

**JOURNAL of Her Majesty's Hired Convict Ship
"Pyrenees"
between 22nd December 1852 and 16th May 1853.**

GENERAL REMARKS

The prisoners embarked on board the Pyrenees were received from the following prisons:

22 Dec 1852	Warrior Hulk	55
	Woolwich Defence Hulk	35
19 Jan 1853	Portsmouth Prison	50
	Stirling Castle Hulk	2
24 Jan 1853	Portland Prison	88
28 Jan 1853	Dartmoor Prison	66
	The total number embarked	296

The average age of the Prisoners was 25.55 years. Between 15 and 20 years there were 64; between 20 and 25 there were 114; 50 between 25 and 30; and the remaining 68 were upwards of 30 years of age. There was a marked difference in the appearance of the men received from the Hulks and those from Portland and Dartmoor prisons; the former had a pale and waxy look which contrasted strongly with the rusty and florid complexions of the men who had been exposed fully to the bracing air of those elevated localities.

In the families of the Guard there were several of their children who appeared ill qualified to withstand the privations of so long a voyage. The heavy expenses entailed on a Pensioner by providing his outfit and very great difficulty most of them would find in repaying the advance made for that purpose renders the rejection of any of the children a measure of great hardship to the parents. They were therefore all received on board.

Five of them died on the voyage from various complaints incident to their age. Here may I be allowed to remark that I consider the addition of a few leeches to the supply of medical stores would prove of much service in the treatment of these children, the want of them was much felt on board the Pyrenees. The Guard being, with one or two exceptions, men of whose constitutions had been long tried by foreign service suffered very little from sickness. One aged man who had never before left Ireland died of the prevailing fever. Although several of their wives were young girls they all enjoyed good health.

The Crew were all young men. The space appropriated to them was much too small and only ventilated by a small narrow scuttle. It was impossible to remove the bottom boards of the lower bunks as instead of being fitted like those of the prisoners, they were fixtures. As sailors in the Merchant Service are mainly averse to cleaning out their new place even when it can be done without much trouble it was found very difficult to secure their requisite cleanliness in this case where it was about impossible to reach dirt which rolled by the motion of the ship under the sleeping places. As the fever first showed itself amongst these men, these defects were remedied as much as possible; venetian blinds were substituted for boards in the after bulk-head so as to allow a current of air from stern ports and by opening a communication with the ventilator in the Prison Hospital an additional vent for the heated and respired air was afforded. Holes were cut in several parts of the boarding of the lower sleeping places through which any filth that might have accumulated was removed. Notwithstanding all that could be done, the crew were lodged in an ill ventilated and confined space much worse than either the Prison or the Barracks. More than the proper proportions suffered from fever and various other diseases attributable in a great degree to the circumstances just mentioned.

During the detention in the Channel and for several weeks after leaving England many of those on board suffered from sea-sickness and disordered bowels. The time occupied in passing from England where the Thermometer stood at 50 degrees to the variable winds near the Equator where it never falls below 80 degrees was only 17 days. A succession of light and baffling winds prolonged the passage between the NE and the SE trade winds for upwards of ten days. As usual a great quantity of rain fell which rendered it necessary to keep the Prisoners below much more than usual: they suffered so much from the heat and closeness that many of them assured me it formed the worst part of their punishment. Shortly after this period of the voyage, a Continued Fever made its appearance amongst the Prisoners. Several Cases had already occurred in the Crew but it now began to lock very

formidable. A Prisoner died after a few days illness and there were others labouring under the disease in a very decided form while a great many complained of general derangement and uneasiness which were in general removed by a brisk mercurial ergative or by an emetic. The fever was of the Continued type; the head and lungs were frequently affected but some of the cases proved to be quite simple and uncomplicated; no evidence of contagia was observed during the whole course of the Epidemic. It appeared to have been caused by the combined influence of a sudden elevation of temperature, and the moist close atmosphere inseparable from the confinement of so many persons in a ship; acting upon some local cause of disease and rendering it active. A very peculiar and disagreeable smell arose from the airholes, which at a later period was discovered to have been caused by liberty clothing having been packed while damp. Ventilation and cleanliness had all along been strictly attended to they were now enforced with additional rigour; fumigation with vinegar, sugar and other substances was used partly to inspire confidence but the principal reliance was placed on the liberal use of the Solution of Chloride of Zinc with which every part of the fittings was well washed; large quantities were poured down the different airholes and the ship's pumps after their well had been dried and the whole allowed to remain in the hold for 24 hours. As may be supposed from the origin of the smell not much effect was produced upon it, yet I consider that great benefit was derived from the Solution; its well known efficiency in destroying noxious effluvia was signally manifested during this voyage; it was, during the hot weather, used twice a day for several water closets with the effect of keeping them wonderfully free from smell.

The treatment of the Fever varied in each case according to the symptoms; it was observed that where the moderate abstraction of blood was judged necessary on account of the urgency of the cerebral or pulmonary complication, the loss was invariably followed by a protracted convalescence. Cold sponging of the whole body was much employed and was found beneficial and soothing to the feelings of the patient as was also the cold stream of water upon the head when the symptoms were such as to render its use advisable. Quinine was much employed and was found of great value nursing the recovery and in the later stages of the fever.

Two sporadic cases of Dysentery occurred in both what there was found ulcerations of the large intestine. During the course of most of the diseases of the Children that excellent preparation of Milk (Moore's) with which the Ship was supplied for trial was found of great service as by its use they were induced to take nourishment which otherwise they refused.

Generally speaking the health of most of the persons embarked was improved by the voyage. The greater part of the prisoners were disembarked by the 6th of May; the others waited on board for a passage in a vessel shortly expected, until the 16th of May and the 2nd of June on which date all that remained were sent on shore. The greater part of the Guard with their families left on the 9th of May, a few being retained until all the Prisoners were landed.

John Bower MD
Surgeon

Transcribed by Graham Bown

Daily Sick Book on board Convict Ship "Pyrenees" between 22nd December 1852 and 16th May 1853.

When on Sick List	Names	Age	Quality	Disease or Wound	When off Sick List	How disposed of	Case History No.
December 24	Patrick Butler	3 months	Infant	Porrigo	December 29	Cured	
January 2	William Thompson	45	Pensioner	Phlegmone	January 5	Duty	
January 9	Patrick Archer	10 months	Infant	Diarrhoea	January 10	Died	1
January 9	Pater Falassy	46	Pensioner	Fracture of ribs	February 17	Duty	2
January 10	Ann Booth	18 months	Child	Diarrhoea	February 4	Cured	
January 11	Henry Rosier	26	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 22	Duty	
January 11	Robert Welch	25	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 20	Duty	
January 12	John H Thompson	42	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 21	Duty	
January 12	Catherine Goggins	11 months	Infant	Catarrh	January 27	Cured	
January 13	James Ross	40	Convict	Phlegmone	January 19	Duty	
January 13	Samuel Husbands	17	Ordinary seaman	Fever	February 5	List	3
January 14	James Scott	22	Convict	Diarrhoea	February 4	List	
January 15	William Wimbridge	48	Pensioner	Catarrh	January 18	Duty	
January 15	Henry Young	22	Convict	Catarrh	January 27	Duty	
January 15	Margaret Falassy	2	Child	Diarrhoea	January 26	Duty	
January 15	James Ritchie	19	Convict	Abscess	January 20	Duty	
January 16	Alfred Poynter	21	Convict	Cynanchi Tonsill	January 23	Duty	
January 17	William Butler	2	Child	Ophthalmia	January 25	Cured	
January 18	Joseph Sawyer	25	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 24	Duty	
January 22	Thomas Brown	18	Convict	Abscess	January 27	Duty	
January 23	William Jones	16 months	Child	Diarrhoea	January 30	Cured	
January 25	Joseph Carroll	21	Convict	Iritis	February 10	Duty	
January 26	Edward Legge	31	Convict	Dyspepsia	February 6	Duty	
January 28	John Bevington	35	Convict	Bronchitis	February 12	Duty	
January 29	William Austin	41	Convict	Chronis Diarrhoea	February 16	Duty	
January 30	William Sawyer	23	Convict	Bronchitis	February 10	Duty	
January 30	Mrs Archer	21	Pensioner's wife	Constipation	February 6	Duty	
January 30	Thomas Cook	36	Convict	Catarrh	February 11	Duty	
January 31	Catherine Welch	2½	Child	Catarrh	February 8	Cured	
February 3	John Eaton	32	Convict	Catarrh	February 16	Duty	
February 4	James Scott	22	Convict	Intermittent fever	February 15	Duty	
February 5	Samuel Husbands	17 seaman	Fever	March 7	Duty	
February 6	John Thomas	29	Convict	Diarrhoea	February 17	Duty	
February 6	Mrs Thompson	19	Pensioner's wife	Constipation	February 12	Duty	

February 7	George Trehearne	43	Convict	Bronchitis	March 18	Duty	
February 7	Thomas Smith	36	Convict	Anaemia	February 9	Duty	
February 9	Charles Niblock	40	Convict	Asthma	February 26	Duty	
February 10	Peter Wilson	23	Convict	Cattarrh	February 23	Duty	
February 10	John Robinson	14 months	Child	Diarrhoea	February 20	Cured	
February 11	John Groom	20	Convict	Dyspepsia	March 28	Duty	
February 11	Daniel Sullivan	16	Ship's boy	Fever	March 18	Duty	4
February 13	James Hounslow	32	Convict	Diarrhoea	February 21	Duty	
February 14	Alfred Poynter	21	Convict	Diarrhoea	February 25	Duty	
February 14	William Butler	2	Child	Diarrhoea	February 22	Duty	
February 16	James Johnston	21	Convict	Ulver	March 28	Duty	
February 16	Thomas Davies	21	Convict	Constipation	February 18	Duty	
February 16	William Bolland	21	Convict	Fever	March 12	Duty	
February 17	James Slater	21	AB	Fever	March 6	Duty	
February 18	Peter Fraser	22	Convict	Tonsillitis	February 24	Duty	
February 19	Thomas Quin	29	Convict	Convulsions	February 26	Duty	
February 22	Joseph Hesketh	23	Convict	Scald	February 27	Duty	
February 22	Joseph Hayhurst	27	Convict	Convulsions	March 7	Duty	
February 23	Robert Mewborn	23	Convict	Diarrhoea	March 18	Duty	
February 23	Thomas Wimbridge	3	Child	Diarrhoea	March 1	Cured	
February 24	Thomas Meakin	31	Convict	Abscess	March 10	Duty	
February 25	Alexander Moriarty	21	Convict	Diarrhoea	March 4	Duty	
February 27	John Rowland	18	Convict	Fever	March 3	Died	5
February 28	Richard French	32	Convict	Porrigo	March 4	Duty	
March 2	Ann Booth	20 months	Child	Meningitis	March 7	Died	6
March 2	John Wilson	19	Convict	Fever	March 23	Duty	
March 3	Margaret Falassy	2	Child	Meningitis	March 14	Died	7
March 5	Joseph Sawyer	23	Child	Fever	March 22	Duty	
March 6	Mrs Mackey	20	Pensioner's wife	Constipation	March 9	Duty	
March 6	Alexander Moriarty	21	Convict	Fever	April 8	Duty	8
March 7	James Hounslow	32	Convict	Dysentery	April 3	Died	9
March 7	Mrs Booth	32	Pensioner's wife	Diarrhoea	March 12	Duty	
March 7	Mrs Carey	27	Pensioner's wife	Dyspepsia	March 14	Duty	
March 8	Patrick Hannon	50	Pensioner	Fever	March 24	Died	10
March 9	Edward Bewley	23	Convict	Scurvy	April 30	Duty	
March 9	Edmund Champ	23	Convict	Phlegmone	March 12	Duty	
March 10	James Blackett	25	Convict	Phlegmone	March 20	Duty	
March 12	John Barlow	18	Convict	Fever	April 11	Duty	

March 12	William Gibson	34	Convict	Diarrhoea	March 30	Duty	
March 13	Thomas Dennis	23	Convict	Ophthalmia	March 22	Duty	
March 13	John Hagger	26	Convict	Fever	March 29	Duty	
March 14	William Jones	17 months	Child	Diarrhoea	March 29	Duty	
March 14	William Pirrie	18	Convict	Tonsillitis	March 18	Duty	
March 15	George Hill	46	Convict	Diarrhoea	March 29	Duty	
March 16	William Phillipott	23	Convict	Fever	May 4	Hospital	11
March 18	John H Thompson	42	Convict	Bronchitis	March 28	Duty	
March 18	William Hunt	24	Convict	Fever	April 29	Duty	12
March 19	William Coverley	24	Convict	Fever	April 12	Duty	
March 20	William Newis	18	Convict	Fever	April 20	Duty	
March 21	Thomas Healy	22	Convict	Fever	May 5	Hospital	
March 21	Charles Wallis	21	Cuddy servant	Fever	April 10	Duty	
March 22	John Owens	21	Convict	Wound of foot	April 20	Duty	
March 22	Priscilla Hill	11 months	Infant	Bronchitis	April 3	Cured	
March 24	Mary Ann Walsh	8	Child	Remittent Fever	April 7	Cured	13
March 24	Mrs Falassy	30	Pensioner's wife	Diarrhoea	April 3	Duty	
March 25	Archibald McIntyre	27	Convict	Intermittent Fever	April 7	Duty	
March 25	John White	30	Convict	Diarrhoea	April 10	Duty	
March 25	William Butler	28	Pensioner	Catarrh	March 28	Duty	
March 26	William Baldwin	3	Child	Ileus	March 26	Died	14
March 27	Charles Wells	27	Convict	Colic	April 2	Duty	
March 28	John Hinds	15	Ship's boy	Fever	April 19	Duty	
March 29	William Gibson	34	Convict	Hepatitis	April 28	Duty	
March 31	Joseph Carroll	21	Convict	Iritis	April 20	Duty	
March 31	Richard Parry	27	Carp's Mate	Fever	April 20	Duty	
April 1	Henry Phillip Edwards	16	Apprentice	Fever	April 18	Duty	
April 2	John Robinson	14 months	Child	Hydrocephalus	April 15	Died	15
April 3	Mrs Carey	22	Pensioner's wife	Dyspepsia	April 19	Duty	
April 3	George Reid	22	Convict	Phlegmone	April 1	Duty	
April 4	John Goggins	2	Child	Bronchitis	April 20	Cured	
April 6	William Butler	2	Child	Ophthalmia	April 14	Cured	
April 7	Mrs Hill	25	Pensioner's wife	Fever	April 25	Duty	
April 7	William Austin	41	Convict	Dysentery	April 14	Died	16
April 8	William Fairhead	19	Convict	Fever	April 28	Duty	17
April 8	John Ward	2½	Child	Colic	April 13	Duty	
April 9	George Trehearne	43	Convict	Bronchitis	April 29	Duty	
April 9	Charles McLaughlin	29	A B	Hepatitis	April 29	Duty	

April 9	Thomas Wimbridge	3	Child	Catarrh	April 15	Cured	
April 10	George Ware	45	Convict	Dyspepsia	April 29	Duty	
April 14	George Jones	22	Convict	Abscess	April 23	Duty	
April 15	David Welch	40	Pensioner	Dyspepsia	April 25	Duty	
April 15	George Hill	46	Convict	Diarrhoea	April 25	Duty	
April 16	Thomas Lidbury	22	Convict	Fever	May 4	Hospital	18
April 18	James Scott	22	Convict	Diarrhoea	May 4	Hospital	19
April 19	Mrs Baldwin	31	Pensioner's wife	Fever	May 6	Duty	
April 20	Catherine Carey	2	Child	Prolapsus Ani	April 28	Cured	
April 21	John Coppains	30	Convict	Rheumatism	April 29	Duty	
April 22	Thomas Wimbridge	46	Pensioner	Constipation	April 27	Duty	
April 24	Albert Shaw	21	Convict	Phlegmone	April 30	Duty	
April 26	William Brooks	25	Convict	Dyspepsia	May 3	Duty	
April 27	William Beasty	24	Convict	Contusion	May 2	Duty	
April 28	James Ross	40	Convict	Phlegmone	May 6	Duty	
April 30	John White	30	Convict	Catarrh	May 6	Duty	

John Bower MD
Surgeon

Australian Joint Copying Project Reel 3208
ADM 101/62