of Fundy,
 Hurrying towards St. John.
 On Thursday we got up in the morning;
 There was great tidying up,
 Everyone dressed in their best
 To disembark on dry land.
61. About two in the afternoon,
 The pilot came on board,
 And we then entered the haven quickly.
 There we held a service,
 To acknowledge God and give thanks
 For delivering us through the entire voyage;
 For bearing us to this pleasant land,
 To elevate Him will be the task.
62. On the following morning we went out,
 All of us to the town.³¹
 Who could imagine how kind

through waste and carelessness on board ship; sufficient testimony to this was that at first two Cabouzes were kept fully fired; now there wasn't enough to boil up one of them.

30 The barrels of fish were very acceptable and timely. We could have about twelve Cod for a shilling; one man ate so much he was ill in bed for a whole day.

31 After the Doctor had been on board to check our health, in case there were strange diseases among us, we brought the ship to the quay, where the people had gathered in crowds of high and low rank. This, they said, was the first group from Wales to come to our province; we should give them a welcome, because the Welsh were the first inhabitants of the old country to come to America. They praised our cheerful and clean countenances, and said we excelled by far the Irish.

Were the sweet inhabitants of the place;
Gentlefolk came among us,
Bearing many gifts,
Some were given here at least
Fifteen shillings and more.

63. The Leader is a famous Welshman,³²
He sympathises with us like a father;
He found a place for the young people
In the town and the country around;
And he settled every head of family
In his own superb land,
So that they might become well-known gentlemen
Themselves presently.
64. We were able in the land of Columbia,
To have our first Sabbath in praise of God
In the excellent and superb church
Of the lively Scots Presbyterians.³³
Doctor Burns, a famous pastor,
Is the minister here now,
He loves the Welsh nation
And wants to elevate them greatly.
65. I can tell you about New Brunswick,
Which is so full of trees, right across it;
I don't think there is anywhere in the whole world
A better district to be found.
You may have told us there were poor people here,
I can contradict this utterly;³⁴
If they were here, we would have seen them,
As we travelled day and night.
66. There are no rents or taxes here,
Everyone owns his own property.³⁵
O that all the poor people of Wales

32 A gentleman in the service of the government, from Flintshire, in Wales.

33 This gentle minister, by request of the Captain, let us have his kirk for a service at six in the afternoon, where we had a Welsh service, the first ever, I suspect, in this province. Many of the local inhabitants were present, and they were greatly pleased by the lively and musical singing.

34 If they work and are industrious, there is no reason to be thus.

35 Consider this about the people in the country: that they owe no rents if they wish to obtain their own land from the government. But town people who wish to live in other persons' houses pay a high rent and taxes for roads and paths. In the countryside there is very little of this — next to nothing to pay.

Could be here, all of them!
Which do you think is best,
To stay at home poor in Wales,
Or to come here to Columbia land
And say farewell to everyone?

67. O that the girls of Wales
Would hurry to us!
Here they would get, in service,
More than twenty shillings a month.³⁶
Let the sweet and gentle young men
Come to this delightful land;
Here, within a month,
They could earn forty shillings in the town of St. John.
68. You often used to say,
And claim very sincerely,
That no one would be tolerated
To write the truth home;
We can send whatever we like,
No one supervises us,
So don't you any longer believe
Such empty, foolish things.
69. It's time to end and put this by,
So as not to tire you out,
I hope we can meet again,
And meet in health at the end of the journey.
Eternity will be our home,
Each one of us presently.
O! for the grace to be ready.
For the judgement to come.
70. I will give this advice to sailors
Before venturing on the water:
Whatever standing you have,
Seek Jesus as mediator,
And then if your ship goes to the bottom,
You only have to know Christ;

36 Within two days most of the boys and girls had been employed; the girls of twenty and above got one pound a month wages; those under twenty, fifteen shillings. If they could turn their hands to anything, could speak English, they could obtain more than a pound a month. But we didn't have any with experience of working in towns. They were very anxious to get young girls of eight and ten, to raise as one of the family, and educate them to eighteen years of age.

He will bring your bodies from the depths,
From the ocean to the shore.

71. He is the great experienced Pilot,
He will bring you easily to the harbour,
On land, on sea and on the rivers.
You are daily in His gaze;
And as you sail the rough oceans
He is the greatest bounty of all,
Great is the victory, Great the success,
Which belongs to Christ and his grace.
72. To the Albion again doubtless you will come,
With all the "stores",
Helm and compass, mast and anchor,
Everything to make us happy,
Faith and hope, perfect love,
Widely you will seek in your lifetime;
And then you will be aided
By the Man who was on the Cross.