

## Details of the Employment & Dispersal Lists: Assisted Passengers Arriving 1848 to 1854

I first heard about these records while at a family history conference in Dubbo in 2008 when Cheryl Mongan<sup>1</sup> gave a presentation titled "*Distanced by time and circumstance: Orphans Immigration and the Great Irish Famine*". Cheryl mentioned that she had found the employment list for the *Thomas Arbuthnot* in the NSW Governor's Despatches at the Mitchell Library in Sydney. Supplied with the reference from Cheryl, I went in search of the list for my Irish orphan girl's ship, the *Tippoo Saib*<sup>2</sup>, but it was one of the lists that hadn't survived although I did find the NSW Governor's Despatch sending 10 lists as enclosures including the one for the *Tippoo Saib*. The information contained in the surviving lists that I found was too important to ignore so I decided to transcribe all of those lists. Martin Beckett<sup>3</sup> supplied me with a list of references for the NSW Governor's Despatches and later posted a more detailed list. This is his initial list:

The original set of the NSW Governor's Despatches is held in The National Archives at Kew in the UK, in their record series CO 201 (copied onto the AJCP PRO reels).

### Despatches to the Secretary of State for Colonies, from the NSW Governor [110 reels]:

- (1) 1813-1855: Vols. 1-78: D 74 - D 75; A 1191 - A 1266/2  
Handwritten duplicate copies.
- (2) 1856-1879: Vols. 79-95: A 1266/3 - A 1266/19  
Typescript transcripts made in the 1920s, of the original volumes held in the PRO, London.
- (3) 1823-1855: Vols. 96-102: A 1267/3 - A 1267/9  
Typescript transcripts of the missing despatches from A 1194 - A 1266/2, made from the PRO, London, volumes.
- (4) 1823-1860: Vols. 103-122: A 1267/10 - A 1267/29  
Typescript transcripts of despatches, enclosures and extracts, missing from A 1194 - A 1266/4.

### Despatches to the NSW Governor, from the Secretary of State for Colonies [76 reels]:

- (1) 1831-1878: Vols. 123-199: A 1268 - A 1320; A 1321/1-24  
Mainly typescript transcripts, also with some handwritten copies.

In the 1980s, Martin had recorded all of the Ship Return lists he had found on his Ships card index and the card index is in 11 drawers of ship references at the Mitchell Library. He hadn't made any record in his card index when a list was mentioned in a despatch but the actual list was missing. Realising that I couldn't go through the 11 drawers of ship references to find those relating to these lists, I instead searched through the microfilm reels and recorded the references then, when I had completed that list, I scanned copies of the pages from the microfilms to enable me to transcribe at home. All of the transcribed lists have been checked against those in the original volumes as there was often additional information in the binding or the writing was so faint on the microfilmed copy that it was illegible.

The ships are:

**SYDNEY: Arrival 1848:** Sir Edward Parry, Hyderabad, Subraon, Thetis, Canton, Equestrian, Royal Saxon, Fairlie, Agincourt, Earl Grey, Charlotte Jane, Castle Eden, Emperor, General Hewett, Waverley, Walmer Castle; **1849:** Thomas Arbuthnot, Harbinger, Walter Morrice, St Vincent, Lady Peel, Scotia, Mary Bannatyne, Duke of Roxburgh, Victoria, Kate, Sea, Petrel, William & Mary, Una, Lismoyne, Sarah, Success, Blonde; **1850:** Panama, Thomas Arbuthnot, Cornwall, Anglia, Elizabeth, Oriental; **1851:** Earl Grey, St Vincent, **1852:** William & Mary, Joseph Somes, Neptune, St George Seymour, Agincourt, David McIver, Kate, Irene, John Gray, Ontario, Hydaspes, Humboldt, Wilson Kennedy, **1853:** Rattler, Tamar; **1854:** Plantagenet, Sabrina, Rodney, Switzerland, Araminta, Lady Elgin

**Lists Missing: [GDs survived]: 1849:** Inchinnan, Steadfast, Julindur, Digby, Midlothian, Tory, Lady Amherst; **1850:** John Knox, Thetis, Lloyds, Maria, Tippoo Saib, Ramillies, Lord Stanley, Emily, Kate, **1851:** Garland

**TWOFOLD BAY: Arrival 1848:** Bermondsey

---

<sup>1</sup>[1] Richard Reid, Cheryl Mongan; *A Decent Set of Girls : The Irish Famine Orphans of the Thomas Arbuthnot, 1849-1850*

<sup>2</sup>[2] *Barefoot & Pregnant?: Irish famine orphans in Australia : documents and register*; compiled and introduced by Trevor McClaughlin

<sup>3</sup>[3] Martin Beckett, Acting Manuscripts Team Leader, Microforms Librarian, Original Materials Branch, State Library of NSW (since retired)

**PORT PHILLIP: Arrival 1848:** Sir Edward Parry, Lady Peel, William Stewart, Adelaide, Mahomed Shah, Cheapside, Palmyra (Palmira), Cornwall, Berkshire, Blonde, Tasman, Andromache, Nelson, Lady Kennaway; **1849:** Francis Ridley, Aurora, Labuan, Maitland, Duchess of Northumberland, Manchester, Lysander, Thetis, Osprey, Mary Shepherd, Lord George Bentinck, General Palmer, Sir George Seymour, Victory, Hope, Elizabeth, Medway, New Liverpool, Courier, Mahomed Shah, Tasman, James T Foord, Nelson, Royal George, Andromache; **1850:** Maitland, Diadem, Lady Kennaway, Derwent, Reliance, Eliza Caroline, \*Culloden

**MORETON BAY: Arrival 1848:** Artemisia; **1852:** Maria Somes, Argyle, Meridian, Rajahgopaul; **1853:** Parsee  
**Lists Missing: [GDs survived]: 1850:** Emigrant; **1851:** Duchess of Northumberland

The general and disposal list of the female immigrants on the \*Culloden (Sidney Herbert's needlewomen) is sourced from the NSW Colonial Secretary's In-Letters.

The immigrant details include name, age and occupation and there are also lists of births and deaths with dates for each and, for deaths, the cause is given in most cases.

Amongst these lists are Ship Returns for the ships on which the Irish orphan girls were conveyed to the Colony under the Earl Grey scheme. These girls were not welcomed by all prospective employers. In 1850, the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the City of Melbourne sent a Petition [[Petition by City of Melb re IOGs 1850.pdf](#)] to the Queen protesting about these young females from the Workhouses of Ireland being sent out to "this Province at the expense of the Land Fund under the authority of your Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, and by the advice of your Majesty's Land and Emigration Commissioners ...". Their objections were that many of the girls were under the age of 18 years contrary to the Regulations and they listed other objections amongst them that this particular description of immigration was totally unsuited to the general wants of the Colony.

The database contains 23,262 records with only a few entries duplicated when an alias was recorded in these lists. If I found an alias recorded only in the shipping lists, that information is in the Remarks in this database. The database fields are:

Surname; ForeName; Age; Occ. [Occupation]; Ship; St. [Status]; Dep.Port [Departure Port]; D.O.Arr. [Date of Arrival]; Arr. Port [Arrival Port]; Ref. [Reference]; Remarks [Notes]; NSW GD [file reference for the Despatch transcription]; Ship Rpt [file reference to the report compiled from the ship details on the second page of the Ship Return and the Remarks page]; and Addl Docs [file reference/s to additional documents]. See the list of abbreviations for explanation of those used.

The Remarks field contains additional details found in the records such as names of related family members so that the father has the names listed of his wife and children and the children have the names of their parents; when the numbers of unnamed children and the sex of them has been noted in specific age brackets in the lists, this information has also been included in the relevant records. If a name was different to that on the State Records NSW online index, the variant name is recorded in Remarks. Many of the records have also been checked against the SRNSW (State Records NSW) online Agent's lists when the names and quite often the ages have been the same in the Ship Return and in those cases the native place and sometimes other details on the Agent's list have been recorded for each person.

There were many instances where the name the immigrant arrived under was changed on arrival. In one case, a married couple who arrived under the surname of STAPLETON stated when they were being employed that they were actually brother and sister and their surname was SEXTON. The single male confessed that they had used a fraudulent marriage certificate in order to use the passage certificate. There were other instances of immigrants using a different name on the passage having purchased the assisted passage certificate from somebody who had decided not to come and also some immigrants have been missed from the ship arrival records but they are listed in these Ship Returns. All variant names have been included in the Remarks field. On occasion, when I have checked the Agent's list and noticed the "R.R." in the Remarks column signifying that the passenger obtained an assisted passage under the Remittance Regulations and the deposits for those passengers were recorded from 1853 onwards in the NSW Immigration Deposit Journals. Some of these immigrants though are earlier arrivals than 1853 and it is worthwhile checking the late Joan Reese's *Convicts and Others* index to the Colonial Secretary's

correspondence for the 1848-1853 period (see link below to Colonial Secretary file). In some but by no means all of those records, I've recorded the reference to the Colonial Secretary's correspondence records at State Records NSW found in that index in the Remarks field. Note that there is no indication in that index that the reference was for a deposit. For some found in a later period when the deposit was recorded in the Journals, I've recorded the reference to the deposit from the *NSW Immigration Deposits Combined Index 1853-1900*.

The employers' names and quite often locations were often misspelt. Wherever possible, I've included the correct names and locations in square brackets again in the Remarks field. When I have been unable to find this myself, many others have provided assistance so I could add this information in square brackets after the transcribed list information. The same applies to the causes of death as, when I've been at a loss to find what some obscure cause could possibly be and have asked for assistance from those friends with a medical background, that assistance has also been so willingly given and my grateful thanks is extended to all.

Many related documents have been transcribed including any found for those where the lists haven't survived. For those ships, I have listed in the database the names of the ships' masters and surgeon superintendents with a 'List Missing' entry for the passengers. The table of the Ship Returns contains the references for the additional reports [[ML\\_ShipReturns Table with Rpt refs.pdf](#)]. I haven't included transcriptions of every document that *could* exist for the passengers or ships on these lists and researchers are advised to not only check the Mitchell Library resources but also the NSW Colonial Secretary's correspondence and the Immigration correspondence at State Records NSW.

Although copies of the original NSW Governor's Despatches can be found in the microfilms in the AJCP (Australian Joint Copying Project) PRO (Public Record Office, now The National Archives at Kew) Colonial Office records, no trace has been found to date of the originals of these Ship Returns which were forwarded to the Emigration Commissioners. There must have been many more lists than those duplicate lists that have survived in the NSW Governor's Despatches records at the Mitchell Library.

### ***Further Research***

Researchers seeking more records of correspondence should check both the Colonial Secretary's papers and also the Immigration Department records at State Records NSW and also use the related Archives in Brief guides to find what other records they could search. These guides are available online.

### ***Immigration Correspondence***

The series reference for the Immigration correspondence at State Records that may lead you to other documents is:

NRS 5238, Indexes and Registers – skeleton or incomplete index only but it can supply enough information for you to obtain the Item number – usually a 9/ ref. – available at Kingswood

NRS 5239, Immigration Letters Received, 1846-97 [75 boxes]. There is no online Item list so you need to first check

### ***Colonial Secretary's Correspondence***

There are State Records NSW Archives in Brief for both of these series and I recommend that researchers also check the late Joan Reese's *Convicts and Others* index of the NSW Colonial Secretary's correspondence. This index was published in sections each covering a specific period and it is currently only available on microfiche. This table [[Colonial Secretary.pdf](#)] provides details of the sections.

***Recommended reading:*** A book supplying background on the voyages is *Life and death in the Age of Sail : The passage to Australia*<sup>4</sup>[4] and another book on the free immigrants and migration schemes particularly relating to Irish migration is *Farewell My Children*<sup>5</sup>[5].

---

<sup>4</sup>[4] *Life and death in the Age of Sail : The passage to Australia* by Robin Haines; published by University of New South Wales Press Ltd

<sup>5</sup>[5] *Farewell My Children : Irish Assisted Emigration to Australia 1848-1870* by Richard E. Reid; published by Anchor Books Australia