

three English ships here, belonging to this station. I wish I had come here, as there seems to be splendid sport of all kinds out here, much more than on the Pacific station. Captain Rose introduced me to the senior Captain out here (there is no Admiral), whose name is Kennedy. He is a friend of Uncle John's, and seems to be a very good sort. He has asked me to breakfast with him, which he has at 11.30. I hope you will be able to read this, as the mail steamer which is just going is the only chance. We have had six mails now without a letter from you; I hope none have gone adrift. It is almost certain we shall pay off at Plymouth, which is a nuisance—in the first place because it is so far from home, and also because it will be so awkward packing up my things, as if we were at Portsmouth, Fraser & Davis would look out for them. I am awfully anxious to see you all, as I shall have been away close on four years. I shall be entitled to eight weeks' leave, which I hope I shall get. We ought not to be more than five weeks more at the most. I hope I shall get a letter at St Vincent, just to tell me how you are. As far as we know at present, there is every chance of our not going to Lisbon at all, but to the Azores instead. Good-bye, dear old Mum, from—Your very loving son, NED.

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