

Ship 'Douglas' 1874

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Information from the Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives is added at the end of this document

Letter dated 10 Jun 1874 Isaac Earl Featherston to the Minister for Immigration, Wellington

Written from the Office of the Agent General for New Zealand, 7 Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W. via Brindisi

Sir, I have the honor to advise the sailing of the ship "The Douglas" from London for Wellington on the third day of July with four hundred and sixty five Emigrants, equal to three hundred and sixty nine and a half Statute Adults. Herewith, I beg to forward a copy of the Ships Book, the originals of the Promissory Notes and the Certified List. The gratuities payable on the recommendation of the Inspecting Officers in the Colony are the following viz:

To the Surgeon Superintendent, Dr Purcell, fifty pounds and ten shillings per adult on the number of Emigrants landed.

To the Chief Officer, ten pounds.

To Captain Wilson, twenty five pounds.

To the Officer who serves out the provisions, five pounds.

To the Matron, Mrs Ann Banks, five pounds.

To the Constables: Ordinary, two pounds each, For Water Closets five pounds

I have appointed the Rev M. Rowe to act as Schoolmaster. He receives a second-class passage in return for his services. I have the honor to be,
Sir, Your most obedient servant, I. E. Featherston, Agent General.

P.S. The sum of twenty pounds (£20) has been advanced to Dr Purcell, on account of his gratuity. A similar sum should therefore be deducted from the amount becoming due to him under his Agreement with this Office.

Letter dated 24 Jun 1874 Isaac Earl Featherston to Mrs Ann Banks
Written from the Office of the Agent General for New Zealand, 7 Westminster Chambers, London S.W.

To Mrs Ann Banks, You are hereby appointed to be Matron of the Ship "Douglas" conveying Emigrants to Wellington, New Zealand under contract with the Government. I beg to hand you a Copy of the Queen's Order in Council, and the Regulations of the Government, which will fully explain to you the duties expected of you during the Voyage. A strict enquiry into the state of the Ship, and the treatment and behaviour of the Emigrants during the Voyage will be held immediately on your arrival at Wellington. If it shall be found that your duties have been efficiently performed - in addition to a free passage and separate Cabin as remuneration for your Service - you will be repaid ~~a gratuity of Five pounds~~ the amount paid for your passage £14 10s. If the contrary should unfortunately be the case, the gratuity will be forfeited. I am, Your Obedient Servant I.E. Featherston, Agent General.

Letter dated 23 Oct 1874 H. A. Atkinson to the Immigration Office, Wellington
The Immigration Commissioners are authorized to incur the necessary expense with respect to the quarantine of the ship 'Douglas'.

Memorandum of the Immigration Office dated 04 Nov 187_

Mr Haughton, The Agent General actually promises a free passage to Mrs Banks, Matron of the "Douglas" as by his letter of appointment dated June 24th and engages to repay also £14 10s the cost of her passage, erasing from the agreement the original promise to pay a gratuity of Five pounds, as by his letter dated June 10th. Mrs Banks, is according to the letter of the appointment, entitled to a free passage and a refund of £14 10s which she has paid – but not to the gratuity of £5. Signed J. _ . Ballard.

Letter dated 04 Nov 1874 Mr H. J... Sho_t, Clerk to the Agent General to Mr Haughton
Mr Haughton

I forward you the letter of appointment of Mrs Banks as Matron of the ship "The Douglas" from the concluding portion of which it would appear that not only is she entitled to a free passage but also to be repaid the amount of her passage money £14 10s. It is also stated in the Agent General's letter of the 10th June advising the sailing of the ship that the Matron would receive a gratuity of Five Pounds - although these words are struck out of the attached letter. As I did not feel justified in paying Mrs Banks the sum of £34 which on reading the two instructions I have quoted would appear to be due to her. I merely paid her £5 pounds as Matron and £9 10s on account of refund of passage. Altogether £14 10s which amount she readily accepted.

The Report of the Surgeon Superintendent of Ship 'Douglas' dated 05 Nov 1874

Gentlemen, I beg to lay before you a few remarks which I think pertain to the interests of Emigrants and emigration. The 'Douglas' in every way is well adapted for carrying emigrants. The condenser is particularly good. Enough water was daily condensed to supply the wants of the Ship. I cannot say too much in praise of the kindness of Captain Wilson and his officers who assisted me in every possible way. The Captain has often kept the Ship off a point to prevent her rolling and the Emigrants are under lasting obligations to him for kindnesses shown them in various other ways.

Thirty-one deaths occurred on the 'Douglas' all under 4 years and on Somes Island four deaths – 3 children under 2 years and one woman aged 59. The majority of these deaths were sequelae of measles or whooping cough. The measles without doubt were brought on board the Ship: the first case occurred on July 14th and the embarkation took place on July 1st. The children of two families were suffering from measles previous to embarkation and in the case of one child who had been suffering from whooping cough previous to embarkation, the cough re-appeared shortly after the departure from Gravesend. There were 62 cases of Measles and 30 of Hooping Cough.

From an entry in my log of July 8th you will perceive that at that early date I drew attention to the excessive number of children on board – 166 under 12 years and I then remarked that if any epidemic should unfortunately break out I feared that the overcrowding of children might be the cause of great mortality. I there mentioned that in one bay alone on the Starboard side consisting of 16 Bunks there were 16 adults and 28 children. As a melancholy proof of the truth of my remarks 11 of these 28 children were lost on the voyage.

The arrangement of the berths between decks was radically bad and well calculated to increase rather than modify the effects of overcrowding. There was plenty of draught but no ventilation. No passage was left between the bunks and ship's sides in consequence of which the dirt to collecting there could not be removed till the berths were taken down. The sweat from the ship's side caused those bunks near it to be constantly damp. It is necessary too, that the space between the deck and the bottom of the bunks be increased. When any water found its way between decks the beds in the lower bunks always became wet. Their proximity to the floor caused them even to absorb the least moisture from beneath.

Due facilities for separating the sick from the healthy should be made on board an emigrant ship where too much watchful care and attention cannot be bestowed to prevent the spread of disease. I regret to say I had not those facilities. The Contagious Disease Hospital fell short in accommodation and especially in ventilation. I have frequently had as many as twelve patients with the nurse in this Hospital. The cubic contents of which were not sufficient for one adult. As a remedy I would decidedly recommend that no other passengers but emigrants be carried in Government Emigrant Ships and then the hospital surgery &c could be in the Poop.

The Hospital between decks was likewise to be condemned. It was situated in the most noisy part of the between decks on the port side of the main hatch and opposite the store room where there was continual traffic. Water coming down from the main hatch was sure to find its way into the hospital and I need scarcely allude to the impropriety of lying-in women being in a noisy or damp compartment. I would recommend this hospital to be placed on one side of the after hatch.

The booby hatches were very flimsily constructed of white deal instead of hard wood. In consequence of the soft nature of the wood the main hatch was stove in on the 26th September and a large quantity of water found its way below and as the charcoal sand &c were used up difficulty experienced in drying. The quantity of sand and charcoal may be wisely increased: and there should at the least be five tons of sand. Instead of holy-stones which wear away quickly I would recommend fire bricks. In other ships I have always used sand and fire bricks and have found them superior to everything else.

The food on board was good especially the beef and pork. I would however recommend a few changes. The Emigrants should be supplied with more flour and less biscuit. The mortality amongst the children I greatly attribute to the want of bread for they would not eat the biscuit sago arrowroot &c provided but were constantly crying for bread. I would also recommend the stoppage of all currents and raisins since the mothers in order to keep their children quiet gave them these articles no matter from what disease they were suffering: and in many cases the efforts of the surgeon are entirely frustrated by these means. As a substitute I would recommend (preserved) vegetables and cheese. Instead of all pickles there might be with advantage an alternate issue of pickles and vinegar.

I should strongly recommend the discontinuance of the preserved soup issued daily for children's use and the substitution for it of milk: as the soup is the cause of diarrhoea. Furze's stout for medical comforts was very inferior as were also a number of tins marked Mt Ararat Mutton. I would recommend the entire use of Aberdeen or Hann's tins which are far superior to all other brands. The medicines were good but some were insufficient and others may be added with advantage.

There might be added to the chest the following:- Chlorate of Potash, Tresnitrate of Bismuth, Hydrate of Chloral (syr 10grs...), Syr. Tolut, Tinct. Cinchr., Lin. Camph. Co, Pulv. Tinci. Oxid, Honey & Wadding, A few leeches in wet peat, 2 or 3 Carboys of Distilled water. There was an insufficiency of: Tinct. of Iron, Linseed Meal, Methylated Spirits, Borax, Tinct. Squill, Caster Oil, Cod Liver Oil, Glycerine, Olive Oil, Flannel.

The health of the Emigrants was bad and at one time the between decks could only be compared to a floating hospital. There have been diseases in great variety. Diphtheritic sore throats, Measles, Erysepalus, Whooping Cough, Bronchitis, Thrush, Diarrhoea, Dysentery &c. There were eight ~~successful~~ cases of midwifery all successful.

The bad state of health is to be in a very great measure attributed to the insufficient care in the selection of persons suitable for emigration. The people shipped were of a very poor description and many of the families were constitutionally weak and totally unfit for colonists. One man was suffering from a double rupture, another from single rupture, two were 60 years old and there were in others defects which should certainly have been serious impediments for emigrating. I cannot but too strongly condemn the examination or as it is properly called "the march past" at Gravesend before Dr Humphries.

I would recommend that the Emigrants be kept in Depot ten days at least previous to embarkation and that the Surgeon about to take charge of them for the voyage should visit them daily and make a proper examination of each emigrant and that he be made responsible for the class of emigrants brought in to the Colony. I have the honour to be Gentlemen, Your obedient servant, Herbert C. Purcell, L.K. & 2 C.P.I.L.R.S.C.I.L.M.

Certificate of Births and Deaths

Births

Date	Name of Parents	Sex	Remarks
July 6 th	Jonathan & Susannah Pearson	Female	
July 6 th	James & Mary Barr	Female	
July 22 nd	Frederick & Margaret Pope	Female	
September 28 th	Mark & Eliza Newsom	Female	
September 30 th	Philip & Susan Beard	Male	
October 4 th	Thomas & Letitia Moore	Female	
October 15 th	William & Betty Woodhouse	Male	
October 21 st	Charles & Annie Cutler	Female	

Deaths

Date	Name	Sex	Age	Cause of Death
July 7 th	Susannah Pearson	Female	1 day	Apnoea
July 19 th	Edwin Packer	Male	2 years	Convulsions
July 27 th	William Hydon	Male	2 years	Capillary Bronchitis
August 8 th	Bertie Bowles	Male	2 years	Marasmas with Diarrhoea
August 16 th	John Browning	Male	1 year	Enteritis with Parotitis
August 19 th	John Kelby	Male	Infant	Convulsions
August 19 th	Amelia Hancock	Female	1 year	Bronchitis with Diarrhoea
August 19 th	Halford Jones	Male	Infant	Diarrhoea & Thrush
August 19 th	John Toye	Male	Infant	Convulsions
August 20 th	John Conroy	Male	Infant	Sudden death*
August 24 th	Amy Byford	Female	2 years	Enteritis
August 27 th	Albert Moore	Male	1 year	Sudden death cause unknown
August 29 th	Reginald Moore	Male	3 years	Pneumonia with Diptheria
August 30 th	Edward Brown	Male	2 years	Diptheretic sore throat
August 31 st	George Cutler	Male	2 years	Croup
September 5 th	Elizabeth Broom	Male [sic]	1 year	Parotitis with Hospital Gangrene
September 6 th	Arthur Gardner	Male	Infant	Capillary Bronchitis
September 14 th	Austin Davis	Male	1 year	Tabes Mesenterica
September 19 th	Esther Creswick	Female	Infant	Enteritis
September 20 th	William John Hosking	Male	1 year	Meningitis with Erysiphelas

Deaths continued

Date	Name	Sex	Age	Cause of Death
September 20 th	Simon Trevena	Male	2 years	Convulsions
September 20 th	Lavinia Bowles	Female	2 years	Enteritis
September 22 nd	Louisa Schottler	Female	Infant	Capillary Bronchitis
September 30 th	Arthur Palmer	Male	Infant	Convulsions
October 5 th	Edward Palmer	Male	Infant	Convulsions
October 7 th	Flora Wills	Female	2 years	Hooping Cough with Convulsions
October 9 th	William Davey	Male	2 years	Marasmus
October 10 th	Mary Murray	Female	Infant	Parotitis with Haemorrhage of Lips
October 11 th	Charles Hoare	Male	Infant	Hooping Cough with Bronchitis
October 16 th	Ellen Earl	Female	4 years	Hooping Cough with Convulsions
October 20 th	Agra Brooker	Female	Infant	Bronchitis

* supposed cause spasm of Glottis

I hereby certify that the above is a correct statement of Births and Deaths amongst the Government emigrants by the above named ship.
Signed Herbert C. Purcell, L.K. & L.C.P.I.L.R.C.S.I.L.M.

Deaths on Some's Island

Date	Name	Sex	Age	Cause of Death
October 23 rd	Marian Douglas Pope	Female	Infant	Convulsions
October 25 th	Arthur Pearson	Male	Infant	Hooping Cough with Convulsions

Immigration Commissioners' Report on Ship "Douglas", Wellington 10 Nov 1874

A printed copy of this can be found in the Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives 1875 Section D3 page 31

Sir, We have the honor to report the arrival of the Ship "The Douglas" on the night of the 22nd ult. with 362 Adults, 33 Deaths equal to 7½ Statute Adults - occurred on the voyage and during the lay days in quarantine and 2 deaths equal to 1½ Statute Adults after the expiration of the lay days in quarantine. As the health of the passengers was reported generally bad, Measles, whooping cough, and other diseases having prevailed we had no alternative but to send the vessel and her passengers to quarantine, where she was at once towed by the Government Steamer "Luna."

Having given the Captain and Surgeon Superintendent instructions to land all the Immigrants, have their luggage disinfected and the tween decks of the ship thoroughly cleaned out and painted, we inspected the Immigrants on the 26th October and were pleased to find the single men and women a fine healthy body of people, but we regret we cannot say so much for the married people many of whom were quite unfit to undertake

the sea voyage much less to be of any benefit to the Colony even though they succeeded in reaching their destination. On the 27th we inspected the ship and finding that our instructions as to cleaning and painting had been carried out we at once admitted her to pratique. We have on a previous occasion inspected this fine vessel and reported that she was in every way suited for the Immigration Service of this Colony. It is therefore needless for us again to enumerate all the advantages she possesses for lighting and ventilating the tween decks; the single women, married compartment and single men, were berthed as usual in Immigrant Ships but there was one alteration with regard to the single women which we think was a judicious one viz the entrance to their compartment being direct from the poop which prevented them having any excuse for going on the main deck. We regret to say that there no alleyways in the vessel as on the previous voyage and it will be seen from the Surgeon's remarks herewith that he comments upon this saying that the "arrangement of the berths in the tween decks was radically bad."

We append a summary of the voyage by Dr Purcell and we would direct especial attention to every one of his suggestions which are of a practical nature he having had a large experience in Emigration. It will be seen that he distinctly states how the measles and whooping cough were brought on board the vessel and that the Medical inspection was of the same cursory nature as it was when Emigration to this Colony first commenced, in fact from his remarks respecting the hospital accommodation and their position, the position of the surgery, flimsy hatches, want of charcoal and sand, deficiency of certain medicines, we can only imagine that no experience has been gained in Emigration matters, notwithstanding that some thousands of people have been sent to the Colony, during the last 2 years, a perusal of the printed papers during the period named will shew that over and over again have the very same deficiencies and bad arrangements been complained of. Another matter which has been brought under our notice, was the bad stowage of the cargo a quantity of railway iron being placed in the bottom of the hold which caused her to roll very much which greatly inconvenienced the passengers and especially the invalids. Again we have to complain of the practice of allowing private passengers in Emigrant Ships for not only is the space they occupy under the poop urgently required for hospitals dispensary etc. but their conduct is frequently of great annoyance to the Captain and Surgeon Superintendent and in the case of the 'Douglas' this was so with the second class passengers. There was also a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst the single men when 11 of them found after paying Messrs Shaw Saville & Co full passages that they might by applying to the Agent General have come out free.

In conclusion we have very great pleasure in recommending the payment of all gratuities and we consider that Captain Wilson and Surgeon Superintendent Purcell are deserving of the highest praise for the manner in which they struggled against almost overwhelming difficulties caused by the crowding together of a number of weak and badly constituted families the effect of which can best be understood by the following remarks by Dr Purcell. "The health of the Emigrants was bad and at one time the tween decks could only be compared to a floating hospital."

The Rev Mr Rowe also deserves praise for his exertions on behalf of the Immigrants both during the voyage and since their arrival here. We have the honour to be Sir, Your Obedient Servants, Alexander Johnston M.D., H. J. H. Elliott, John Holliday

Read and forward to the Honble Minister for Immigration. I concur in the opinion that no cabin or second class passengers should be taken on board Immigrant Ships. William Fitzherbert 16 Nov 1874

Letter dated 14 Nov 1874 A. F. Halcombe, Wellington to the Minister for Immigration
Sir, I have the honor to request that a copy of the report furnished by the Surgeon of the ship 'Douglas' may be forwarded to the Secretary of the Emigrant and Colonists Aid Corporation by the outgoing English mail. The address is

C.Stewart Bailey Esq
Secretary E & C Aid Corporation
3 Queen Square
Westminster

I have the honour to remain Sir, Your most obedient servant, A.F. Halcombe, Agent E & C Aid Corporation

Letter dated 09 Mar 1875 Isaac Earl Featherston, Agent General to The Minister for Immigration, Wellington
Written from 7 Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster S.W. - Via San Francisco
No 129 Re Promissory Notes of certain "Douglas" emigrants

Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No 326 of 16th November 1874 in which you inform me "that the Promissory Notes amounting to Thirty six Pounds five shillings which appear from the Ship's Book of "The Douglas" to have been taken from the Emigrants by that ship had not reached your Office or that of His Honor the Superintendent. I have instituted enquiry into the circumstances, and I have also seen Mr Simmons, the Secretary of the Kent Agricultural Laborers' Union (to which the men Bowles, Gibson and Usmar belonged) with reference to the conditions under which the Emigrants proceeded – And I find that the arrangement with Mr Simmons was that the men were not to sign Promissory Notes, all the children in their families being allowed to go free. The Clerk who attended at the Ship erased the amounts from the list of Promissory Notes, but omitted to make the necessary correction in the body of the Book and in the financial summary at page 35. The Emigrants should not therefore be called upon to pay any portion of the sums statement. I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient Servant, I. E. Featherston, Agent General.

Immigration to New Zealand 1875

(Letters to the Agent-General, Transmitting Reports upon Immigrant Ships)
Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR) 1875 Section D3

Page 31 Item No.51

Letter dated 19 Nov 1874 The Hon. H. A. Atkinson, Immigration Office, Wellington to the Agent-General

Sir, I have the honor to transmit the following documents relative to the ship "The Douglas," which arrived in Port Nicholson upon the 22nd ultimo:-

1. Immigration Commissioners' report
2. Surgeon-Superintendent's report
3. Correspondence between the Immigration Office and Surgeon-Superintendent relative to the "Feilding" immigrants.
4. Certified list of births and deaths upon the voyage.

1. The unusually large number of deaths on board the ship and the "Cartvale" enforces the consideration that the frequently repeated instructions of my predecessor, as to the necessity of a proper medical inspection of the emigrants before embarkation, have not been attended to. The perusal of Dr Purcell's report leaves little doubt that "The Douglas" left England with the seeds of infection on board, and that there were cases of organic disease which even a cursory examination must have detected.

2. You will observe that the Commissioners again call attention to the inconvenience and trouble caused by passengers other than Government immigrants being carried in ships chartered for the conveyance of the latter. I desire that you will, subject to Mr Vogel's approval, stipulate in all future charter-parties that the whole passenger accommodation of ships should be at the disposal of the Government. Many advantages will result from such an arrangement. The hospitals can then be under the poop, and the other annoyances which have frequently resulted from the presence on board of persons not subject to the control of the surgeon-superintendent will be avoided.

3. It is necessary that I should particularly remark upon the other points raised in the enclosed reports. These are ably written, and speak for themselves, and I trust will receive every consideration at your hands. Probably, also, by this time many of the defects and omissions complained of will have been rectified in accordance with instructions given to you in former letters.

4. I forward copies of correspondence between the Immigration Officer and the surgeon-superintendent of the ship, in order that you may be officially informed of the unsatisfactory physical character of the immigrants sent out by the Colonist's Aid Society. As these immigrants were approved by you, I have to request that an inquiry be made into the several cases specially cited by Dr Purcell, in order that it may be ascertained who is responsible for shipping so undesirable a class of persons.

I have, &c., H. A. Atkinson.
