

H.M.S. Grappler. Esquimaux

August 8, 1862

Yesterday afternoon we had a meeting of the female immigrant committee: I think that the committee is composed of the very best ten persons that could be got together for the purpose, and so far that is very satisfactory: I read an extract from your letter to me dated March 18: although it was received with every courtesy the very natural question was asked, "is your father a member of the Committee in England?": I was obliged to answer no: then I was asked, "do you think that you father expresses the views of the Committee in England?" I answered that I believed you expressed the views of the committee at that time, but I could deny that those do not appear to be the views of the committee at the present time, as we gather from the letters we have received: and now I will notice the points in your letter to which exception may be taken.

I myself have serious doubts as to the great want of women in these colonies, and have an idea that all the money we can get here, will be absorbed in maintaining for a time those women for whom situations cannot at be found: in any case I think it would be madness to send out any more women until it has been seen how this experiment answers. I think that you imagine more public spirit, more unanimity than exists here: this may be in some degrees caused by the large number of Americans. I think the English Society out to change its name so as to embrace both colonies. Other members of the Committee are more sanguine than I am of facility of finding places for the women, and they have more experience: still I feel sure that the immigrants have been led to expect too much, and you will hear from them that they have been more or less disappointed.

I would further remark that the "Tynemouth" left England on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June and that it is given out that she is due her from Sept. 15 to Oct. 1: I think there is no possibility of her arriving before the middle of October, and that this trifling inaccuracy is to be regretted.

Your affectionate Son,  
Edmund Hope Verney

H.M.S. Grappler. Victoria  
September 20, 1862

My dear Father,

We arrived here on Monday morning last, and the intervening days have been rather eventful: the most interesting event to you perhaps is the arrival of the "Tynemouth": she anchored off Esquimalt on Wednesday night: yesterday the women were all landed, and nearly half were received into people's houses at once; the remaining half were placed in a building that had been prepared for them by the Committee: before entering into particulars I will say my general opinion: I should think that on the whole, the female immigration in the Tynemouth, may be considered a success and to rank among the best of efforts that have been made for female immigration: but if other efforts that have been made for female immigration: but if other efforts have been worse, I am nevertheless sure that this might have been better: among the females are good, but also bad: some of the arrangements have been suitable, other, the reverse, and while the decided success of this is a cause for thankfulness, it is anything but a cause for self-congratulation and pride.

Some of the little ones are very pretty, and attractive: I don not know whether this is quite grammar, but I talking of the immigrants: I think the little orphans from East Grinstead took my fancy most: perhaps that is because, being only twelve, they do not expect to get married at once.

Your affectionate Son,

Edmund Hope Verney

H.M.S. Grappler, Victoria  
September 20.1862

My dear Father,

On the whole I think it better to turn to a fresh sheet of paper to continue my say about the arrival of the Tynemouth.

Until three days before she came in, no preparations had been made for the reception of the females beyond plenty of discussion at committee meetings: we concluded that we could do nothing because, as a committee, we had received no information that such a ship as the "Tynemouth" was on her way out, nor did we know, as a committee, on what terms she was bringing out female emigrants: so when ladies came to us to engage servants we could not answer what wages they would expect, nor whether they had made any agreement to accept such situations as the committee should procure from them: in addition to this, we could procure no official recognition of our existence as a committee from the governor or any one else: I must observe that with regard to the first difficulties, we have received no particulars concerning the women up to this moment, except a semi-official list sent to the Archdeacon, which two members of the committee were fortunately allowed to copy privately: an official recognition of our existence as a committee, was sent to us by the Colonial Secretary after the women were landed: add to this that the Bishop is a Cariboo, the Governor in British Columbia, and the Archdeacon of New Westminster, and you will divine how aghast the Committee looked, when they were told their sixty young ladies might be expected in two days or less.

I think the committee deserve great credit for the way in which they all (with the exception of one who went into the country; and has not come back since, another who obliged to be at the police court, and a third who had "important business") went to work to meet the emergency: I landed nearly all my men to scrub, clean &c, and tradesmen were called in to provide everything needful, so that by noon

on Friday all was complete: The ladies too came forward manfully, and without a murmur waited three or four hours to receive the immigrants:

At three yesterday afternoon the Forward brought them round from the Tynemouth at Esquimalt, as the Admiral had granted her at my request, and to the great delight of a considerable crowd the ladies landed safely and marched up in a body a few hundred yards to the "Marine Barracks: the building that had been prepared for them. And now as I facts you must take the unpleasant with the pleasant: one female was carried up helplessly intoxicated and two or three more were evidently the worse for liquor.

You must take into consideration the great excitement under which all laboured, and the irregularity in meal hours that necessarily attended the disembarkation, and not think this so very serious after all: of course, these little failings were not paraded before the crowd, or I hope, generally known.

Nearly half the females slept out of barracks that night, having either gone into situations out once, or having been kindly received into people's houses as temporary arrangement: a fence had been put up round the building inside which none but the committee were admitted: a few straggled away, but were brought back by the vigilant police, and although the night was very dark I believe that no harm took place: the committee did not separate until half-past eight, when they were not sorry to go to bed.

But having premised that on the whole, the experiment may so far be considered satisfactory, and believing that any expression from the committee of opinion on the subject will be rather formal and entirely complimentary, I must say that I had expected the affair would have been more carefully attended to in England: there is not a shadow of doubt in my mind or in the minds of at least one more of the committee with whom I have spoken, that a least one or two of the women are thoroughly bad and must have been so before leaving England, and there must be

unpardonable neglect somewhere that they were ever allowed on board: the system, which prevails with some people, of giving underserved recommendations, is a great sin the frightful consequences of which are not appreciated:

Mr. Scott is not popular with some of the females: how far he is the best person that could have been procured, I don't feel competent to say because I do not know how difficult it may have been to procure any one to undertake such a task. I believe that Mr. Scott and the Captain have not been on speaking terms since the ship was at the Falkland Islands: personally, I think the Captain seems a good sort of man and earnestly anxious for the welfare of the females, but unsatisfactory accounts of the cleanliness and discipline of his ship are rumoured aboard: many of the other passengers, or perhaps only a few ought never to have been allowed to go in a ship with female emigrants: it is said that no actual harm has taken place on the voyage, but I do not feel sure of this. I am foolishly and improperly to these women before leaving England to the less misled with regard to the position they would occupy here but not so much as I had expected: the following were two answers given to the committee, selected from others equally extraordinary: "I don't care where I go or what I do so long as I get plenty of money": then, "I really cannot undertake anything like hard work; I should like an American family were I should be on footing of equality": yet the Committee average wages are 15 dollars a month, £ 3. or £36 a year. I think we have found places for but two governesses, a class really not wanted. As much as thirty dollars has been offered, but the committee has in no case hitherto allowed more than twenty. No attempt to repay the society in England for sending out these women is being made.

Your affect. Son,  
Edmund Hope Verney.

H.M.S. Grappler, Esquimalt V.I.

January 17 1863

My dear Father,

A Tynemouth girl, "Sophia Shaw", was married a day or two ago to a Mr. Pioneer, a Cariboo miner: she was smart flashy girl, but not without some good in her: everything was ordered to be carried out in tip-top style: the milliner was instructed that the bridal dress was not to cost less than £400; the breakfast not less than £200: a ball took place in the evening, at which the bridegroom became tipsy: the next morning he came back to the ball-room to see if his wife was still there, as he had not seen her since supper: I have not yet heard whether she has turned up or not, but of course everybody is talking about the wonderful wedding.

Your affectionate Son,  
Edmund Hope Verney

H.M.S. Grappler. Esquimat, V.I.

April 20. 1863

My dear Father

I wrote a short time ago to Mrs. Kennaird telling her about a very nice girl from her school, who came in the Tynemouth, Jane Ann Saunders: she was married a few days ago to a Mr. Nesbitt, in Victoria, a well-to-do baker, I went to see her to-day, and was quite charmed with her simple, modest, happy appearance, and also amused with the little matronly air she put on: she has always been a great favorite of mine: Mrs. Kinnaird's other girl, Emily Berry, has not been well during the winter; she is now better however, and engaged to be married to Mr. Care, catechist at Nanaimo: she is a good girl, but I have not known her as well as Mrs. Nesbitt: there can be no doubt that Mrs. Kinnaird's two girls were quite among the best of the consignment: it would have been well if other people had been a little more particular whom they recommended for the Tynemouth.

Your affectionate Son,  
Edmund Hope Verney.