

**Journal of Her Majesty's Hired Convict Ship
"William Hammond"
between 8th December 1855 and 2nd April 1856**

GENERAL REMARKS

During the period of this Journal the "William Hammond" has been employed in embarking male Convicts in England and conveying them to Fremantle, western Australia. The embarkation took place during the winter season of the year at several of the ports along the Coast of England yet, notwithstanding the very heavy gales and cold wet weather which prevailed in the channel, the general health of the Convicts and others did not suffer but continued remarkably good during the whole of the voyage which was performed without touching any intermediate port. There were a few cases of Diarrhoea, which were speedily relieved by the exhibition of aperients, astringents and restoring the proper action of the surface combined with light unirritating diet. On getting into cool weather south of the line, a few cases of Catarrh and Rheumatism appeared but these were of no import and soon disposed of by the remedial measures usually adopted in such cases. There were two cases of Phthisis Pulmonalis under treatment. One patient was a Convict who had evidently suffered from disease of the lungs previous to embarkation and was sent to hospital on arriving in Australia. The other subject of this disease was a Corporal in the Pensioner Guard who came on board in an emaciated state having been recently discharged from the Military Hospital at Plymouth where he had been for some months under treatment for disease of the chest. Hamoptysis accelerated the fatal event and this was the only death which occurred during the voyage. The Dysentery (No 6) was removed by aperients calomel and opium, epispastics, etc, but when the patient was in a state of convalescence much emaciation being present, he was seized with headache, wandering and other symptoms of diseased action within the head, followed by coma and hemiplegia. Cold lotions to the shaved head, epispastics aperients, stimulants, alterative mercurials etc were had recourse to and after lying in hopeless state for some days, consciousness returned with the gradual restoration of power and sensibility in the side and lower limb, but without any improvement in the paralytic condition of the arm. On being sent to the hospital at Fremantle, the general health had much improved, appetite keen with some increase in the muscular development. The Ophthalmias soon disappeared under the use of the Nitrate of Silver in strong solution, as will be seen by a reference to the cases Nos 8 and 9. In the cases of Nyctalopia the retina was no doubt in a state of impaired sensibility arising from exposures to the brilliant light of the day and must have been rendered prone to irregularity of action in consequence of the sudden transitions to which the prisoners were necessarily subjected in passing from the obscure light of the prison to the glare of the upper deck and vice versa. There was no scorbutic tendency in any of the prisoners and in no way did the complaint appear to be connected with any particular state of the system though as the seizures were entirely confined to the inmates of the prison, it is to be supposed that an impaired condition of the nervous energy peculiar to this unfortunate class of men sent a predisposing influence in promoting the accession of the disease. Aperients, repeated blistering etc combined in one or two cases, with generous diet effected the cure, Nos 12, 16 and 17 in the Journal are examples. On embarkation the general state of health of the Convicts was good and as already mentioned continued so during the whole of the voyage. Woolwich, 67 male prisoners were embarked on the 8th of December 1855; 58 at Portsmouth, on the 17th ; 80 at Portland, on the 18th and 45 were received in Plymouth Sound from Dartmoor, on the 31 at of the same month making in all 250. The whole number were disembarked at Fremantle, Western Australia, on the 1st and 2nd of April 1856; at which time the general condition was very high; indeed the appearance of the prisoners was far superior to what was on embarkation. Many having become quite stout. The Guard consisted of thirty pensioners accompanied by a train of 20 women and 40 children. It now becomes necessary to mention some of those points of economy which in all probability, were the means of contributing to the high tone of health on board the "William Hammond". Those grand adjuvants in the preservation of human health on board ship - cleanliness, dryness and ventilation - were made the subject of constant and serious attention and became especially necessary where so many persons were huddled together in a small space - with the nervous system depressed and agitated by a variety of conflicting influences inseparable from convicted criminals on the way to a penal settlement. The Dietary scale included the occasional use of preserved meat and potatoes, wine and daily issue of lemonade. The

bedding was stowed on deck during the day and frequently spread open to the air: personal cleanliness was strictly attended to and every opportunity for employment and amusement embraced. The Chloride of Zinc was in constant use, and, by virtue of its power in decomposing putrid emanations, tended much to health and comfort. But there is yet another circumstance to which I am inclined to attribute in no small degree, the excellent state of health on board. It was the frequent removal of the Convicts in part, or in whole when practicable, especially before sunset to the upper deck so as to allow the atmosphere of the prison to become pure and wholesome, while at the same time the men had the beneficial influence of the open air: for in my opinion, without this all other sanitary efforts would have proved nugatory.

George D MacLaren
Surgeon Superintendent

Daily Sick Book of the Convict Ship "William Hammond" from 6th December 1855 to the 2nd April 1856.

When put on Sick List	Names	Age	Quality	Disease or Wound	When put off Sick List	How disposed of	No. days on Sick List	Case History No.
1855 December 20	Thomas Aspinal	28	Convict	Pleuritis	1855 December 27	Cured	7	1
December 26	William Yard	24	Convict	Diarrhoea	December 29	Cured	3	
1856 January 1	James Knowles	34	Convict	Diarrhoea	1856 January 2	Cured	1	
January 1	Thomas Brown	22	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 13	Cured	12	
January 1	William Clements	27	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 11	Cured	10	2
January 2	Thomas Aspinal	28	Convict	Diarrhoea	April 1	Hospital	80	3
January 3	George Parsons	23	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 4	Cured	1	
January 3	Joseph Ryan	36	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 4	Cured	1	
January 3	Bernard McArdle	21	Convict	Obstipatis	January 14	Cured	11	
January 3	Charles Ellis	20	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 4	Cured	1	4
January 7	John Sullivan	25	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 9	Cured	2	5
January 7	Luke Packwood	25	Convict	Phlegmone	January 19	Cured	12	
January 7	James Hanson	31	Convict	Rheumat.	January 9	Cured	2	
January 8	George Parsons	23	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 14	Cured	6	
January 8	William Martin	25	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 31	Cured	23	
January 10	Charles Bowen	23	Convict	Dysenteria	April 4	To Hospital	82	6
January 10	William Bantock	41	Convict	Cynanche Tons	January 17	Cured	7	
January 10	George Wilmott	23	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 18	Cured	8	7
January 10	James Pickering	35	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 13	Cured	3	
January 11	John Shorrocks	29	Convict	Vulnus	February 17	Cured	34	
January 14	Peter Manning	35	Convict	Obstipatis	January 15	Cured	1	
January 14	John Darnall	42	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 23	Cured	9	
January 15	Edward Maguire	43	P Pensioner	Vulnus	January 24	To duty	9	
January 15	Samuel Swift	41	Convict	Ophthalmia	January 19	Cured	4	8
January 15	Wm Drinkwater	21	Convict	Ophthalmia	January 23	Cured	8	9
January 15	George Allen	22	Convict	Erythema	January 26	Cured	11	
January 20	Robert Sly	42	P Pens	Catarrhus	February 23	To duty	34	
January 20	John Wilson	23	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 23	Cured	3	
January 20	John Charlton	35	Convict	Rheumat.	January 31	Cured	11	
January 20	John McLaughlan	23	Convict	Dyspepsia	March 31	Cured	71	
January 22	Joseph Ralph	36	Convict	Diarrhoea	January 27	Cured	5	
January 27	Henry Fuchs	26	Convict	Cynanche Tons	February 3	Cured	7	10
February 3	George Hudson	25	Convict	Obstipatia	February 17	Cured	14	
February 4	James Waterworth	26	Convict	Cynanche Tons	February 23	Cured	17	

February 7	Bernard McCaffrey	40	P Pens		Furunculus	February 10	To duty	3	
February 7	George Allen	22	Convict		Furunculus	February 17	Cured	10	
February 7	Thos Chinnery	26	Convict		Dyspepsia	February 22	Cured	22	
February 11	Edward Farrell	21	Convict		Phlegmoni	February 20	Cured	9	
February 11	Owen Griffiths	23	Convict		Phlegmoni	February 17	Cured	6	
February 13	Thos Bantock	41	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 24	Cured	40	
February 13	Henry L Fraser	47	Corporal of Pensioners		Phthisis	March 13	Died	29	11
February 15	John Wallace	27	Convict		Phlegmoni	February 24	Cured	9	
February 16	Robt Helliwell	37	P Pens		Vulnus	February 22	To Duty	6	
February 16	George Anderson	24	Convict		Phlegmoni	February 20	Cured	4	
February 18	James Stevenson	22	Convict		Nyctalopia	February 24	Cured	6	12
February 28	George Bird	25	Convict		Diarrhoea	March 7	Cured	8	
February 28	John Hughes	31	Convict		Diarrhoea	March 8	Cured	10	
February 29	Robt Helliwell	37	P Pens		Ulcus	March 8	To duty	8	
March 2	George Bray	21	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 28	Cured	26	
March 2	Robert Trett	42	P Pens		Ulcus	March 18	To duty	16	
March 4	Joseph Kelly	45	P pens		Otitis	March 8	To duty	5	
March 5	William Rogers	23	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 20	Cured	15	
March 6	Henry Whitehead	42	Convict		Catarrhus	March 28	Cured	22	
March 12	James Quinn	24	Convict		Catarrhus	April 1	Cured	20	
March 12	Alfred Blake	22	Convict		Catarrhus	March 17	Cured	5	13
March 13	Charles Sloper	26	Convict		Contusi	March 16	Cured	3	
March 14	Robt Helliwell	37	P Pens		Phlegmoni	March 25	To duty	11	
March 17	Joseph Cable	41	P Pens		Rheumat.	March 18	To duty	1	
March 17	Robert Allen	25	Convict		Rheumat.	March 22	Cured	5	14
March 17	Richard Johnson	34	Convict		Rheumat.	March 20	Cured	3	15
March 18	John Kinghorn	20	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 25	Cured	7	16
March 19	Frank Travers	26	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 29	Cured	10	17
March 19	William Hawkins	23	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 29	Cured	10	
March 25	George Norville	27	Convict		Nyctalopia	March 28	Cured	3	
March 28	John Saunders	34	Convict		Rheumat.	April 2	Cured	4	

George D MacLaren, Surgeon

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