

On overhauling my ship, the fore-topmast was found to be slightly sprung.

It was with great pleasure I learned the safety of the *Peacock*; for that vessel had occupied my thoughts more than the others, on account of the condition in which she left Sydney. All on board of her were well, and the vessel was undergoing repairs in Mossman's Cove, one of the many which this harbour forms. These coves may be termed wet-docks, affording as they do every facility for the repair of vessels of any size. They are more like artificial than natural basins, and are secure against any wind. There is no port in the world that offers so many natural advantages as Port Jackson, for a great naval power. We had many things to relate to each other; among others, the particulars of the accident that befell the *Peacock*, that has already been noticed. The return of that vessel to this port now claims our attention.

On the 28th of January, their sick-list had increased to thirteen, more in consequence of the fatigue the men had undergone, than from any disease.

On the 29th, they experienced strong gales from the northwest, which continued to increase until midnight, after which the weather moderated. The ship during this gale was in latitude $61^{\circ} 20' S.$, and longitude $154^{\circ} 09' E.$ This gale is remarkable, in consequence of its blowing in a contrary direction to that which the *Vincennes* experienced on the same day; while the former had it from the northwest, the latter had it from southeast. Their distance apart was four hundred and fifty miles, in a northeast direction.

On the 1st of February the weather was stormy until towards evening, when it moderated and cleared off, with the wind to the northwest, and gave them a view of the aurora australis lighting up the southern portion of the horizon. Rays were thrown out in different directions, some reaching an altitude of 30° , others of 40° , whilst others again almost spanned the heavens.

On the 2d, they had another display of the aurora, but contrary to that of the previous day, it was first seen at an altitude of 70° , diverging towards the horizon, from east-southeast to the southwest-by-west, before it disappeared. The point from which the rays diverged reached the zenith.

On the 4th they made Macquarie Island, and shortly after passing it, experienced another gale from northwest to southwest, which caused them much anxiety for their rudder, which thus far had answered well, although great attention was necessary to prevent strain upon it.