

From the Diary of Bishop John Francis Norton – 1925

Inscription....

*Diary kept for my dearest Mother
on the P. & O Steamer "Mongolia"
by John F. Norton
With the Australian National
Pilgrimage to Rome & Lourdes 1925.*

9th May

The Bishop has had a setback, let us hope a temporary one, for it is too much to hope that all the attacks would cease at once.

We are just opposite Jidda, the port of Mecca, the holy city of the Mohammedans. At least one of the Lascar crew of the "Mongolia" has made the pilgrimage there, as his red dyed beard shows.

All the P & O Boats are manned by Lascar crews and English Officers. These dark men seem a decent hardworking lot, never mixing with anyone on the boat but attending to their duties.



This morning I spent a most enjoyable morning in the Captain's cabin and then on the navigating bridge. He sent me an invitation (an uncommon invitation) and we had a very pleasant chat. He is interested in books and poetry, pottery and music. His little daughter too writes well and with considerable skill also.

After a time he asked the 2nd Officer to take me on the bridge. It was just there that I was most anxious to go, for here all the wonderful instruments by which the ship is directed safely through the waters are found. I found out that many of the most valuable of these are the inventions of Lord Kelvin, so that I had reason to be proud of my countryman. Finally, the Captain played "In a Monastery Garden" on his gramophone for me, and brought to a pleasant conclusion a very instructive morning.