

[This is a type written copy of the hand written original, which was falling to pieces.]

Smeatonhill,
Melbourne Victoria
New South Wales;

December 6th 1852,

Dear Robert

I arrived in this Colony on the 17 September [1852] after a good passage but it was not a quick one we were 98 days sailing and worse than that we were kept three weeks in curinteen in Port philip for sickness being on board the vesel [Wanata] it was on the 9 October we got ashore I am very sorry to relate you that I had two children dead since I saw you my youngest lasy Janet died on the voyage on the 31 August and my wife had a son on the 26 November and he only was alive 5 days but I am happy to say that my wife is keeping in good health since there was about 40 children died on the voyage and 7 persons between men and women [official number of deaths was 33 children and 6 adults] and among them was Peter Alisons wife she died short time after sailing from Liverpool and George Douglas Wm Turnbulls good son died about the Cape of Good Hope they both died with a consumption there nobody that has got any bad trouble about them need think that they will stand this voyage and I would not advice any man to come out by the Government ships with a weak family for they put such a number on board that the want of room and foul air just destroys the weak children I have to inform you that I saw Alexander my brother and him and his family was looking very well and he is within 25 miles of me we hapened to come ashore the same week at Melbourne there was only two deaths on the vesel he came on and only 350 passengers and we had 950 emigrants and 60 men of a ships crew therefore if you ever intend to come here come as long as you have no family I am a shepherd with Captain Hepburn Smeatonhill [If William disembarked in Melbourne on the 9 Oct. he was probably engaged to start work the same day, or very soon thereafter.] I have 50£ yearly and that is the least wages that is going in this Colony there some of the shepherds and labourers has a £100 yearly and rations but you may all understand that when strangers comes into the Colony that the masters take advantage of them I and a great number more engaged on board the vesel for lodgings was very dear in Melbourne at the time and you all know I had no money and I had to do for the best I could but I am as well of as I would wish to be unless I was idle altogether if I and my wife will be alive and in good health. I will soon be an independent man in this country I and one George Melville from Gordonbush Sutherlandshire is stoping in the one hut he is a very fine man he came out on the same vesel with me if I be alive another year I and Alexander is going to the Gold diggings they are diging the Gold within a mile of my hut Now Dear Robert I hope you will make up your mind and come here the next year you and Donald McLeod and John my brother the sooner you come the better its a most beautiful country it is all green to the tops of the hills you can take a cart any road in this country there no such thing as made road in it except the coach road to Sydney they cannot get men to make road whenever a man makes a little money here hes of to the digings some make there fortunes in a very short time but a man will soon be independent here should he not go to the digings at all the land is very cheap here you will get the grass of a sheep here for a halfpeny as soon as you receive this you will write me if you intend coming here this is the place for a poor man I am sorry the way that shepherds and labourers is used in Scotland as little as there thought on they will turn you away if you do the least tum wrong but that is not

the way here I would not take a bad word of my master here when I would leave him I would soon get another and the farmers knows that as well I asure you a man will go far wrong hear before his master will say anything that is bad to him but I am well pleased: with my master hear as yet and if I keep my health I will serve him this year until the 8 October 1853 I hope you will have the goodness to send: this letter to Donald McLeod for I am going to write a few lines to him here. Mr Donald McLeod Dear sir I hope you will now keep your mind and come out here you and all your brethren and my own two brothers I hope if you will be all in good health when you receive this letter that you will get ready and come here this is the place for a man that can work for wages plenty of meat and money in this country but it is needless for a lazy man or a drunkard to come here but if ever you intend coming come as soon as possible before your family gets any more in numbers for children is a great trouble on the voyage we got plenty of good victuals on the voyage but there was to many on board and although there was a great death there was no bad fever on board such as smallpox or measles but there was a great number took the ship fever I and my wife took it but it was not (one or two words missing :here) I was very poorly for a long time but I and my family all that I have got of them is in good health at present and it was the cold and the bowel complaint that destroy all the children any of you that intend coming take plenty of clothes and flanel with you this country is not near as warm as is reported at home Sydney is much warm than this Colony I have got no word from James as yet but it is not long since I wrote" him every word that I have put in here is as true as I have got to meet death and I hope I will see you all here soon Nany joins me in sending our kind love to you all friends and acquaintances and Donald McKay Arskik and his , family and I wish they were here and not on the black muir of Arskik I have no more to say but I hope you may be all led to love your Maker upon earth and that I may be favoured to meet you with him in Glory I am your dear brother and well wisher while I breath

Wm Michael care of Captain Hepburn Smeetonhill

Give my kind love to my mother if she is alive and tell her that I and Alexander is as well of as she would wish us to be although I have met with hardship since I left Scotland and if I be alive for another year I will send her what will do her good during her life time.

This letter is addressed to: —

Mr. Robt. Michael
Shepherd
Salahie
Near Lairg
by Golspie
Sutherlandshire
North Britain.

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