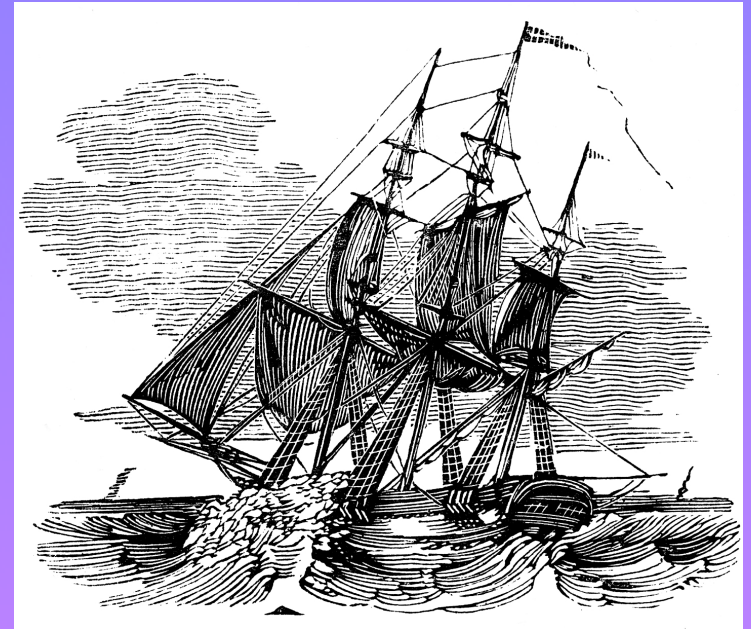


In 1775, the snow class brig 'Lovely Nelly' left the Solway Firth with 120 emigrant families, heading for Prince Edward Island in Nova Scotia and what they hoped would be a better life. Drawing from a variety of historic sources, fourteen writers imagine these voyagers' experiences.

Lovely Nelly

a ship of hope



new creative non-fiction from
two winter workshops
with Vivien Jones

Published with support from Wigtown
Festival Company March 2020

Acknowledgements

The writing group would like to thank :

- The staff of Dumfries Observatory Museum for the warmth of their welcome during the two workshops.
- Wigtown Festival Company for funding the publication and the workshops.
- Frances Wilkins for the generous use of her historical research and publication around the court case that followed the 1775 voyage of 'Lovely Nelly'.
- Matthew Crampton for the use of images from his book *Human Cargo* (ISBN 078-0-9561-2-1) www.matthewcrampton.com
- Jean Manson and Laura Rimmer for layout help and proofreading.



Introduction

The 'Lovely Nelly' project began by accident. In autumn 2019, I had been leading a writing workshop for the Crichton Writers on creative non-fiction, and had looked out the passenger lists for the 1774 and 1775 voyages of the 'Lovely Nelly', which sailed from several Solway ports carrying settlers to Prince Edward Island in Nova Scotia, as reference material.

The writers had not exhausted their interest in the subject by the end of the workshop, and I had gathered a number more from a new writing group nearby. The Wigtown Festival Company agreed to provide funding to make 'Lovely Nelly' the focus of a whole new project, resulting in this book.

The project consisted of two workshops held in Dumfries Museum, where the writers were given access to reference materials on the Solway ports, emigration in the 19th century, circumstances in the New World and details of the voyages, all of which resulted in a great deal of discussion. Writers fell to following their own veins of enquiry, making new writing with careful reference to the materials provided. Over the period of a month, the writers refined their work through peer critique and comment until it was as you read it here.

***'... could not with all his industry support himself and his family...'
from the passenger list of 'Lovely Nelly', 1775***

These records carry poignant detail - the ages of the many children, the fact that their fathers could not earn enough to feed them, the fact of whole families leaving their homes for an unknown destination. These are indicators of the hope that must have infused them as they set out. This book contains the imagined experiences of those who sought that better life.



Contents

The Leaving

Carol Price	: The Leaving	5
Vivien Jones	: Grizoe's Lullaby	7
Jane Richardson	: The Voyage	9
Jackie Johnston	: Annie's Plea	11
Dan Gillespie	: Mittelberg's Memory	14
	I Am Going on a Ship	15
Alexandra Monlaur	: Longevity	16
Angela Taylor	: Congregational Decision	19
Alexandra Monlaur	: Notes on a Voyage I	21
Kriss Nichol	: Leaving	23
John Burns	: Guid Times, Bad Times	25
Eleanor Chesters	: Quayside Voices	27

The Voyage

Jean Manson	: The Imagined Diaries of Isabella McKie	29
Laura Rimmer	: Losing	35
Kriss Nichol	: Service	37
K A Vivers	: The Crossing 1775	38
Alexandra Monlaur	: Notes on a Voyage II	39
Carol Price	: Safe in God's Hands	41
K A Vivers	: The Evangelist	43
Alexandra Monlaur	: Torn	47
Jackie Johnston	: Dougie's Plea	48
Eleanor Chesters	: William's Memoir	50

The Arrival

Kriss Nichol	: The Comfort of Trees	52
Edmund Wigram	: Escape	53
Alexandra Monlaur	: Notes on a Voyage III	59
Jackie Johnston	: Annie's New World	61
Angela Taylor	: Brave New World	63
Eleanor Chesters	: Haiku	66
Jean Manson	: The Arrival	67
Jane Richardson	: Arrival	68
Judith Muir	: Beginnings	69
Edmund Wigram	: Birch Bark Canoe	74
Jean Manson	: Bear Grumbles	76
Alexandra Monlaur	: The Spelling Bee	78
Vivien Jones	: Grizoe's Letter Home	80
Jane Richardson	: Pictou	83

Afterword

K A Vivers	: The Crossing 2020	84
Jane Richardson	: 1794	85

Notes on the Writers

87

The Leaving

Background: Leaving home is a universal experience. Soldiers conscripted to armies, young girls becoming scullery maids, sailors setting sail to far distant lands, refugees leaving war torn countries and, more recently, Australian families driving away from their homes as the fires raged closer and closer. That last glance from the top of the hill, consigned permanently to memory, not knowing if you will ever return; we have all experienced that feeling to some degree.

The Leaving :: Carol Price

I turn at the brow of the hill
to see my mother's house
and the smoke from the chimney
curls up to the cloudless sky.
And there she sits by the door,
shawl wrapped, quiet as the morning air,
watching me go.

This valley of my youth
with its bubbling stream
and heath blanketed slopes
is where my heart belongs.
And she sits there still,
watching me go.



A new life awaits me,
over hazardous oceans,
far away from this place.
As the smoke curls up to the cloudless sky,
so she sits there still
watching me go.

The geese fly over my head.
They too search for a better life.
Their haunting cries seem as echoes
of the sorrow in my soul.
Shawl wrapped, in the evening of her life,
she sits there still,
watching me go.

Background: I took my starting point from these entries in the 1775 passenger list - William Clark, a gardener (30), his wife Grizoe Kissock (30) and their son John (10 months), left Caerlaverock on *Lovely Nelly* on 1st May, 1775 'to provide for his family'. Some further research showed who might have employed, or not, a gardener in Caerlaverock. At this time it was the well-connected Maxwell family who owned both the Caerlaverock and the Terregles estates, both of which might have needed a gardener. Lady Winifred Maxwell was one of five women who ran the Caerlaverock estate, an unusual feature at the time.

Grizoe's Lullaby :: Vivien Jones

- she is nursing her 10 month old son, John -

There, there, little one, be at peace. That tooth is sore coming through, is it not? But you must sleep and I must put our things into that chest before your Da comes with the cart. It's a big chest for our poor possessions - the Bible, our plates, our Sunday clothes, not much else - but then, when we get where we're going, things will be different. We will have good land and your Da is such a gardener, he will soon dig it and plant it and grow food for us to eat and sell. It's shame he couldn't get more work at the castle but Herself said he wasn't needed after this year's planting, so, for your sake, little man, we are setting out on this great adventure.

No more lean winters for us. We're going to build a shack for shelter, just while we settle, then when we've got going we'll make it bigger and you shall have a room of your own like the children at the castle, and maybe a dog or a pony. Once the church is built and we have a minister, you can get taught to read. Oh, and you shall be a gentleman

one day and come to your Ma and Da and make us proud that we came across the sea and all that to give you a future.

Your Da will be back soon. He's gone to see his Ma, then to fetch the cart. She'll be greeting again, praying one minute and sobbing the next, hanging on to his sleeve, telling him the minister says we shouldn't go. That's not true. The minister says there's little enough for us here. We told her she should come too but she says she too old, just a poor old widow woman, and she's afraid of the sea.

I'm not fond of the sea either. I have never been on it further than this bit of the Solway, and just when there were fish to catch. But once a wind sprang up from nowhere and turned the little waves to wild rocking. They were not blue anymore but grey and foaming. The sea came into the boat and wet my clothes all over and even your Da was afraid. He turned the boat for home but when the sea was broadside on it nearly tipped us over into the water. I don't dare to think what the sea beyond the Solway might be like. And for six weeks. But the Captain Sheridan and your Da will look after us.

Some sailor, probably in drink, has been telling your Da the tricks of a happy sailing. And the hazards. Your Da will see that we find a dry corner for the voyage, somewhere where the air gets to. So we must be clean, drink only water, and keep away from any sick person. That'll do it.

There, you're sleeping and I hear the cart wheels in the lane. Me and your Da, we'll put everything we have into that chest and tomorrow, we'll be on that ship - and maybe sail away to our fortune - what a sweet name, *Lovely Nelly*.

Background: Based on the emigration from Annan of the family of Wellwood Waugh, his wife Helen and six children who all survived the voyage in *The Lovely Nelly* in 1774. Waugh, and a compatriot, John Smith, were charged with underwriting the voyage to transport 120 passengers to Prince Edward Island. Waugh was able to do this having received a legacy on his father's death. This information is available at: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/waugh_wellwood_6E.html in a biography by Lois Kernaghan.

The Voyage :: Jane Richardson

The Lovely Nelly unfurls her sails as
we, we loosen the long ties of before
waving at the rail, now only the wake to see
the children jump and laugh, excited innocence
still ignorant that our existence
will profoundly change
unrelenting movement, the ocean challenges
our balance both in mind and body
vermin abound and rob us of our meagre victuals
the reek, all enveloping, raw and foetid
Wellwood implores his God – ours too
to whom will He listen?
he exhorts: 'Come pray with me'
but ears are deaf when hope has gone away
and lurching onwards, worse befalls



battered by wind and wave we cannot stand
sickness is rife and babies are dying
daily these bairns are lowered to the deep
the Lord has spared the Waughs
I give thanks but see diminished families
who weep and mourn
even as a dark line breaks the infinite horizon
they will not join the joyful noise of expectation
that land is our land and soon will be our home
felicitous, this place of plenty, but Fate is fickle
our seed to sow, to grow, to feed us
the mice have found it first and lie,
fat bellied, in the hold

Background: *The Lovely Nelly's passenger list was the starting point. Many families boarded the ship because they were finding it impossible to feed themselves. So I created a family of my own, imagining who might typify the many who were in that position at the time. Next, I embedded them in a well-known village in Dumfries and Galloway, New Abbey, known to locals and visitors alike. It was one of the first places I visited when I came to live in this area and I think it has wormed its way under my skin; so it felt easy for me to write with it as a backdrop and I hoped my familiarity with it would convey authenticity of place. I researched the history of Sweetheart Abbey and a little of the natural history of the area, consulting an ornithologically-savvy friend about a good choice of bird which would be at home where there is both shore and moorland. She told me that the Curlew was known as a Whaup. On examining references online about this, I came to know that it was also known as the Whaap and that the bird's distinctive beak lent itself to descriptive phrases for certain facial features, e.g. whaap-nebbit. If you don't know what that means, 'nebb' is a nose. But Auld Whaap-Nebb Hissel, is a bit like saying Auld Nick Himself.*

So, I had already strayed into the descriptive world of the Scots language. Annie's Plea and the other two pieces which follow on from it just had to be done in Scots! I come from the part of Scotland where Doric is the prevailing dialect; so I made an effort to select words and turns of phrase belonging more to south-west Scotland than my own tongue. I think I slip up sometimes but comfort myself with the thought, or should I say thocht, that the Scots picked up lingo from each other in those days as we do now, even though there was no internet. I pored over the Dictionary of the Scots Language rather a lot, not only to locate words, but also because our emigrants lived in the second

half of the 18th Century and language continuously evolves. The DSL, or Dictionar O The Scots Leid, brilliantly includes archaic entries too.

I checked the name of Prince Edward Island in those days. If you read the piece you'll know what it was called when our travellers went. So the human lives as they are portrayed in Annie's Plea, the first of a set of three prayers, or communications with God, are, I hope, brought to life by the results of that wee bit o research.

Annie's Plea: The First Prayer :: Jackie Johnston

Lord, Ye might be shocked tae find me oan ma knees, by moonlicht, in the coo shed. Sleep's been jinkin aboot the night in oor hoose an has passed me ower. I hae a yearnin tae speak wi Ye, wi sic desire the likes o which ah've never felt in Kirk. "Trust in the Lord," ma mither aye said. "He'll hear yer prayer." Sae, here I find masel. Oor beastie'd be ramfoozled if she cuid see me; bit she's gone noo, selt, alang wi ma aumrie an plank; nae feed, nae need.

Ye are the Maker o us aa. In Yir Greatness, Ye ken athin, Ye see athin. Yer affairs'll hae nae bounds. I wunner if Ye saw that ma man an me an oor bairnies, in whae Ye pit the spark o life, are stervin? Ma twae plump, hardy dochters are na growin but like runts. Ah fear they'll nae last lang.

There couldna be a man whae'd turn himsel tae work wi mair conviction than their guid faither; he, an ma babbies, were Yer greatest blessins oan me an ah bow doon tae Ye in gratitude. Ma man's back is aw but broken. Ye'd think this earth'd be rich, in sicht o Criffel an near whar Nith an Abbey Pow rin intae the Solway Frith. We canna feed

oorsels e'en wi me cleanin an mendin at the Big Hoose. Ma fowks
deed young bidin here; the same fell earth is killin us tae.

The morn, we leave for St. John's Island. It soonds sae gran.

Letters there are, frae souls wha sailt ower twae year gone by.
Clement weather an bountiful land, that's whit they describe. Thon
agent booked oor berth. I'll nae pretend I tak tae the man bit Dougie
says he's daein his job the best wye he kens. He gets ower close an
the lassies roar at his flumgummery. He'll no cherm me. Ah beg Ye;
strike ma unkind words! The man himsel mae hae his trials. He's gaun
oan the ship an aw.

In Yer Palatial Kingdom, dae Ye eke oot oor story. Or is't awaitin us,
screived oan the shore we're bound for? Ah hae summin tae ask:
Tender Lord, will Ye be kind? Noo I hear ma grannie's voice: "In
prayer, lass, dinna speir; God kens best whit's fur ye." In Yer Bountiful
Mercy, cuid Ye forgie me this ane plea; I dae it for the lassies and
Dougie, wha, were he tae be cut in twae, wid show but guidness
through and through. A hope Yer Dominion streeches tae The New
World. Thank Ye, Lord. Amen.



Background: *I found myself immersed in the list of passengers and the number of families that were on board and I imagined how they might have felt. It was an incredible, strange and sad feeling all at once.*

I mostly looked online at the research and also from the notes that I was given to begin with - this was a great starting point for me.

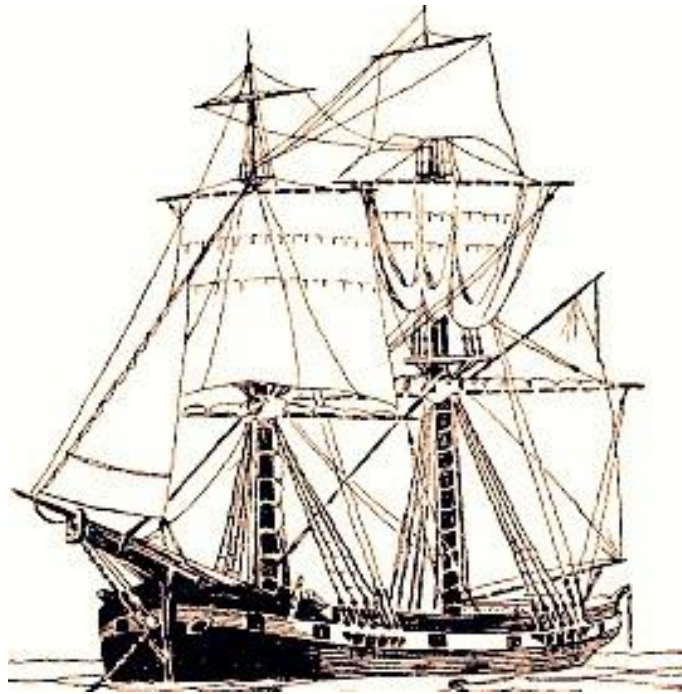
Mittelberg's Memory :: Dan Gillespie

All I want,
is what I can't have.
I'm frightened,
it's a terrible misery.
I'm looking around
and it's clear that it's
not just I that
knows this pain.
We are weak.
Adults, young children too.
Some are turning
on each other, and
I fear the worst.

I Am Going on a Ship by James K :: Dan Gillespie

Mum and Dad say that I am going on a ship.
I wonder if it will be a big one because I have only seen small ones.
I like to look at ships, I have seen some come up the river before.
I have never been on a ship, I am very excited to try.
My Mum and Dad say that we are going to an island so I don't know
when I will see my friends again but maybe they can visit me.
I hope I make new friends to play with, that would be nice.
I am looking forward to going on the ship,
maybe the captain will let me wear his hat.

James Kirkpatrick, 7, Dumfries, 1775



Background: I took inspiration for this piece from the photograph of a 'kist' or wooden chest supplied by a fellow writer following her visit to Edinburgh Museum. This chest would have held any items of value to the passengers bound for the New World. It is likely that most passengers had little in the way of 'valuables' as we would understand the term today. I felt that using a small object, traditionally presented to Scottish brides, could be employed in allegorical form to describe the success of a family in both assimilating to and shaping their future in the New World.

Longevity :: Alexandra Monlaur

I've been with the Mackenzie family for over 250 years; first fashioned by James McKenzie from a piece of fallen beechwood on the Laird's estate. I've been shaped by the countless hands that have held me, their chilly roughness altering to smooth gentleness as their fortunes improved. And improved they have, although not easily and not without the heartache of loss and a fundamental sense of self-determination.

I'll never forget that sea voyage from the West of Scotland to the New World. Crammed into the kist, my head walloped against the side every time we encountered the watery turbulence of the Atlantic. If I'd been asked then, I would have said that the journey had 'gien me the boak', but no one did, and like the family I serve, I don't speak in that strange song-like dialect anymore.

I'm about to be passed on, for James Mackenzie VI is soon to be married and as tradition dictates, I'll go to his bride with a silk tartan ribbon around my neck. I've grown in confidence and experience too, although (forgive the pun) porridge is my daily bread and butter, I, on

occasion, create custards and sauces with fancy French names. I've helped build the reputation of the women of the family as generous hosts and accomplished cooks.

Humble spurtle I may be,


Celtic symbol of family,

strong-minded,


hard-headed,

and long-lived.




FOR MIRAMICHI, FROM ANNAN,

THE Schooner **LOVELY MARY**, John Hui-on, master, to sail the latter end of this month. For freight or passage, apply to **JOHN & ROBT. MITCHISON.**
 Annan, 7th April, 1817.

FOR BOSTON, AMERICA.



THE New copper-fastened **BRIG**, about 330 tons burthen, now building at Kelton for Capt. Kirk, will be ready for sea about the middle of May. On early application, a few passengers may be accommodated, on reasonable terms. There is seldom an opportunity from this port to the United States, and at so convenient and seasonable a time of the year.
 Apply to John Carruthers, Blue Bell Inn, Dumfries or Capt. Kirk at Kelton.
 1st April, 1817.

For Pictou and Miramichi,


THE Brigantine **NILE**, of Dumfries, 120 tons register. Robert Carwell, Master, will sail from Glencastle Quay on Thursday the 1st of May next, for Miramichi, North America, and if a sufficient number of Passengers apply, and wish to be landed at Pictou, the Captain will have instructions accordingly. Passengers, wishing to go by this desirable Vessel, at so fine a season of the year, or for freight, Will please apply to **ROBERT THOMSON, Jun.**
 Dumfries, 1st April, 1817.

NOTICE.

Day of Sailing altered from the 3d to 15th of April.


THE Fine Ship **AUGUSTA**, of Dumfries, 600 tons burthen, William Davidson, Master, will sail from this Port on Tuesday the 15th of April, for Pictou and Miramichi.—Persons wishing to go by this commodious conveyance will be landed at any of these ports.
 For St JOHN'S, New Brunswick, To sail also on Tuesday the 15th of April, from this Port,
 The fine New Ship **ELIZABETH**, 600 tons burthen, Geo. Thomson, Master, on her second voyage since launched. Both of these Vessels have excellent accommodation for Passengers, and will positively (weather permitting) sail on that day. Passengers may book until the tenth, if the number is not made up previous to that date.
 Please apply to **JOHN THOMSON.**
 N. B.—Both the above Vessels are provided with Surgeons.

To be Sold, by public roup, in Mrs Grive's Coffee house, Dumfries, upon Thursday the 17th of April 1817, at two o'clock afternoon,
THE following **LOTS** of the Sequestrated Estate of James Turner, hosiery in Dumfries, viz.
 1.—The South Division of Barbeth, containing about 51 Scots acres, will be exposed at the upset price of.....£1
 2.—The North Division of Barbeth, about 41 acres, at.....
 3.—The Friar Yard below the Mill Lade, at
 4.—The just and equal half of the 2d Lodging above the front Shop in Dumfries, at.....
 5.—The half of the 3d Lodging at.....
 6.—The two-storey Tenement in Parkend's-clos, at.....
 7.—The slated Shed down the clos, No. 3, at
 8.—The slated Shed next the above, No. 4, at
 Should the above lands not be sold, they will, on same day, be exposed to set for Pasturage only.
 The articles of roup, and title-deeds (which are unexceptionable) may be seen in the hands of Mr Goldie and Threshie, Dumfries, who have also a plan of the lands.

TO BE LET ON LEASE,
 And entered to immediately,
THE MAINS of **LARGS**, in the parish of Tholm. This Farm extends to about 141 acres, statute measure, subdivided into twelve inclosures substantial stone dikes, and all the fields are well watered. The soil is naturally a dry loam, of superior quality, and the Farm is at present in excellent order. Houses and Offices are new, extensive, and convenient, and there is a capital Threshing Machine on the premises.—Every facility of import and export is afforded at the harbour of Tongland, within two miles of Largs.
 Liberal encouragement will be given to a tenant of capital and respectability. For farther particulars application may be made to Mrs Falcon of Largs, or Mr D. Hannay, Lochbank.
 7th April, 1817.

FARM for SALE.

To be Sold, by private bargain,
THE following **FARM**, in the immediate neighbourhood of Penpont, viz.
BOGS of CORSEFIELD, consisting of 23 acre rods, and 16 falls, or thereby, as presently possessed by Robert Newall, on a lease current for 15 years Whitsunday 1808.
 For particulars apply to Mr William Gordon, writer in Dumfries.
 Dumfries, 10th Feb. 1817.

10,098 PRIZES!
4,502 BLANKS!!
 F. D. B. C. 200000

Background: *The project began for me with the passenger lists. Who were these people who risked everything to travel, what must it have seemed like for them, a journey halfway around the world? What was it like for those who perhaps wanted to go, but felt their commitments at home were too strong, such as the Minister? What was it like for those who arrived, but lost their babies on the journey? Then finally, for those who did arrive, what was it like for the children? How did they feel about what may have started out as an adventure then possibly ended up as a nightmare? What were the economic hardships that most of them faced that caused them to seek a new life in the first place? It was an unparalleled time in the history of this area, when the Lowland Clearances and the Galloway Levellers were in revolt against private landlords who wanted cattle on their land rather than people. My research has taken into account all these factors, and then what happened after they arrived at Georgetown, and the plague of mice that ate all the seed so they nearly starved.*

Congregational Decision :: Angela Taylor

Watching from the quayside, I stifled the heart-breaking pain, as the tears flowed.
So far away they fly, so far away,
and I am left, mourning their departure.

Between two families, I am torn; how can a man decide? Which family must I support?
Which family needs me most?
Am I forsaken too?

I am needed here, this is where I belong, and yet ...
the love of my life departs from me,
taking my grandchildren with her.
Will I ever see them again in this life?

She begged me to go; they begged me to stay.
How can I abandon them when they need me
so much? I am their Minister and carry the care
for their souls. Yet how can I let her go?

I hide my face from her tears, and uplifting my arms
in blessing, I remember Him, who left His Father
and went to the cross
for me!



Background: *I wanted to write a piece from the viewpoint of an educated man, a person who had status and influence at home and who would expect to have similar, if not greater, standing in the New World. I thought that a Minister of the Church would fit the bill perfectly and would allow me to explore a number of themes. Those themes, the voyage itself, the loss of faith and the future of the woman he was affianced to, in uncertain times; became the basis for writing a story in letter form, the first time I have ever attempted this approach. To my surprise I found that 'love letters' of the 18th Century could be excessively effusive and imaginative. The British Library has a number of letter writing manuals from this period.*

Notes on a Voyage I :: Alexandra Monlaur

**Annan 1774/day of Departure
By Hand**

My Dearest Edward,

My heart overflows with affection and trepidation as you depart these shores. Travel safely my love, and know that I long only to join you in the New World where we will be wed. Together we will build a new life. Your preaching, I am assured, will bring hope and comfort to our neighbours there, as it has here, since you entered our lives only two years ago. I have enclosed a pressed posy of thrift and sea-campion, that I picked on the summer's day you begged for my hand in marriage. I beseech you to keep this close to your person in recollection of that day and know that I yearn for nothing more than to walk beside you as wife and helpmeet.

Your loving Ishbel

**Annan 1774/day of Departure
By Hand**

My Beloved Ishbel,

I undertake this journey with the knowledge that you will join me soon, our parting is necessary only for me to establish our future home in the New World. Fear not, my love, our prayers will be heard, the voyage is said to last a mere six weeks and the Captain appears to be a stout fellow; although uneducated, I am content that he will keep us on a safe and certain course. I will keep the posy in my bible, never far from my person. I hope to bring solace to my fellow passengers, for they have trusted my advice in this matter of emigration and I will pray for our loving reunion daily.

Yours in loving friendship

Affectionately, Edward.



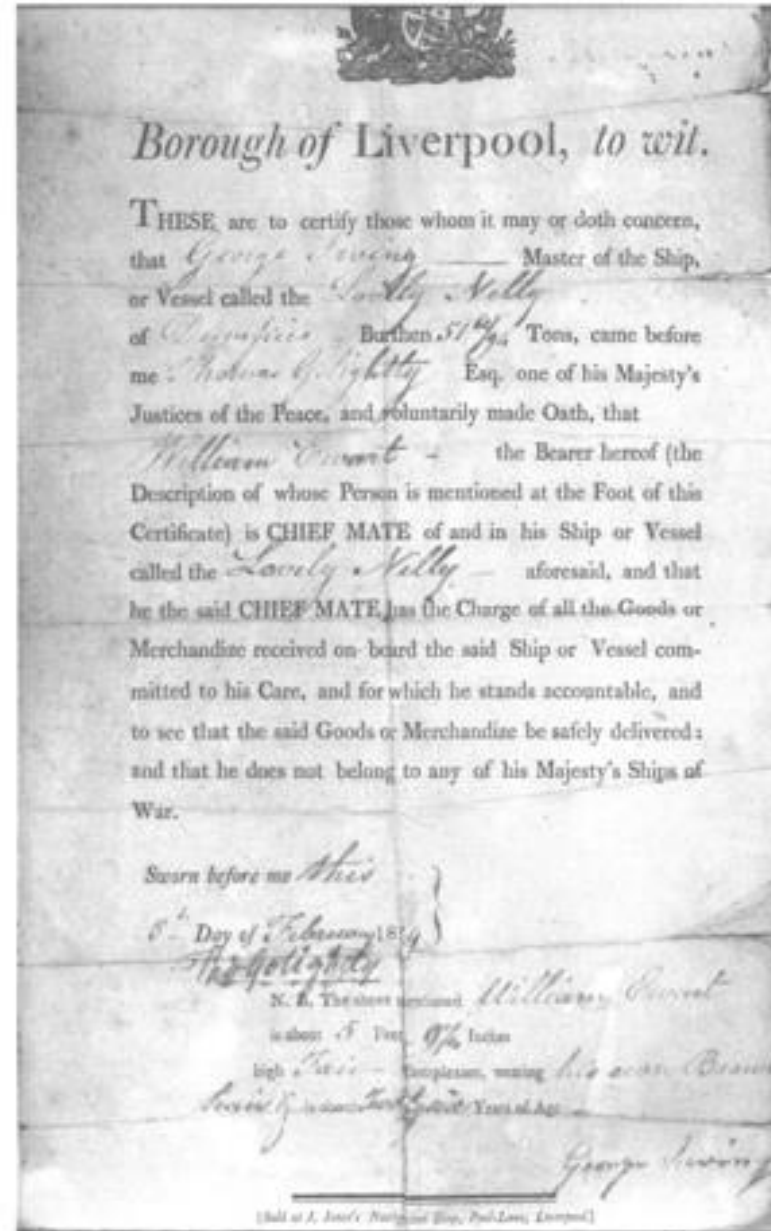
Background: As a starting point for 'Leaving' I used the information about C18 clothing and further research on crofting and the Clearances to imagine what it must have felt like to leave everything you had known and embark on a new journey.

Leaving :: Kriss Nichol

wind scrabbles at my *arasaid*
pierces the fabric of the *casquin* beneath
swirls around the croft then skitters off
across the moorland and heather

in this desolate place
brown earth stripped of peat holds water
like tears held back
and a lapwing's song mourns

our leaving the cart creaks
with the weight of possessions not much
to show for five generations
my heart shrivels



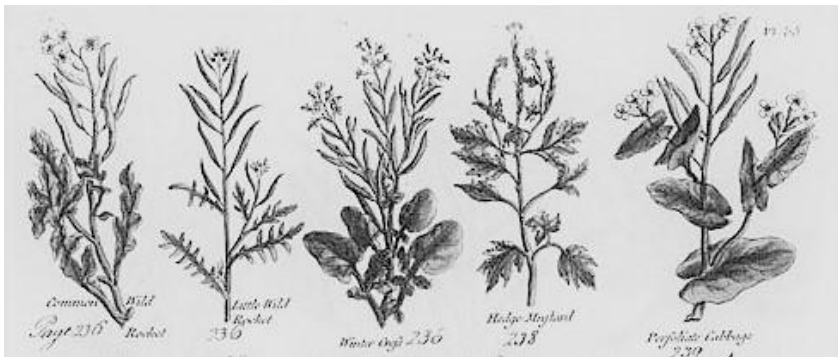
Background: For John Smith, Emigrant, who sailed from Annan to Nova Scotia in the ship 'Lovely Nelly' in 1774 in search of a better life. He died by drowning shortly after having settled in Canada.

Poem :: John Burns

I

Guid times, bad times,
an aw the times atween.
Guid times, bad times,
the times that I hae seen

an tellt, for yon's my darg,
tae let fowk ken the joy
that comes wi a new wean
or the sair pangs o bitter pain
or them that's left when life's
nae mair. Guid times, bad
times, an aw the times atween.



II

Doun, doun, deeper on doun,
birlin slaw in the bricht blue
swirl o my ain daith.
The muin shines doun,
its licht brokken bi the waves.
The cauld wagher hauds me ticht,
taks my braith
in its cauld caress.
Brokken pictures tummel
through the watter.
A bricht blue mornin doon bi the shore
wi my mither runnin
an wavin at the boats
gaun oot on the Firth.
Siller scales on my faither's buits
an on his haunds.
Bonnie blue een glitterin
wi brokken licht.
A sherp mindin
ablow the Canadian muin.
Doun, doun, deeper on doun

Background: I took my information from the passenger list 'The Lovely Nelly (ship type -Snow) departing Annan: 1774', which was included in Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society.

John Smith, age 33, his wife Margaret McVicar, age 28, and their two children lived in Colvend. William was 6 and Mary was 4.

John Smith decided to join the emigrants who were leaving Galloway for Canada and a better life.

He 'could not earn bread sufficient to support him & his family'.

Quayside Voices :: Eleanor Chesters

John Smith recalls

I stood rigidly on the quayside, forcing a reassuring smile at my wife Margaret and our two children, William age 6 and Mary 4. They were so taken by the adventure ahead that they seemed unaware of our misgivings, or so we thought. My wife barely spoke a word, but the look on her face said it all.

Margaret, wife of John

I became increasingly perturbed as we waited nervously to board the ship. A snell wind was blowing, which in itself was a signal of what was to come. My thoughts drifted back to home and the miscarriage that I had endured just months before we left. At that time, leaving had seemed the solution to all our troubles. But was it?



William, son of John and Margaret

I was truly excited and yet trembling with fear as I stood on the quay close to my mother, watching in awe the loading of the ship and hearing the loud voices of the crew. A lad, not much older than me, I thought, caught my eye and for a moment we stared at each other with the dread of not knowing what lay ahead.

Mary, daughter of John and Margaret

Oh! The Lovely Nelly, I can't wait to get on and dance and skip around the deck. Maybe I'll meet some friends and we can play games and sing songs. For now, I'm happy playing with pieces of tattered rope and rags, which are blowing in the wind.

The Voyage

Background: The decision to focus on Isabella McKie was inspired by an article by CBC News about bears on Prince Edward Island (P.E.I.), which stated:

'A woman named Banks, who came to P.E.I. in 1775 aboard the ship Lovely Nelly, was eaten by a bear as she walked through the woods between Georgetown and Mount Stewart.'

An initial look through the 1774 and 1775 passenger lists for the Lovely Nelly showed no passengers by the name of 'Banks'. A further search online turned up a 'Mary Banks (born McKie)' on a genealogy site with the note that she had emigrated in 1774 on the Lovely Nelly to P.E.I., Canada. Looking back at the 1774 passenger list for the Lovely Nelly, there was a family of McKies from Kelton – William and Issabell McKie, and their 3 children: John (aged 6), Eliza (aged 4) and Mary (aged 1). I believe this one-year old Mary McKie is the same Mary who eventually got eaten by a bear!

I wanted to write diary entries from the viewpoint of one of the passengers, but it couldn't be Mary because of her age at the time of the journey. Looking at the family tree further, I managed to find out that the father, William McKie, aged 30 at the time of the journey, was either a farmer or a stonemason who died aged 74 in 1823 and was buried at the Bay Fortune Presbyterian/United Cemetery on P.E.I. He married Isabella Boyce (I assume this is the same lady listed as 'Issabell' on the passenger list) in 1766 in Kelton, Scotland, and they went on to have another 7 children on P.E.I. (the Lovely Nelly arrived on 23 August 1774 and their next child was born in 1775!).

However, when I tried to find out more about Isabella's background, this turned up a dead end – I couldn't seem to find any trace of the family she belonged to or who her parents were. I therefore decided to base the central character of my diaries on my reimagined Isabella.

The Imagined Diaries of Isabella McKie :: Jean Manson

July 5, 1774 – Tuesday

We have been sailing now for two days and I still cannot stand the constant swaying of this vessel. We are on the 'Lovely Nelly', bound for the distant land of Canada. The last two winters back in Kelton have been hard and William says there is a better life awaiting us across the seas. We managed to sell whatever land we had to raise the cost of passage for us two and our three little ones.

The children are coping better on the seas than I am – although I think little Mary is too young to realise what is happening. Eliza and John both think this is a great adventure and have so far been in high spirits, making friends on board and getting under the crew's feet.

July 8 – Friday

I knew we would not have much to do on this journey so I brought this pocketbook with me to practice my writings. I do not usually have a chance to do so – such activities considered unnecessary for a farmer's wife. My father was a schoolmaster and I an unruly child, so when he saw me tracing the words in the Bible one day, he decided to teach me the art of the written word. Not that it has been much use to me, apart from my own amusement.

The seasickness is still there, although I am starting to get used to the motion of this vessel. I am glad I packed a few loaves of bread for the journey – it helps to settle the stomach.

July 13 – Wednesday

The skies have been stormy the last few days and we have had to take shelter in the hold. Eliza does not like the dark – she wants to run and play. I cannot seem to get my skirt dry at all. John cut his hand while playing with some other boys a few days ago and although I have tried to keep the wound clean, it does not seem to be healing as it should. Still, he is in good spirits, so perhaps it is only my lack of other distractions that is causing a mother's worry.

July 17 – Sunday

Two weeks since we set sail. At home, we would have been getting ready for church, but although there is plenty of time here, there is not the inclination. A few have taken to muttering prayers under their breath as we endure the confines of our floating quarters. We held our own family church service today, and said the Lord's Prayer, in the trust that the Good Lord will carry us safely to our new home.

July 19 – Tuesday

It is easy to feel small when you are on the upper deck, surrounded by so much water and neither land nor another soul in sight, save those on this ship. All this open space is starting to frighten me so I have been spending more time below deck. William tells me I should get some fresh air – he is a man of the earth, my William, he needs to feel the air on his face, even if his feet are not on the solid ground he is used to.

July 23 – Saturday

I am not sure I can take any more of the salt beef. Our last loaf was eaten by mice, even though I was sure I had hidden it well, so we are now dependent on the supplies aboard this ship. The beef makes my mouth dry and I suffer from a terrible thirst afterwards. John and Eliza have both refused to eat any more of it so I have given them my portion of watery oatmeal instead. Mary seems satisfied with the oatmeal, and thankfully she does not need very much. I think they may let us have a few potatoes tonight.

July 29 – Friday

I felt the sun on my face today. The vessel was surprisingly stable – either I have become used to its motion or the seas have become calmer. I had to get away from the coughing and retching down below – some of the other passengers have taken ill, making it harder to breathe the same air. I think Mary prefers the sun also.

We are nearly a month into our journey – it should not be long now until it ends.

August 4 – Thursday

I think my eyes are beginning to fail me – everything seems too bright on deck. I have a terrible headache which nothing seems to soothe. The stench below is overwhelming, although we do not have much choice where to bed down at night. We have made a little den for ourselves out of some clothes and boxes, but it does not stop you from hearing the others around you. The lady next to us seems to be suffering from a terrible bout of consumption – she coughs and coughs and barely eats anymore. I don't know if it is catching but I am trying not to think about it.

August 9 – Tuesday

William looks a bit thin these days, especially as he is not doing any of the work he is used to. Today he told me about that which awaits us in Canada. He has been speaking to some of the other men who have mentioned the rich land in the region. We would have a house of our own, a bounty of fish and game to live off comfortably, our own farmland. An ideal place to raise our children – our three and perhaps more – with more richness than our lives could ever have had back in Kelton. It will all be worth it.

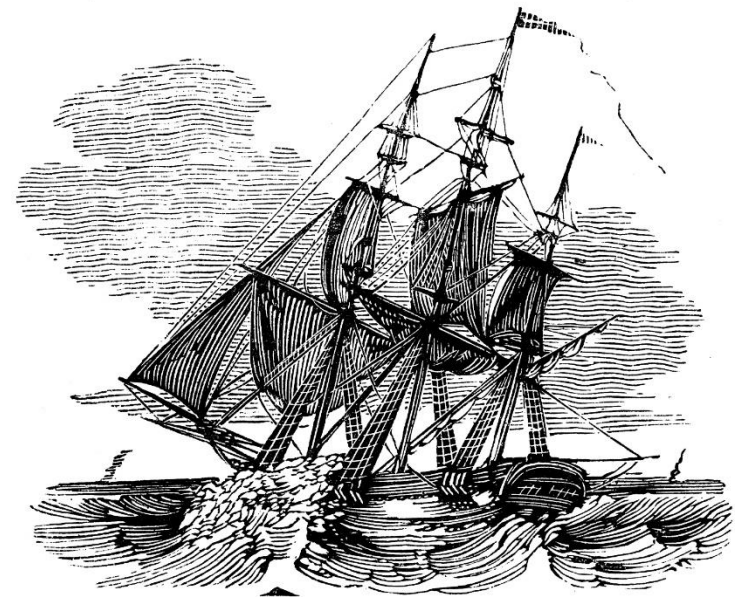
August 14 – Sunday

Dear Lord, I pray we arrive in one piece.

A small storm blew our ship off course by a few days but Master Sheridan assured us we were now making good speed and should not be far off our destination. Oh how I long to see land once more and feel the solid ground beneath my feet again. The children are getting restless – the novelty of being on a ship has worn off and they long as much as I do for dryness. At least it is warm, although sometimes too warm down below.

August 22 – Monday

I had a dream where I was visited by an angel with long golden hair. She told me that the end of our journey is near. Today the air smells different and the sea looks different, though I cannot say exactly why. I think we are only a day away from the promised land, where our new life awaits us. I am thankful that our family, while not thriving, are still alive, as others have not been as lucky. Our fate is now in God's hands.



Background: When researching this project, I was struck by the descriptions of the conditions on board the ship¹: how must it have felt, and smelt, being confined to that overcrowded space for anywhere from six to fourteen weeks? It must have become almost unbearable, to be surrounded by suffering and sickness and death. Taking that one step further, I imagined how it must have felt to have been a woman forced to give birth under those conditions. I am sure this must have happened.

Losing :: Laura Rimmer
from aboard *Lovely Nelly*, 1774

it wasn't the scurvy which caused me to lose my mind
nor the stench of weeping sores
from diseased bodies
not two feet from my nose
nor even the wading through piss and shit
to claim a square of rancid meat

it was the squatting in that hell-hole
birthing my first bairn
which brought neither hope nor comfort
nor even pain relief
but rather an infant blue of skin
and limp as a bag of oats

¹ Source material: *Emigrants in chains : a social history of forced emigration to the Americas, 1607-1776*. 1992. Coldham, Peter Wilson; *The Lowland clearances : Scotland's silent revolution, 1760-1830*. 2012. Aitchison, Peter Andrew. Cassell

it was seeing that child
my child
dead as the rotting deck
knowing I would never give him suckle
as the milk from my breasts flaunted its warmth
its heady abundance

it was swaddling his still-warm limbs
in my mother's knitted shawl
and losing him overboard
into those cold black jaws



Background: Inspiration for 'Service' came from material about the conditions on board, the diseases and numbers of deaths. Further research about slave ships and a group discussion about lack of access to medical care provided additional inspiration.

Service :: Kriss Nichol

There were three deaths last night. Wee Mhairi and Catriona Henderson and old Mrs MacDonald. The stench below decks is insufferable and it's a relief to be here, wind whipping my hair and the sails, even if it is for their funeral.

I remember wee Mhairi, only seven months old, bundled up in her mother's shawl, smile at the ready for anyone who spoke to her, and Catriona toddling along behind her da, trying to get his attention. He'd pick her up and swing her above his head, her screeches of delight blending in the atmosphere with the cries of the gulls. Both silent now, wrapped tight in their shrouds. And Mrs MacDonald, crippled with arthritis, who shared her herbs and administered to the sick. Now she shares the sea with the wains and the others who died last week.

The flux has left me weak and I stagger with the swell of water. But it's the images that plague me - the wains being sewn into their shrouds, their wee noses threaded with the bodkin - making me feel faint. Yet at the same time I'm more aware of all around me, like the colour being turned up, and things happening in slow motion: the rock of the ship; flap of rigging; Bible pages fluttering in the Captain's hands; sobbing from Mr and Mrs Henderson; Mr MacDonald's head bowed, clutching his hat; the cacophony of birds; the splash of bodies hitting the water.

It's over.

Background: Robert Douglas joined the ship prior to picking up passengers in Annan in the South West of Scotland, before setting sail on 1st May 1775 bound for St John's Island (renamed Prince Edward Island in 1799).

The first document of Scottish settlement in the Americas was of Nova Scotia (New Scotland) in 1629. [source: Wikipedia]

The Crossing 1775 :: K A Vivers

Boarding the 'Lovely Nelly' at her home port of Whitehaven, it had proved to be a hazardous journey in a wooden sailing vessel with very little food and foul water to drink. Despite sailing in the Spring, he – along with his fellow passengers – had been forced to spend long periods below deck. Eight long weeks crossing the Atlantic. He considered himself one of the lucky ones, as he had not succumbed to anything more serious than an infestation of lice. There had been much suffering on board, and many died miserably. And now, there would be many challenges facing him in an unfamiliar land and climate and God knows what else. As a runaway, he had been unable to pay his passage, and had thrown himself at the mercy of the ship's master. On arrival in Canada, he would be put to work as an indentured servant, at least long enough to pay back the initial cost of the passage.

Notes on a Voyage II :: Alexandra Monlaur

6 weeks later
On board the Lovely Nelly

My Beloved Ishbel,

I have entrusted this letter to Captain Sheldrake, for fear that I will not survive this most pernicious of journeys. We remain at sea, battered by the most gigantic waves, with foul cold winds and little sign of respite from the storm. And yet, my love, this is not the worst of it. Many of my fellow passengers have died, among them the tiniest babes and most frail elders, some of them in the most obscene agony that I have ever witnessed. I too have had the flux for some weeks, and in fear of my mortal life have decided to pen this missive and beg you not to embark on the journey. I must insist on this, for although we are not yet wed, you must obey my command, save yourself and think no more of me; my soul has shrivelled at the pitiful and dread suffering of my fellows and I blame myself entire.

The Captain, from the first, a rough but Godly fellow invited me to stay on the deck of the ship, rather than in the bunks below. I readily agreed; however, I have spent much time below, praying daily for a safe and speedy voyage and preaching the Word of Our Lord. Alas, 'twas not long before sickness befell the frail and very young. These evils fell upon us gradually yet with an unremitting burden. The ship is barely seaworthy, leaking and creaking incessantly, overrun with vermin and with nowhere humanly decent to void bowels or bladder, the passengers are awash in foul detritus. I hope that you may never witness the horrifying degradation of human beings such as this. Once the food became spoiled and rampant disease raged, selfishness, hopelessness and even violence ensued. I prayed and pled for peace

and the all-encompassing compassion that so often marks the human spirit and yet I failed. And in my failure, I cannot live with the thoughts that torment me. These poor souls, many of whom have been cast overboard, dead and bound in winding sheets with barely a cursory blessing trusted me to lead them thus.

It was I, who upon reading the grandiose advertisements of a better life in the New World, encouraged my parishioners to leave the harsh dominance of their landlords and seek a just and Godly life in the Americas. Repentant, I cannot meet their stoic gaze now; I cannot bear my reflection in the bowl of fetid water as I lift it to my face to drink. I ask God not to deliver me, or bless me or save me. My only want is that this letter reaches you and that you are able to forget me; a miserable and lost soul, unworthy of any man's affection.

Farewell my heart, my Ishbel.

Yours, Edward.



Background: *In the dark days of uncertainty, the emigrants confined to the ship could only dream of a better life. Birth was often followed by death when diet and health were poor. It would be approached stoically, relying on their deep-seated faith in a God who would care for them through all their suffering.*

Safe in God's Hands :: Carol Price

Four weeks we have been sailing.
The ship lurches through the waves.
It shudders, creaks, the timbers shift
and water drips from decks above.
The wind howls and we huddle
in pathetic family groups,
gagging on the stench.
Vomit mixed with excrement
swills from upturned pails,
and I haven't felt the baby move for several days.

Oh Lord, You know our sorrows,
You lead us through dark times,
We trust in You, deliver us
to flourish in New Lands.

When the pangs of labour start,
they leave some space for me.
A filthy mattress on the floor,
a sheet tied up to rafters,
gives me some privacy.



The women gather round,
long schooled in birthing rites.
A lone piper's mournful sound
masks my moans and cries,
as a tiny lifeless child is brought into the world.

Oh Lord, you know our sorrows,
You lead us through dark times,
We trust in You, deliver us
to flourish in New Lands.

I held his limp, pale body,
his crumpled face I kissed,
then wrapped him in soft linen,
readied for his watery grave.
We stood on deck and said a prayer
as he slipped down through the waves,
to lay among the fishes,
cradled in the swaying weed.
Wee bairn, who never breathed,
I will keep you always in my heart.

Background: *Gavin Johnson was a passenger aboard the 'Lovely Nelly' sailing on 1st May, 1775. He is listed as a Schoolmaster and a scholar – aged 22 – from 'Bothwell, Lanark.' It would appear that he had no dependents, and travelled on his own. The enigmatic 'to find a place' was what caught my attention. Was it 'a place' in an educational establishment he sought, or was it a journey of self-discovery?*

The Evangelist :: K A Vivers

My name is Gavin Johnson and in 1775 a recent graduate from the University of Glasgow.

The second son of a Lanark farmer of modest means, the unexpected legacy from a bachelor uncle allowed me to pursue my education, gaining Distinction in Hebrew, Greek and Mathematics.

It soon became clear to me that teaching did not suit me, and I wished to abandon my post at Dumfries Academy, deciding instead to embark on an adventure.

It was in the Burgh that I heard talk of a boat the 'Lovely Nelly' carrying passengers to a new life in the Colonies.

We sailed on 1st May, 1775 to St John's Island² under the diligent stewardship of the ship's master, William Sheridan.

Most of my fellow passengers were unskilled farm labourers and their families from the parishes around Dumfries and Annan, looking to

escape hardship and make a better life for themselves. The Scottish Lowlands – along with most of Europe – had enjoyed a period of peace, but a series of bad harvests and adverse economic conditions, meant the prospect of land ownership – which we were told was guaranteed – had motivated families to gather together enough to pay for their passage, and food for the journey.

I quickly adapted to my new environment, for after all I was young and healthy with no dependants. At the beginning of the voyage I would often take my blankets and sleep on deck, giving up my berth to a fellow traveller from the parish of St Mungo who was weak of chest and in general delicate health, despite his protestations he was 'a worker who could support himself and his family.' David Irvine – for that was his name – confided in me that he had been unable to find farm work at the Hiring Market held the previous month in the nearby town of Lockerbie.

He felt he had no alternative but to scrape together enough for their passage to the New World. It had meant borrowing from family and friends which did not rest easy with this proud man, but he was determined to provide for his common-law wife Margaret Graham and their young family, aged 11, 7 and 3 years of age.

Thankfully we were oblivious to the hardships which were to face us in the New World. Disease and famine would stalk us – there would be times of starvation when many wouldn't make it through the harsh winters. Savages, wild animals and uncooperative French settlers would add to our woes.

² *Not renamed Prince Edward Island until 1799*

In order not to allow ourselves to worry about what might await us, we tried to stay cheery with talk of home and kinsfolk left behind.

It was at this time I discovered a gift which would ultimately be the calling to a religious life. Up until now I had not felt called to the Ministry, although it had always been my father's wish that I study Theology. A Calvinist, his character and way of life reflected his convictions, and this did have a profound and lasting influence on me and my dealings with others.

On the occasions when we sat round recalling our homeland, I discovered the ability to produce vivid illustrations like the image of a lantern on a wall, which entranced even the youngest of my listeners.

It became my mission to deepen and broaden the listeners' understanding of the Scriptures, for which they had a healthy appetite. I had a captive audience and I took comfort in the fact that it alleviated the deprivations on board – the lack of privacy, no sanitation, little space and no air or light in the holds. In the morning – or after a storm had abated – opening the hatches released a smell akin to a cesspit.

Although I cannot claim to have had a conversion experience which set me on the path of feeling the need to pass on the Gospel, the responsibility of all the souls on board began to weigh heavily on me.

With time on their hands, the menfolk would often seek me out and I quickly got to know family relationships, and those they had left behind. In confidence they shared the reasons for leaving and any past grievances and unresolved disputes with family and neighbours, and debts which they had been unable to repay. They were often fearful that if they deserted the God of their fore-fathers they would be

punished for it, and sought my reassurance that all would be well for them and their families in the 'New World'.

I began to feel the strain of the role as 'confidant', but I also felt humbled that God was calling me to a life of obedience – and ultimately of suffering.

I had inherited my father's physique with the shoulders of a ploughman, and I knew that my future was bound to these sons of the soil and with their families whom fate had chosen to accompany me on my adventure. I knew 'my place' was to walk with them every step of the way, however dark and hard that journey would prove to be.

'To this you were called...' 1 Peter 2:21 NIV



Background: In reviewing the passenger lists for the 'Lovely Nelly', the number of deaths on board was striking. The most vulnerable were the elderly, frail and very young. I tried to imagine the horror of losing a baby and the reaction of the fellow passengers and crew.

Torn :: Alexandra Monlaur

I cannot bear it. I cannot.
They tore him from my breast
where hidden soft in
the folds of my shawl
I had thought to keep him safe.
My boy. My boy,
whose suckling stilled. My breasts
wept milk as I sought to hide my tears.
Yet, they took him
alerted by our silence.
He lies now, beneath the evil seas
that claimed his innocent life.
Bound and unblessed.
Bound and unblessed.



Background: Research about the Transatlantic journeys undertaken by the Scots emigrants of the 18th Century revealed that the vessels they sailed in were often in poor condition and that the cramped conditions, shortage of food and clean water, combined with overcrowding and lack of fresh air below deck, led to high rates of serious illness and premature deaths, including those of children. This informed how the story of Annie and Dougie's family would be developed.

Further language research using a Scots Thesaurus, as well as the DSL helped me give some richness to the Scots tongue during Dougie's Plea. Much of the research done for Annie's Plea stood me in good stead for this piece too.

Dougie's Plea: The Second Prayer :: Jackie Johnston

Lord, forgie me ah'm nae oan ma knees, but in ma berth. Ah'm taen wi the bloody flux the noo an ah coupe wi the lurchin ship. Ah dinna wint tae fa oan the weans, or miss the pail wi spew, or the ither.

If Ye'd seen us, weel a suppose Ye did, the day we sailt. The heart-wrenchin decisions taen, ma family wi prospects o a new life. The Lovely Nelly, anchored up. Wi er fine riggin, she looked lik a paintin. Fowk gaitherin, fear etchin itsel on their hungry faces, jist lik oors, aye, bit markt oot wi hope an aw, as sure as a yowe efter the tup. Annie hid worrit since lang afore daylight; shi hudna slept; ae thing efter anither, she conjured up tae long for when wi'd be gone: the whaap whistlin oan the wing ower Criffel, the lassies nae langer bein able tae clammer ower the deep dykes that wrap aroon Dulce Cor an gether the sweet tastin brammles that growe there. Sweet, but a belly needs mair than

berries. Shi hankers for the whaap's ca, bit mind shi his the agent a whaap-neb, which as Ye'll ken, is nae intendit tae flatter. Annie is kindness itsel, bit somewye cautious about the man. Ah've seen him gie er the ee, bit fain that's hoo he is wi aw the weemen. Mine, the hairs oan the back o er neck are whit shi trusts. Shi's mebbe richt about im. Weel, agent or no, her stallin about gettin aboard stapped deid at the sicht o the ship itsel. The weavers fiddled tae cheer us aa loadin oor baskets an bags, an accoutrements. We'd be breakin new earth. The bairnies wir jiggin wi thir new freens.

Lord, Ah'm strang; Ye made me so. Ah'll get ower the flux, bit ma Annie is steeped in grief fur her babbies. Me an aw, but ma first concern is Annie, wha birthed them an loued them like the fiercest mither. Ah'll nae forget oor lassies' wild reed hair, thir fine ferntickled skin or, the meenister layin the mortcloth upon them afore they drapped intae the wash ablow the boat. Bound tichtly thegither thi wur; in life, thi rarely were pairted. Ah ken some body can be taen in a day, sae ah'm compelled tae ask, Dearest Faither, fur Annie, jist this ane plea: ma faithfu wife, whae Ye, In Yer Perfect Judgement, joined wi me in mairriage, is bereft an withoot the easy equilibrium o er mind since losin the bairns. An ah see the early signs o flux upon her an am nae convinced that she will thole the baith adversities athoot Yer help. Wid Ye strengthen her till ah'm withoot the seekness, Lord an ah can aid er then? I've seen ither fowlk wi this same ailment an ken ah'll be worse afore I recover. Ma mooth is dry an watter his become a rare thing. I'm mindful o the story o Job. I dinna unnerstaun the gein and the takin awa, but I ken the words frae the Kirk readins. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Amen.

Background: *William and his family were on the passenger list for the 'Lovely Nelly'. They had travelled from Colvend to board the ship at Annan. I thought of how frightening the whole experience of waiting on the quayside would have been, especially for a child. William had to witness the roughness and indifferent attitude of the crew. I imagined he would have had no idea where his young life was going, but was old enough to remember that day.*

William's Memoir :: Eleanor Chesters

My vision of that time
will never leave me,
shivering and fearful on the quay
holding onto my mother's skirt
afraid to let go

I stared ahead at the chaos,
amid the deafening noise
of men screaming orders
that penetrated my skull
and still does

A lad I'd seen earlier
who was one of the crew,
smiled at me from the deck
and we gazed at each other
with the same fear in our eyes
'Git doun! Tak a haud boy'
yelled the crewman,

The Arrival

the lad looked up as if in slow motion
as the heavy timber crashed down upon him
mercilessly hurling him into the waves

'He haud haunds like a wumin'
spat the crewman,
and the others laughed
as the lad's body floated
beside the ship

I often think of that lad,
the cruelty inflicted
the total rejection
of a life not needed
a soul unwanted

The Lovely Nelly,
how that name belied the squalid ship
where hundreds suffered
and others died
in misery

I'm now an old man
I've seen people prosper
And others not,
I still have my demons
But open my eyes and sing

***Background:** I used information about sea journeys and conditions but really wanted to concentrate on what the immigrants might be experiencing when they caught sight of land after their ordeals. I tried to imagine what had propelled them to make the journey in the first place, what their expectations might have been and how that might have diminished during the voyage. Then I tried to imagine what their feelings might have been knowing that their journey was coming to an end, and what feelings might have been triggered by that knowledge.*

The Comfort of Trees :: Kriss Nichol

lost in my own deep-water winter
after months at sea
hoarse chill breath of
disease and death
I am roused by shouts
land look land
as a new scent reaches me

it is the presence of trees
I will remember most
alive wind-shaken like us
but deep-rooted in earth and rock

Escape :: Edmund Wigram

solid columns of silence
that mark our passage
round the headland

no longer wandering or drifting
dead ground of home
slips away replaced by a fertility
that wells up trunks
whatever follows cannot erase
this hope this promise



Background: *This story wrote itself; I took a name from the 1774 'Lovely Nelly' passenger list, William Blair from Colvend, and we set off together. Very soon we were sailing and he had volunteered to help on deck so I looked into how the square-rigged ships of those days worked, in order to be able to describe what he was doing. The storm came upon me as a memory of my own journey to Canada nearly two hundred years later, going to a new life with a young pregnant wife. We were in a steel hulled ship of ten thousand tons, and even in that we were driven back for three days, unable to force our way safely against the huge seas. I felt able to understand William's fear and exhilaration, trying to be there with him in a small wooden ship with only sails for power. He eventually told me that he was on the run and had used another's name to travel with. He was clearly resourceful, and able to work at anything, but he turned out to be an adventurer.*

We were full of hope sailing down the Irish Sea to Douglas, Isle of Man, warm in the spring sunshine, gaining some shelter in the lee of Ireland from the strong westerly wind. Shipmaster Sheridan allowed us to walk on the open deck for fresh air, whilst we took on board the last passengers here, a kindly gesture from an otherwise brusque and distant man. I so enjoyed the beauty of blue sea and sky, reminding me of the wild open northern land I'd left forever.

It felt a good omen.

As I had been at sea before, I volunteered to help the deckhands, suggesting to Master Sheridan that another pair of strong arms might be welcome. They taught me the ropes on this elderly Snow ship, with its two masts and the *snauw mizzen* close by the main mast, which gives this class their name.

We had to beat into the wind past Cobh and Baltimore, and the master decided to pause in Crookhaven to top up with fresh water and a few supplies. Passengers were allowed ashore for two hours but warned that if they did not return, he would not wait.

Come what may, we will be out on the top of the afternoon ebb tide.

None dared venture far. We had all invested everything in this voyage to Canada, and had no wish for it to end in Ireland, friendly as these people are.

We left on time, the hatches battened down, checked, and checked again, fit for the long journey across the empty wild and now grey

waters of the ocean. The master directed all our actions, and we obeyed, trusting in his years of experience of the perils of this ocean crossing. Little did I know what was to come, the warmth and beauty of our beginning did not last long, the sun had left us along the southern shores of Ireland. Our great hopes for this adventure had no understanding of the unthinkable, indeed unknowable, dangers to come. It took a lifetime, but now in my old age I'm happy to be here, and glad I came.

Our first landing was a forested wilderness, and I, like many of us, had come from a very different land, with none of the skills for living here. I moved on as soon as I could, working my passage through into the heart of this great land, and found rocky places further north, with sparser forests and open vistas, where my heart could sing again in springtime, after the deep of winter.

Winter here dominates every living thing. We all feast in summer and autumn as best we can, and work hard to build up stores for the long dark nights when snow buries the world, and the wild beasts roam in search of food.

With the wisdom of age, I can see how the waves of immigration into eastern Canada not only fed the motherland with high quality timbers, but also filled the places where French settlers came before us, still resentful of their recent defeat by British forces. We were to be a balancing factor in the population of this recently captured French colony. During my lifetime, many of the French settlers moved on. Pressured away from their homes by the new arrivals they travelled further west, and often south into the new republic of the United States.

But I am reminiscing, and have drifted far ahead of my story, for we are still on the Lovely Nelly. We have yet to arrive in Canada; we are just leaving Ireland, with a south westerly wind now driving us into a long reach north west towards the icy world of Greenland and the Labrador Sea. The waves were strong but the ship felt sound enough as we made good time for the first two weeks. One evening the south westerly brought a storm of unimaginable power, driving us back up the east side of Greenland, towards the rocks of Iceland. We stowed all the sails in the fading light of the gloaming and bound them tight to the yards, checked the stays, shrouds, and halyards, and prayed that the mizzen would hold our bow to the wind, for we had no drogue for a storm anchor.

That was the longest night of my life. There was a glimmer of light through the clouds, for the moon was near full, and when a gap came and the light shone clear we could see the walls of water driving towards us, higher than the masts, white spray stripped from the top by the huge wind. The ship's bow vanished into the water, then lifted with a burst of new life as our buoyancy fought back. We flew up the wave front and into the streaming foam of the crest, and there the full force of the wind hit and shredded another strip off the mizzen. We slid down into the next trough, and a brief moment of relative calm before the next wave carried us back up. The master and two hands were holding the wheel and helping to keep us straight, and I stood by with another to steady them, and to run to tighten a rope here, or hammer a wedge there, as the endless flexing of the ship loosened everything.

I should have felt terror, and sometimes did for brief moments of shock as the walls of water came over the bow, fearing this time might be the last, and the ship would plunge into the wave forever. But I was young and strong, and eternal, and for me it was exhilaration, the excitement

of riding this storm was unmatched in all my life, and never again did I have to work so hard to survive. For three days we were driven back riding the huge waves, and it was five days ere the wind dropped enough to set some sail and start the long fight back around the southern tip of Greenland.

Life below deck for the passengers was horrific, I could not bear to be there, and kept to the main deck and the ropes, and slept in a corner of the crew's quarters. As a sure climber I was often sent aloft, and on our last lap in it was a good place to be. I had fine views of the land we were approaching, and called out when there were rocks, and otherwise relaxed standing high on the yard, holding the mast with one arm and gripping the topmast shrouds with the other. There were rewards as well as dangerous times.

When we had offloaded at St John's Island we brought any perishable stores onto the deck and carried buckets and pumped water through leaky hoses to wash the lower areas. I asked Master Sheridan if I could work my passage upriver, and he allowed it, so I hardly set foot on Canadian soil before setting sail again, albeit only for a few more days.

The French ruled these parts of Canada for many years until General Wolfe's recent victory forced their army to flee from Quebec to Montreal. After a second bloody battle, which the French won, both sides licked their wounds, unable to take decisive action until winter was over. The British reinforcements arrived in time to finally force the tired remnants of the French force to submit at the end of the following year. Like us, the French did not take kindly to submission, but after fifteen years there was an uneasy peace between our peoples.

Every year I moved further westward, working my passage through the great rivers and lakes of this amazing land, a marvel of exquisite beauty, occupied before us by quiet peaceful people living in harmony with the natural world. I learned to respect them, and to seek their wisdom in all matters of survival, especially through the deep long cold winters.

My name is my own, you will not find it in the manifest, I enrolled with a southern name, called myself William Blair from Colvend to blend in for the journey. I was on the run, and had absconded from Shiphoint on Lewis, and there was a price on my head. I was born in the years of Cumberland's terrible rule, to parents who he murdered, and I was sheltered and moved on countless times before my escape to come to Canada. They never came here to find me; here my life has been full, free, and good. One day you may ponder over my gravestone, worn and weathered, far into this wild land.

I will die as Mackenzie; only then will you know my name.



Notes on a Voyage III :: Alexandra Monlaur

1 Year later

Delivered by the hand of Captain Sheldrake

My Dear Edward,

How your letter appalled me! I wept at the suffering you had endured and mourned the souls that you were unable to comfort. I could not comprehend the horrors you described, for they are, with the Grace of God, far from my experience. Captain Sheldrake delivered the letter to me by hand and with kind patience and concern for my womanly frailty, described for me the rigours of such journeys.

I have found it difficult to forget you, prayers will always fall gently from my lips with you in mind. I hope and trust that you will have recovered from your sickness, as Captain Sheldrake informed me that he left you in the good care of a widowed woman, once married to a weaver. I hope too that you have recovered your faith, God tested you, and you survived. You must, I beg you, continue with your mission to bring Christian solace and succour to those around you.

Captain Sheldrake remained in the parish for several months. Occasionally returning to manage the business of his home, for these voyages have made him wealthy and often consulted in the affairs of his hometown for his wise and steady counsel. I have found him to be a most agreeable companion. He is, as you observed, not well educated, yet his rugged visage conceals a thoughtful, amiable and moral personage.

Our love, Edward, was like bathing in the rays of the sun, it cheered my heart and made me worthy to become your wife and helpmeet. I trust upon that love to endure when all else has perished, the goodness of your love will forever enlighten any goodness or purity within me. Yet, we cannot be together. You forbade it and I will obey. Captain Sheldrake, or William as I must now call him, and I are betrothed and will marry before his final voyage, this year of 1775.

I must leave now, Edward, may my good and pure thoughts journey with this missive and find you well. Fear not for me. William is a fine man and we will rub along together very well; I have no doubt. I will exchange the golden blessing of your love for comfort and security whilst I strive to be a good and thoughtful wife.

Farewell, Edward my true heart.

Your loving friend Ishbel.



Background: *Initially, my emphasis was on finding out a bit about the island, at which our emigrants had finally landed. I consulted many texts online, but the one I'd like to highlight, I came upon by chance. It contained so much of what I wanted to know about the geology of the island, its flora and fauna, its history of earlier settlement etc. and I found it all in a wonderful dissertation entitled The Environmental Pre-History of Prince Edward Island 1769 to 1970: A Reconnaissance In Force. It was written by a student called Colin Allen Macintyre and submitted to PEI University as his thesis for a Degree of Master of Arts In Island Studies. His own family's history on the island went way back and during his boyhood, he had loved the place. Sometimes as a writer, you get lucky! I hope he got his degree. His work provided me with an invaluable sense of the lives of the Mi'kmaq and Annie's response to discovering their existence helped to create her character.*

I wrote the three linked pieces hoping that the reader might experience moments of recognition from one piece to the others and my search for a Biblical story which might provide a link between the end of Dougie's Plea and the end of Annie's New World was found in some of the guides to the Old and New Testaments online.

Annie's New World: The Third Prayer :: Jackie Johnston

Lord! Great an Powerfu Lord! Did ye mak it ower thon sea, then? Ah nivver aince encountert Yer Holy Presence on The Nelly! Ye're awhere, are Ye? Were Ye in thon cauld depths, tae comfort ma bairnies athoot their mammy or daddy? Did Ye plan this fur me? That ah'd be alane wi naebody o ma ain? A wee bit kindness fur Dougie. The ain thing ah gaithered up ma courage tae ask fur. Is letting ma girls an ma man dee yer idea o bein kind? An Dougie saw thim dee.

Ye must be deaf or there's something wrang wi Ye! Ah'm nae beggin Yer forgiveness this time because ah'm no in a Kirk, or because ah'm ravin. An a dinna care if ma hair's encrustit wi sawt an ma erms an legs are covert wi bluid. Ah've traiked through gressy mersk, haiked ower reed rocks an crunched along bleached oot saund to find ye. I aye get Ye where there's nae a soul, when the moon is oot, maist fowk are sleepin. Whit's that about? Ach, ah forgot, Ye dinna answer! I micht as well converse wi masel; in fact, noo ah dae. Ah've seen thim observin mi an indicatin, ane tae the ither, that they think ah've lost ma heid. Ah micht as weel lose that an a'.

The dockin o the ship ah dinna recall, nor the journey frae the harbour on; Ah'm telt thi cairried me aff. The fowks thit were destined tae be oan the neeborin land tae mine, oors, weel, ah dinna ken .. they dae ken kindness an ah have felt it. I needed it frae Yirsel. Whit am ah tae dae? The land will gae fur forfeit if it's nae formally claimt in days. An there is ither fowk here aready. Aw sorts, the French hae been an cut doon trees but left the stumps in. Nae sae guid. An dae Ye ken, weel Ye micht or no, whit wi Yir habit o bein missin when certain things are happenin, bit there's fowk, whae's families hiv bide here for thousands o years; tha's whit thi say. The Mi'kmaq fowk. Thi've goat thir ain language an they canna haulf hunt an fish. Ye shuid see thir patterned claes, wi quiltin an feathers. O, aye, Ye ken athin.

Is this ma New World? White saund, walruses for ile fir makin soap, muckle black bears. Wi used tae be sayin, "Lassies, luik at the size o that tod". Whit wid they mak o this. An sleepin unner furs. That's the sadness o it a'. They'd hae been ower themsels at aa this new life. An Dougie, o ma Dougie, he wid hae loued it. Can ye no brak a rule an gie mi a sign? It's a burdensome decision nae tae shair. O Lord, wha's this comin along the beach noo. Ah can

bare but see wi the spray along there. Dinna tell mi; it's thon agent, Yi ken, whaap-neb? Or is it Auld Whaap Neb hissel? Lord? Lord! Weel, Amen tae that.

Brave New World :: Angela Taylor

William fidgeted in his seat and sighed. He was bored. He hated Sunday. Nothing but church, church and more church, and this preacher wasn't much good at talking, at least not as good as Grandda. He sighed again, swinging his legs backwards and forwards until his mother frowned at him to stop. Then he craned his neck, desperately trying to see out of the high window, but he was too small. Being seven wasn't much fun. With his Da away all week working on their new plot of land, he had to do all the fetching and carrying for Ma, with the rather less than helpful Jamie at his heels. Sundays were the only day in the week when all the family came together, and most of it was wasted in church.

Church had been much more fun back home, because of Grandda being the Minister. He could tell exciting stories about farming wheat and tares, and a man being set upon by robbers then being saved by his enemy. Then there was his favourite story about the shepherd boy who killed a giant with just a stone and a sling, and eventually became king! That was what he wanted. To become a king, just like David. He used to help his Da with the sheep back home, until the landlord decided he wanted nothing but cattle about the place. David had inspired him to practise with a sling and he was getting pretty good at it. There was the odd mishap now and then, like the time he had put a stone through Mrs Macpherson's window. She was not amused; even now she turned round from time to time to glare at him and mutter to her neighbour about

boys in general, and William in particular. William couldn't think why she was being so mean. It wasn't as if he meant to do it. Jamie had jumped out on him unexpectedly and the stone had gone rogue, that was all. Anyone would think he'd been trying to kill her from all the fuss she created.

It was no fun here! No fun at all! The old bats on the front rows kept eyeing him from behind their hymn books, checking up on him. Why did they have to look at him? The voice inside his head rose to a shriek. It wasn't as if he had done anything to cause them any trouble, well at least, not more than usual.

If only they were back home with Grandda. He didn't mind if he and Jamie ran up and down the aisle while the congregation sang songs, but here, the Minister wouldn't allow them to move, let alone listen to any fun stories. He stood up in the pulpit like an old crow, his nose dripping onto the Bible in front of him, his stubby, white beard bouncing up and down as he tried his best to rouse the congregation, and all the while one beady eye seemed to be firmly fixed in William's direction.

William was longing to get out and explore. He wasn't used to being cooped up for so long. The voyage had been bad enough, even though he had managed to escape now and then from his mother's clutches to go and stand on deck where he got in everyone's way asking questions. He was curious about everything. He couldn't help it. He had been born like it. After all, if he was going to be a king one day, he would need to know 'things'. He fell to daydreaming for a moment. *I wonder what sort of giant I shall have to kill?* he thought to himself. *Will he be big and fierce like Goliath?* Just then his eye fell on Patrick Kelly whose family had boarded the ship in Ireland. *Now there was a Goliath if ever I saw one,* he thought. Patrick Kelly had been the bane of William's short life

ever since they left the coast of Ireland. He was big and stupid, the son of a farm labourer but without any imagination. He was just big and cruel. Patrick must have felt him looking as he turned and raised a clenched fist in his direction. William sighed again. That was another reason to keep practising with the sling. Maybe one day he'd have to kill Patrick Kelly.

The Minister's voice droned on, and he turned to catch Jamie's eye, but Jamie had his head on Mother's arm and was fast asleep. He sighed again, then gently moved his hand over to Jamie's bare leg and pinched him. Jamie woke up with a start and a shrill scream echoed around the room. The Minister stopped talking and scowled furiously in their direction. The congregation all turned round as Jamie's scream turned into an uproar, and Jessie Sinclair turned around and stuck her tongue out at him. Ma and Da jumped then turned to glare at him, while Jamie screamed out at the top of his voice, "He pinched me Ma, William pinched me!" Getting to his feet, his Da hauled William up by his collar, out of his seat and walked him to the back of the church. "Go and sit outside and wait there till we come out," he hissed at him. "Why can't you sit still for five minutes?"

William let himself out of the heavy wooden door into the autumn sunshine, his face burning from a clout across the ear. It was quiet here and very similar to back home in Scotland. They had only been here three weeks, but he liked it. There was lots of space, and beaches asking to be explored. He looked around, at the few scrubby trees, and an assortment of wooden crosses set over a number of graves. People seemed to die fast here, or maybe after the long sea voyage, it was to be expected. The grass certainly wasn't as green as it was back home. Here the tops had all gone to seed and turned to golden-brown stalks.

He picked up a stick and began swishing it backwards and forwards amongst the dry stems.

The congregation were busy singing another hymn, '*All Things Bright and Beautiful*', one of his favourites. *I wonder how much longer they will be?* he thought to himself as he headed towards the roadway and started walking, whistling to himself under his breath. But he didn't mind. He quite enjoyed being on his own. It made a change and he could think. They called this the 'Brave New World'. Well, he was brave, he was relatively new, this was a new world to conquer, and by golly, one day he would slay his giant and become a king, king of Prince Edward Island!



Haiku :: Eleanor Chesters

Journey's end at last
Leaving ship with empty heads
Wanting to survive

Background: I wanted to imagine the 'movie scene' of the arrival of Isabelle McKie's ship and its passengers on Prince Edward Island, and try to convey the sense of bewilderment and excitement that the passengers must have felt when they disembarked on an unfamiliar land.

The Arrival (Prince Edward Island, 1774) :: Jean Manson

A ship arrives –
Bedraggled but still afloat,
A tale of storms implicit in its sails.

They stumble off in staggered groups,
Some holding babes, all wide-eyed,
Gazing blearily at this supposedly regal land.

As sea legs become land legs,
As eyes take in the wilderness of trees,
A lone hut sits neglected in the distance –
A hint of settlers gone by.

No shelter nor food, no clothes save those on their backs,
But a chance to make a better life!
It cannot be worse than the one left behind,
This was the dream that was promised.

A bear bellows in the distance.

Background: Arrival on Prince Edward Island, in the words of Thomas, aged 11, the eldest of the Waugh children. The other children are Alexander, William, Catherine, Wellwood and Mary. Information on the family, including dates of birth, is available at WikiTree: <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Waugh-1082>. This account is imagined.

Arrival :: Jane Richardson

The day we left the *Lovely Nelly* I saw my mother weep.

I was able to walk quite well but we were rolling about just as we had done on the ship. I took Cathie's hand. Mary tried to run ahead, but her wee legs crumpled underneath her. There was a little wooden house (Mother said it was a hut). There was firewood. And there were fish and vegetables which our neighbours had left. Sandy and I went to the river for water. He splashed me, and I splashed him back. We laughed till our empty bellies ached. That felt so good. Then Mother set to and scrubbed us, all of us. There were beasties in the basin, lots of them. I knew I had itched, but I didn't know there would be that many. Feeling clean felt odd, and it tingled. The flames from the fire leapt, and the smell of cooking was good but Willie and Wellwood were sick afterwards. Mother said our stomachs would have to learn to accept food again. Another family joined us and we sang our hearts out round the fire. Good Scottish songs, because we all knew the words. Father says we will have to work and pray hard in this new place. The mice ate all our seed and we will need more to grow vegetables. We will have to chop trees to make space for a new house. Father is a stavemaker, and I will help.

That day I saw my mother weep.

Background: *I started with a visit to the Museum of Scotland in Chambers Street, Edinburgh to look at the wider picture of what was happening in Scotland in the 1770s.*

I spent most time looking at the display of artefacts from the period, especially at construction techniques of basic homes, and objects in daily use of the time.

I next examined the passenger list for 'The Lovely Nelly', and found John McGeorge aged 24 years apparently travelling alone, since there was no one else listed with that name. I joined him up with the Harrieson family, who had five daughters, and gave him reasons to team up with David Harrieson; protection for the girls, and John's comparative youth and strength. The story unfolded from these two premises.

Beginnings :: Judith Muir

It was a cold coming when we finally docked into harbour at Prince Edward Island. As cold as ever it had been out on the sea and we were weakened by the voyage, hungry and tired, filthy and sick.

We were however all alive; me, John McGeorge, Davy and Janet Harrieson and, miraculously, all five of their daughters had so far survived that terrible time. We fell off the ship onto the quayside, limbs trembling with weeks of keeping our balance on the moving waters, and now refusing to work for us as we moved sluggishly to collect our stores and tents to see us through our first winter. I took deep, thankful breaths of that cold air; no matter it stank of fish, humanity and smoke. It was free of decay and as we moved away from the harbour, it

penetrated deep into my lungs making me feel clean and whole again. It was free air, and full of possibilities. I caught Davy's eye as we plodded on up the track to our plot, hefting the kist from one shoulder to the other as its weight, and the steepness of the track began to tell. Agnes and her elder sister carried the other one between them; I fell back to walk behind them. With Davy leading we were better placed that way to spot trouble before it took us unawares. There'd been some nasty moments on board when the elder girls had been subjected to attacks which so far, we'd been able to thwart but who knew what dangers threatened in this cold, glinting land under the waning November sun? It was just such an attack that had brought me to Davy's notice, the day I'd bloodied the nose of some lout who tried to take Agnes unawares. He and Janet had been grateful and though they'd not said much, Janet had suggested I pool my rations with theirs and share what we had. I was glad of the company and found in the Harriesons the family I'd lost when Ma died and my Pa never returned from his last fishing trip. The wee girls were fun, liking my stories and jokes, and in Davy I found a man I could respect even while he appreciated my strength. I thought of this and much more as we trudged through the countryside, hoping we'd get to our destination before it grew completely dark so we could get the tent up, a fire going, prepare some food.

Next morning, I rolled over as I woke, wondering for a moment why the walls weren't moving, why the creaks of the ship were silent and no foul odour assailed my nostrils. The frost had stiffened my clothes and my hands were numb with the cold. Last night we'd arrived at our plot as the sun was setting so we'd hastily erected our tents while sending the girls to collect wood for the fire. Janet had filled her kettle from the nearby burn which ran cold and clear down one side of our plot, disappearing over a low cliff to the beach below, and soon we'd all had

hot porridge inside us, tasting all the better for not being made with fetid water in which things floated. I rose, moved outside to get the fire going to find Agnes there before me, smiling gently at me as we worked together. She was always gentle, Agnes, but there was strength and determination there as well; had to be to stand any chance in this strange new world we found ourselves in. Over the following weeks I watched her be gentle with wee Maggie when she fell ill. It started with a cough but she never seemed to throw it off and by the spring she was obviously losing weight. Consumption. Probably got it while on that stinking vessel. When she started bringing up blood-stained phlegm, we knew it was only a matter of time. Maggie died as the summer came in and we buried her in the cemetery down by the harbour, looking out at the ocean that brought her so far from home only to die in foreign parts.

That was just one of the difficulties we had to face; losing her youngest was hard on Janet but every day we had to fight to survive. Fight the winter weather in all its harshness, the soil to clear before planting, the very trees we had to fell to turn into our home. That first winter I think we all asked ourselves if it was worth it; had it been for this we'd endured that long, hellish voyage, turning our backs on everything we'd known, leaving the familiar and dear, only to freeze, starve and die here? Then reason would assert itself and I'd know I could freeze, starve and die as easily if I'd stayed in Scotland; coming here I had a chance. We all had a chance, a second chance at life. The air I breathed was clean, I called no man my master, I had companionship and, following a lucky shot with Davy's musket we had fresh meat! I skinned a deer and that day, and for some to come, we had venison steaks. Other days I would take a break from logging and take my

dubrock³ down to the strip of beach that ran at the foot of our cliff and see if I couldn't get a trout in the shallow waters there. Then we'd have fish rolled in oats for supper. If it wasn't for the game I caught that first year, we'd have surely starved, as our rations were delayed. Janet took mine and Davy's coats one day and bargained with some French settlers who lived on the plot next to ours. She'd seen they had potatoes, which was something we'd not set eyes on since the start of our voyage. None of the women spoke a word of one another's language but that didn't stop Janet! She returned triumphant with a sack of tatties and told me getting that next tree down would soon warm me up.

Gradually we got to know our neighbours; those that would help out with heavy work, tell us when the next ship was due in with letters from home – Janet set much store by that, looking out for word from her sister – some shared tools and one told me where I could get my hoe riveted down at the quay where a blacksmith had set up his trade. We got on alright with the Frenchies; the Auld Alliance between our countries still had echoes for some and the children quickly learnt, chattering away in their games when they weren't working alongside their parents. We weren't so sure about some further down the track towards the town. The men there had already noticed our women, Helen at 14 years now was bidding fair to be another such beauty like her elder sisters and I knew Davy worried for them. We couldn't do much; a man with a musket in that wild country could have pretty much whatever he could take. Our safety lay in numbers and in sticking together so we became firm friends with our immediate neighbours, and never let the girls roam too far from us.

³ rake-shaped implement made of wood, used for catching trout.

By summer we had a log cabin built and moved in before Harvest. That was good, to feel safe again and be able to close the door against the worst of the weather. We'd cleared enough ground for planting by early spring to feed the six of us, the cow and the calf we'd finally been given at Christmas had so far lived and gave us milk, and there was the prospect the following year of mating our heifer with a neighbour's bull. There was sure enough grazing around for all. The only pause had come when we started putting up walls in the cabin, dividing it into living and sleeping space; there was a room for Janet and Davy, and the girls would share, for me we constructed a shed at the rear that joined the main cabin. It was fine for a single man but I didn't want to be single any longer. I wanted Agnes. We'd lived and worked together for more than six months; we'd endured and survived nameless horrors. Davy knew what manner of man I was, would he entrust his daughter to me?

Of course, Janet sorted it for me. Or for Agnes maybe? Like she'd sorted everything for us since we left Annan. Janet was a born organiser, could see ahead, plan for the future and was a good mother to her brood of girls. Brought them up the same way; young Janet at ten years old was bidding fair to be as managing as her mother. 'Just ask him,' ordered Janet, 'go on, just do.' So, one day I did, in few words and much kicking of my boots against the clods but Davy got it. A grin broke across his normally anxious features as he suggested I better ask Agnes herself but he'd have no problem turning my shelter into a byre and moving the cow in once we'd built ourselves another cabin.

So, we did just that. I spent every spare moment I had building Agnes the finest log cabin I could, and we wed the following year in the tiny chapel in Georgetown as the leaves turned gold.

Background: *When I meditated for a poem the picture of the birch bark canoe came immediately, and it was William who learned to make it and was then able to travel anywhere. I looked into Canadian makers of canoes and there are some differences in materials used depending on locations across Canada. The Canadian Museum of History dates their beginnings three thousand years ago, when the stone tools needed for making dugout canoes were being replaced by the tools needed for bark canoes. They were rapidly adopted by the Europeans when they arrived two thousand five hundred years later, and may have been more readily made using the iron tools and knives the Europeans brought with them.*

Birch Bark Canoe :: Edmund Wigram

Whispering water strokes my birch canoe.
Paddle dipping, soundless, like kingfisher,
Parts mirrored earth and sky, leaving slow swirling eddies.

Slipping through willows weeping into golden brown waters
Rich in peat, like home, seven long years ago.
We didn't know then how to make such craft.

Light to carry, tortoise-like, past wild waters unsafe for life.
Strong, resilient, unsinkable, everything floats,
Naturally, like a dry leaf sailing the surface.

To have yours, learn to make it.
The knowledge is a gift in the native peoples
Children of this watery wonderland.

White birch trees, yield their bark.
Springtime is best, peeled with care,
A cut too deep kills the tree.

White spruce splits willingly
For the skilled hand. and shapes
The skeleton of my canoe.

For the floor cedar is best
Neither warps nor rots.
Dry planks for kneeling.

Long lateral surface roots make ties to bind the whole.
Sealed with pitch, melted with fat,
Bear is best, keeps it watertight.

Shape, bend, trim and cut; new skills to learn
Birthing this exquisite form of
Natural elegance; my canoe.

Now I am a traveller seeking pathways
Throughout this land of forests, lakes, rivers
Deserts and mountains. I love it all.

My tombstone will be aside the water
Where only canoes go, calm, quiet, beautiful.
Look for me in springtime amongst the flowers.

Background: *This was inspired by an article by CBC News (the same article that inspired the 'Imagined Diaries of Isabella McKie'), which stated that the last bear on Prince Edward Island was thought to have been killed by the Leslie family in 1927. Further research indicated that Prince Edward Island used to have a large bear population which was killed off as people began to settle on the island and bears became a threat to farming. I was also struck by an article written by Jim Hornby called 'Bear Facts: The History and Folklore of Island Bears Part One' in which he mentions that 'a report from Mount Albion tells of "a bear that took a lamb off the tether within a few feet of [Murphy's] door, skinned the lamb and folded the pelt up almost as nicely as if done by a butcher"'.*

Bear Grumbles :: Jean Manson

I was born here in this world of greens and browns,
Blind and bawling with two other cubs,
Our mother, with her fine black fur,
Keeping us warm and fed.

That's the spot where we used to den,
My brothers long gone now.
That's where that tree used to stand,
Where our mother left us when she had to hunt,
Ready to climb at the first sign of danger.

This green and brown world was all mine,
Full of bursty-juicy berries and crunchy-crawly ants,
A slumbering and peaceful life,
With a warm den when the winters arrived.

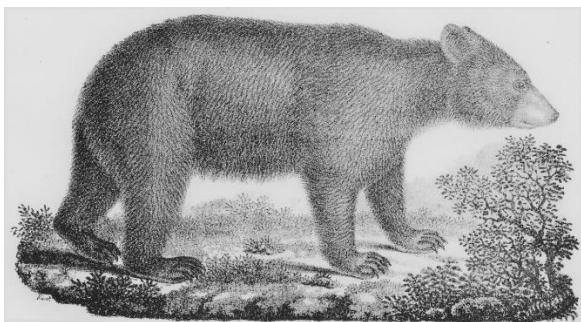
Until they came.

Those two-legged creatures floated in from the big blue,
I watched through the trees as, bit by bit,
The greens and browns were cleared to make way
For other strange growths and dwellings.

My home grew smaller as they cut down my trees,
But they also brought creatures that I could eat,
Delicious, four-legged, woolly things –
An occasional treat.

I never took more than my fair share
And always tidied up after myself,
Yet they still made angry sounds
and tore down more of my home.

I am getting hungrier
And they are looking tastier.
This was my world first –
Eat or be eaten.



Background: *In undertaking internet research on the colonisation of Prince Edward Island (formerly St John's Island under the French and originally Epekwitk (roughly translated as 'lying in the water'); I discovered that the native Mi'kmaq inhabitants had been subjected to a form of cultural suppression via the imposition of Residential Schools on the child population. These schools existed to provide a basic level of formal education and promote the beliefs and culture of the colonising nation. Dress, language and social and cultural norms were imposed by the educators, often under the auspices of charitable or religious organisations. I couldn't think of a more relevant metaphor than the 'Spelling Bee' to demonstrate the deliberate erosion of language, particularly important to First Nation inhabitants given their tradition of spoken word (rather than written) history and culture. The Canadian Encyclopædia was a helpful source for this work.*

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia>

The Spelling Bee :: Alexandra Monlaur

These strange clothes are cold and stiff,
they wear away my skin and more securely
constrain my limbs
even than the narrow bed and wooden chair,
on which I'm forced to sit.
My neck burns with shame, my fingers clench
for I am Mi'kmaq no more.

Instead. A bible, sins and perdition.
Teachers,
faces pale as a bar of soap, talk of goodness.
Extinguishing my heritage, my story,



my mother tongue,
stealthily, like pickpockets, in the marketplace.
Helpless, I am Mi'kmaq no more.

Today, we sit, in a row
stiff as the corn stalks they planted.
Fearful; about to be tested, on words that
emerge reluctantly from our lips.
Sounds so choking, mouth-filling in
their harsh disgorging from the throat.
In language, I am Mi'kmaq no more.

Background: *The detail of this piece comes almost wholly from Frances Wilkins' relating of the conditions and situations that awaited the 'Lovely Nelly' settlers once they reached Prince Edward Island. This pamphlet is mentioned in the Introduction and has proved a most stimulating document during this project. Prominent in this piece is the character of Thomas Chisholm, whose legal battle to receive his idea of his expenses and outgoings is the central topic of the pamphlet, which also makes clear that he was a capable and thoughtful agent for Lot 52 who did much good for the settlers in his care.*

**Grizoe's letter home to her mother and mother-in-law ::
Vivien Jones**

Prince Edward Island. November 1775, from Lot 52.

Dear Mothers,

I write to you both so that you may share the same news of our wee family. Still intact, though many are not after a such voyage. William's leg is healing after the accident but may never be quite right again. Wee John is now 16 months old and trying to walk. 'Wee' John is the right name - is there anything more heartbreaking to a mother than a thin child? I look at the barrels in the clearing that William first cut, and see there is flour, a half barrel of salt beef, some molasses, oatmeal and potatoes - negotiated for us by Mr Chisholm who has been our saviour in many instances both on board ship and once we came ashore. I will not deny it was a shock to behold this land. Perhaps I had been foolish in imagining it would be green and promising, perhaps my sister's letters had painted a more welcoming place. When I saw our proposed land was in a perfect state of nature, covered in tall trees, my

heart sank in sudden fear. William is a gardener not a tree-feller and his leg still pains him though he sets about each day with determination, and a smile.

It is already cold and not yet full winter.

There is further difficulty. There is another man here, David Higgins, who is the agent for Lot 59 which is close by. He is the shoddy fellow who came to talk to the men of last year's sailing, in which my sister travelled, seeking to entice them to break their agreement and move onto his land, which he promised was better prepared and on better terms than they had here. Quite a few went and therefore Lot 52 sat in its wilderness almost untouched.

Mr Chisholm is quite angry that this David Higgins approached Captain Sheridan and sought to entice him to land our group on his land, though he would not. Mr Chisholm comes to visit the settlers often and has told me that he is sorry that our arrival was not better planned for. It seems the owner has no experience of settling land and did not plan for provisions and tools in any sensible way, and anyway lives far away. So Mr Chisholm has been on journeys far and wide to gather what we need lest we starve, whilst all those involved in the ownership of this land, have approached the Governor for guidance as to how to deal with this wanton fellow, Higgins.

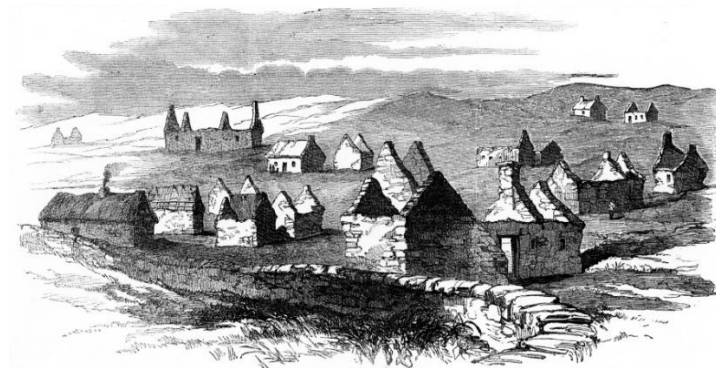
Each time these matters crop up we are given more bills to pay - William and I look at our reckoning - *four years of rent, ten years at 3d an acre, the next ten at 9d an acre, then raised to one shilling, but no higher. Provisions to be freighted in exchange for timber of the same value* - but how can we level our own ground without tools or have the time to see to it if we have to cut timber for the owner of the land?

But there are the good things to tell. We three have managed to keep our health. On the ship I made good my vow to learn read and write better than I had at the minister's knee in Scotland - Mr Chisholm has helped as has a doctor and his wife on board the ship. There was a lot of time. This will prepare me for our better life when it comes and start wee John off until we get the school built.

And when we have time to look, this land *is* fine. It looks as if no-one and nothing has touched it (though we are told there are bears and there are many mice) and we are the first people to break its soil.

William has cleared and dug a patch by the shack and will plant peas in the Spring, a first quick crop before we plant potatoes in the riven earth. We plan ahead because we are determined to make our future here. We will be in the middle of our first winter by the time you read this. I will write again in the Spring.

God Bless you both,
with great affection,
Grizoe.



Background: Wellwood Waugh on leaving Pictou in 1777. A staunch Covenantan, Wellwood's faith was often an obstacle. When asked to sign the Oath of Allegiance he refused to do so. The family then left Pictou for Tatamagouche. This information came from: <https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/tatamagouche/chapter05.htm>

Pictou :: Jane Richardson

I can craft a stave,
and grist is what I know
the trees I fashion into log
to build a home
I'm a Covenantan! No, I shall not sign
allegiance to the Crown
the Lord has stayed my hand
My direction comes from God
Now they have purloined our goods
there is nothing here

Afterword

Background: A migrant crisis involving illegal migrants entering the United Kingdom by crossing the English Channel in small boats began in November 2018.

The British Government blames criminal gangs for arranging the crossings who charge between £3,000 and £6,000 for a crossing attempt in a small boat. The smugglers often use stolen boats for the crossings. [source: Wikipedia]

The Crossing 2020 :: K A Vivers

It had cost him everything he had.

The small amount of money left after bribing the corrupt Border Guards on his way to the ocean, and his mother's rings and a gold necklace – all he had to remember her and his beloved grandmother by.

The truck picked him up outside the refugee camp in Calais. There was a hidden bunk underneath the driver's bed in the cab of the lorry. He breathed a sigh of relief once they boarded the ferry and an even bigger one once they reached England and the driver stopped at a motorway service station.

They drove through the night, and as dawn was breaking, the driver pulled into a well-screened lay-by.

The last part of the chain.

Working for a gang-master wouldn't be the worst existence.

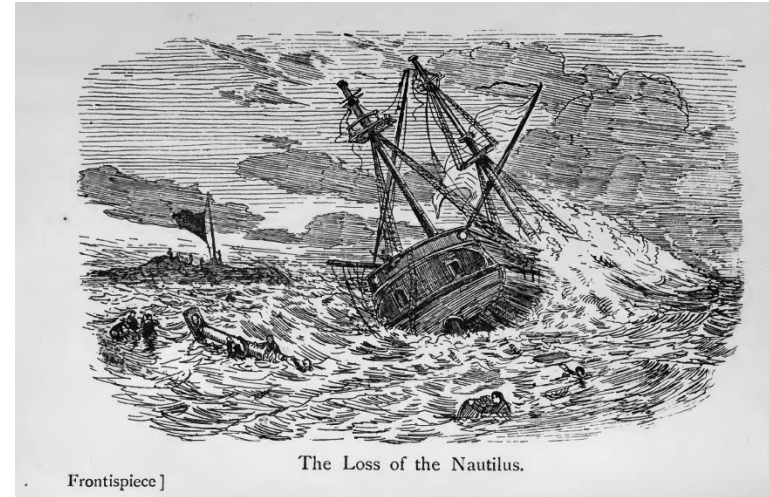
Background: Helen (Nellie) Waugh in her words, the year before she died. Details of the family are all available at:

<https://www.electriccanadian.com/history/novascotia/tatamagouche/chapter05.htm>

where they finally settled, and where the name Waugh is still prominent. The scarf from a Royal prince, Prince Edward, remains in the Waugh family today. There is probably still a Wellwood Waugh in Tatamagouche.

1794 :: Jane Richardson

It is strange how trouble
 like pain in childbirth
 can be forgotten
We have raised a family
 now with offspring of their own
 and each a son baptised as Wellwood
the log house we built in Tatamagouche
 we reside in even now
 by the river which bears the name of Waugh
my husband's faith has mellowed
 the oath he took, and
 now a servant of the Crown



he wears with pride a scarf
 gifted by a Royal Prince
 in gratitude
we have weathered many winters
 and felt the warmth of many summers
our children, and grandchildren
 Flourish and prosper
 are now integral, as are we,
to this New World of Canada
 I am at peace, content
 our Scottish roots intact

Notes on the Writers

Eleanor Chesters: My interest in writing began, I suppose, by listening to my English teacher in secondary school reading poetry to the class. I still remember those poems clearly and sometimes recite them in my head. In my teens I often wrote verses on my bedside table before going to sleep.

Dan Gillespie: I am a young writer from Dumfries who enjoys the great outdoors and in turn writing about my ramblings up hills and along the coastlines of Galloway.

Jackie Johnston: Reading has always been a source of pleasure for me and it seems to have been a natural development, for me to see if I could write something that someone else might enjoy. The written word is still as important a feature of my life as it was when I met her, only I write, as well as read now. It was initially a surprise to find that I like writing in Scots as well as English.

Vivien Jones: is a writer of poetry, prose and theatre pieces, who is one of Wigtown Festival Company's Literature Ambassadors, helping to encourage writers and writing in Dumfries and Galloway.

www.vivienjones.info

Jean Manson: is a professionally trained dancer turned financial mathematician with a passion for reading. She currently lives in the beautiful region of Dumfries and Galloway in Scotland with her husband and two cats, while keeping her London job as a senior actuary, and running a professional London-based dance troupe. She has always loved the arts and being creative, writing numerous poems as a child, but had to stop creating when pursuing her professional

actuarial qualification. After moving away from London at the end of 2016, she recently reignited her passion for writing and is exploring her creativity in the written word.

Alexandra Monlaur: I am a novice writer of poetry and flash fiction. There's something about compressing ideas from their inspiration, into a distillation of feeling that I'm hoping to get to grips with in my writing. I find people, places, images and stories to be a great starting point; usually I read/research and think for a long time before putting pen to paper. Then I usually write a lot and edit heavily – the satisfying stroke of the red pen can become addictive!

Judith Muir: When I first left home in the mid-70s, letter writing was the obvious way to keep in touch. My mother and I carried on a correspondence at least twice a week that lasted for about 40 years. By the time of her death, writing had become a habit and I sought other ways of recording my life. So my journal was born. Moving into writing in other genres has been a natural progression.

Kriss Nichol: has an MA in Creative Writing and since moving to Dumfries and Galloway has had numerous poems and short stories published in small press magazines and anthologies. She has self-published 2 novels and 3 poetry pamphlets of her published poems. She runs a writing group, Curleywee Writers, and is a member of Crichton Writers.

Carol Price: Writing has become an addictive part of my life since I retired. Inspiration is there when I go to sleep, in my dreams, when I wake, when I walk in the Scottish mists, and the urge can only be satisfied by putting words on paper.


Jane Richardson: An avid reader as a child, with a naturally inquisitive, even nosy, mind I took great pleasure in writing stories for my younger siblings. This then became diary and letter writing, but more recently encouragement and support from Crichton Writers has introduced me to like minds and the camaraderie of group work. This emigrant project has particular relevance with a daughter living in Quebec who has also enjoyed the quest for information.

Laura Rimmer: Laura Rimmer's poetry has been published in Southlight, Ink, Sweat & Tears, ARTEMIS and Reach, and she has been awarded a Wigtown Festival Company mentorship for 2020. She also writes for stage and screen. She tweets @laurarimmer.


Angela Taylor: What motivates me as a writer is how people cope with what life throws at them. How do they think, and feel, what are the relationship dynamics that are going on, what do they do in the face of trouble and heartache? How do they cope? Where do they find the hope and courage to carry on in spite of overwhelming odds against them? I like a story to inspire something in the reader.

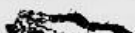
K A Vivers: The letters of the alphabet dancing round the walls in Primary One, poetry sessions in P.7 with Mr Welsh, and the much anticipated Saturday afternoon visit to the Library to change books - three at a time - were the bedrock of a life-long love of words which has never left me. Joining the Write Yard based in Annan at its inception in March 2019 has been a stimulating experience. A lovely group who support and encourage one another in their endeavours, non-judgmental and non-ageist, I recommend popping along to your local writing group and letting your imagination fly.

Edmund Wigram: After ten years of travelling and teaching both healing, and living in the heart, it was time to start writing about what my heart now knew. I came to rest in Galloway, and found Crichton Writers, who have helped me in so many ways to become a better writer.

To be sold,
**THE brig SILVINA---**
burthen about one hundred and sixty tons—now lying at Hancock's Wharf.—
May be put to sea at a small expenfe.
For terms of sale apply to the Master on board. June 18.

For BRISTOL,
**THE new brig Boston, JON-**
ATHAN MERRIT, master, now lay-
ing at Hancock's Wharf--has excellent
accommodations for passengers---will
fail this month. BENJAMIN EDWARDS,
cooper, of Back St. will be among the
crew of said vessel. For freight or
passage apply, to the Master on board
or at WM. and THO'S WALTER'S store, Town-Dock.
Where is for sale,
A few bags of Savannah Cotton, of a
very fine quality, and on very low terms. June 18.

**ANY person wanting a**
good single decked BRIG,
of about 100 tons burthen, on Char-
ter, may know the terms by apply-
ing to the Printer. June 18.

To be sold,
**THE brig SILVINA---**