

THE  
WORKING MAN'S HANDBOOK  
TO  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

WITH ADVICE TO THE FARMER,  
AND DETAILED INFORMATION FOR THE SEVERAL CLASSES OF  
LABOURERS AND ARTIZANS.

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BY GEORGE BLAKISTON WILKINSON,

AUTHOR OF "SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ITS ADVANTAGES AND RESOURCES."

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WITH A MAP.

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LONDON:  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET;  
FRELAWNEY SAUNDERS, CHARING CROSS.

1849.

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TO THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING COLONIZATION,

THE FIRST SOCIETY ESTABLISHED WITH THE OBJECT OF EXTENDING THE BENEFITS OF  
EMIGRATION TO THE WORKING CLASSES OF GREAT BRITAIN,

THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THEIR DISINTERESTED  
LABOURS  
BY THE AUTHOR.

**SEASONS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**

LATITUDE ~ SOUTH.

September, October & November	Spring.
December, January, February	Summer.
March, April, May	Autumn.
June, July, August	Winter

Experience shows that a declining moon is more likely to bring rain than the increasing moon.

**PREFACE.**

THE great success that has attended the Author's work on "SOUTH AUSTRALIA, ITS ADVANTAGES AND RESOURCES," and which he believes to be due to the practical character of the book, to the fact that the Author has seen what he relates, and tried himself what he recommends; and the reception of that work by the London Press, has suggested to him the duty of supplying the 'Working Classes with all the practical information he possesses respecting the colony, in a cheap form.

The present Handbook is the result.

The working man and small capitalist may here see at a glance whether the colony will suit his peculiar circumstances; and, if so, what wages lie may expect, and what prospects lie before him.

Also what preliminary benefit he may receive from the Government Emigration Commissioners, or from the Society for Promoting Colonization. The purchase of outfits, and the rules of his life on shipboard, are also dwelt upon in this little work.

A residence of nearly eight years in South Australia gives the Author confidence in laying his experience and advice before others; and he hopes that his sojourn there may save his readers from the difficulties and anxieties too often undergone on first landing in the colony.

Should any questions arise which are not met with in the following pages, the Author may be written to personally, and the inquirers will be answered promptly through the columns of the Emigrant Newspaper.

New West End, Hampstead, December, 1848.

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## THE WORKING MAN'S HANDBOOK TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

### CHAPTER I.

**Discovery of Australia—The several Australian Colonies—Penal Settlements First Settlers in South Australia— Kangaroo Island—Discovery of the Plains of Adelaide—Foundation of the City of Adelaide—Land Speculation Mania—Extravagant Prices of Provisions—Country Land Mania—Commercial Distress—General Bankruptcy—Government Retrenchment— Foundation of Agricultural Prosperity.**

The Dutch were the first discoverers of New Holland, or Australia. A vessel belonging to Holland was sent to explore in the Southern Seas, and fell in with the land on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria. Not long afterwards, in their trade with Batavia, the Dutch discovered, and gave names to, the greater part of the northern coast of this continent. The celebrated Captain Cook was the first British subject who minutely explored the coast; he having in 1770 discovered the eastern part, from Cape Howe to Cape York, to which he gave the name of New South Wales. Captain Bass in 1798, Grant in 1800, and Flinders in 1805, surveyed the shores to the westward, from Cape Howe to the Lewin.

The quantity of land in New Holland is calculated at about 3,000,000 square miles. But little of the interior has hitherto been explored; but of that little sufficient is known to prove its paramount value to Great Britain, as well for giving a home to her surplus population, as for creating a market for her numerous manufactures, and supplying many kinds of valuable raw materials, as metals, grain, wool, oil, whalebone, timber, etc.

New Holland lies between the 112° and 153° E. longitude, and the 10° and 29° S. latitude; it is 3500 miles from E. to W. and 2000 from N. to S.

It is divided into several distinct colonies; of these New South Wales lies to the east, and joins South Australia at the Port Philip district; and to the west of South Australia, we find Western Australia, from which it is divided by a broad expanse of barren scrub land, found by Mr. Eyre, the great explorer, to be destitute of water, and almost an impervious desert.

New South Wales was first established as a penal settlement in 1778: this was the original colony, and its capital is Sydney. In the year 1809, Western Australia, whose chief town is Perth, was founded. Next in succession came South Australia, which only received its first Governor in the year 1836. Adelaide is the only town of any note in this settlement. These, with the splendid district of Port Philip, of which the chief town is Melbourne, and which is about to be formed into a distinct colony under the title of Victoria, are the Australian settlements at present deserving the attention of the emigrant. However, in passing, I may observe, that nearly the same climate, country, and productions are to be found in Van Diemen's Land as in the Australian Colonies, amongst which indeed it is generally classed. It is the only colony in the Pacific that is at present a penal settlement. This should be borne in mind by all who think of emigrating, for there can be no greater drawback to any country, however fair in other respects, than its reception of convicted felons.

New South Wales has also until very lately laboured under this disadvantage, but it is understood that no more convicts will be sent thither, and in a few years, when the terms of sentence, under which the convicts already there labour, have expired, this grand and prosperous colony will also be in every sense of the word a free settlement; though it will, no doubt, for a long period, have to regret the consequences of the system that peopled it with criminals.



It is not my intention to enter into a description of any other colony than South Australia, because it is the duty of every person who comes before the public to confine himself to an account of such places only as he is practically acquainted with, in order that his assertions may be correct, and of real service in enabling his readers to form a judgment on a matter of such vital importance as the choice of a home of a distant land. For this reason I shall only speak of South Australia; in which colony alone I have been, but where I gained the experience of a residence of more than seven years.

South Australia is situated between the 132° and 141° of E. long., and extends from the 29° S. lat, to the Southern Ocean. The sea-coast line is about 1400 miles in length, and indented by two large gulfs, called St. Vincent's and Spencer's Gulfs. The whole Colony comprises an area of about 324,000 square miles, or 207,000,000 acres, and is therefore nearly twice as large as Great Britain and Ireland.

In the year 1805 Captain Flinders, in H.M.S. Investigator, first explored this part of Australia, and landed on Kangaroo Island, so named in consequence of the numbers of a species of Kangaroo, called Wallaby, found there, and which were at that time so tame, that they suffered the sailors to knock them down like sheep. I presume that the plentiful supply of fresh meat and good water which was here found might have given the navigators a higher opinion of the island than it merited; or the nature of the soil justified, for it was probably upon the recommendation of, Captain Flinders that the first town of South Australia was here commenced. However this may be, the first vessel with emigrants disembarked them in 1836 upon this island, and large and substantial buildings were commenced there.

**Kangaroo Island** measures about 100 miles in length and 25 in breadth at its widest part: it is hilly, and the general appearance is uninviting, being generally covered with a thick compact scrub. This shrub is a peculiarity of Australia, and consists of bushes varying in height from 3 to 20 feet, in so the places growing in patches of large size closely interwoven, and in others isolated, like the furze bushes of our heaths. Here, also, are found large lakes of water, saltier than sea water, and which, evaporating under the powerful summer sun, leave deposits of salt, which are collected and sold in Adelaide. A bush peculiar to this island is found mixed with the other scrub; it is almost as close as a hedge, grows about 10 feet high, and is covered with long dangerous thorns which even cattle will not face. This is cultivated in South Australia, and makes valuable hedges. In one or two parts of the island there are some pretty grassy valleys and good wholesome springs of water, and it was at one of these places on the shore of Nepean Bay that the first colonists landed.

