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JONATHON BENNETT

Logbook of the ship *Margaret*, 1850-52

Reel M714

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Filmed: 1968

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Logbook of the ship *Margaret*, kept by the Mate, Jonathon Bennett, on a voyage from Liverpool to San Francisco, Sydney and Bombay, 24 May 1850 – 9 March 1852.

The *Margaret*, a 644 ton trading vessel commanded by John Ord, sailed from Liverpool on 2 July 1850. It stopped briefly at Juan Fernandez (21 Oct. 1850) before reaching San Francisco on 22 December 1850. It left San Francisco on 31 March 1851 and sailed across the Pacific, stopping briefly at Clarion Island (13 April 1851), Papeete (9-14 May 1851) and Lady Elliot Island (14 June 1851), before reaching Sydney on 18 June 1851. It left Sydney on 21 August 1851 and sailed northwards to Endeavour Strait, passing Raine Island and Booby Island, and then westwards to India. It reached Bombay on 14 November 1851 where it took on board a cargo of cotton. It left Bombay on 14 January 1852 and by 9 March (the final entry) was a short distance from Singapore on course to China.

The logbook was presumably written up each day from a deck log. Bennett usually signed the daily entries. While at sea, there were two hourly entries recording speed, course and winds, while the position of the ship was recorded each day. The entries in the 'Remarks' column are mostly of a routine nature: the weather, winds, the seas, sail changes, occupations of the crew. The daily entries while in port are very brief, referring to the loading or unloading of cargo, ballast and casks of water, and work preparing the ship for sea.

Among the less routine entries was the battering that the ship received during a hurricane off the west coast of America (16 Dec. 1850), subsequent charges of disobedience against crew members, the captain's fears of a possible mutiny, desertions of crew members at San Francisco, a boat accident off Clarion Island resulting in the death of one sailor (13 April 1851), further desertions at Sydney, a fight between sailors (24 Sept. 1851), and the employment of lascars at Bombay.