

AJCP Reel 3210 Vol 69 1-10 Convict Ships

Sovereign Mr Robert Malcolm Surgeon

2 June 1827 - 29 Dec 1827

Sick list of the female convict ship Sovereign

July 31 Margaret Baldwin, age 5, child, disease - adustiv, put off sick ward on Aug 25; cured

Aug 8 Honor Baldwin; age 28; Adustio; 25 Aug ; cured

Sep 6 Honor Baldwin; age 28; Phlogosis; Sep 14; cured

Medical and Surgical Journal of His Majesty's Female Convict Ship Sovereign between the 2nd day of June 1827 and the 29th day of Decr 1827 during which Time the said Ship has been employed in *making a passage to Van Dieman's Land.*

Harriet Appleyard a female child [?] 14 weeks 18th July Downs No. 1

Until this date no case worthy of notice occurred, indeed it was only on the 29th of June that the women began to embark and the embarkation of the whole number - eighty one women and twelve children - was not completed before the 5th of July. I was called between eleven and twelve to night to see the patient who was reported to be dying of convulsion, found the poor little child with its limbs violently agitated to & fro, with its body bent backwards, and its eyes rolling in its head, countenance pale, pulse scarcely perceptible. Water for a bath was ordered to be heated, and in the mean time a clyster, consisting ...

Margaret Baldwin a female child [?] 5 31st July at Sea No. 4

Latitude at Noon 46° 17' N Longitude 7°-31' W Thermometer 71°

Had both her legs and both her feet severely scalded by a kettle full of boiling water which was upset over them by the rolling of the ship. Applied warm oil of Turpentine to the whole of the burned surfaces.

August 1st The injury at the time of its occurrence produced a slight degree of collapse in the system, but the Turpentine on its second application began to produce reaction, and at this moment there is no perceptible derangement of the natural functions of the frame bowels rather slow. Let her take an aperient draught, and dress the scalded surfaces with simple ointment. It is quite unnecessary to give a daily detail of the progress of the sores to their cure, they went on to heal gradually though slowly, and it was necessary to touch them occasionally with a weak solution of the Sulphate of Copper before she was dismissed cured on the 25th August to Duty.

Honor Baldwin [?] 28 8th August at Sea No. 6

Latitude 33° 16' N Longitude 15°-57' W Thermometer 74°

The mother of the child whose case is detailed in one of the preceding pages was so unfortunate as to suffer to day from a similar accident, but happily to a less extent than her child. By the upsetting of a kettle of boiling water she had her left foot severely scalded. Smearred the burnt surface with Linseed oil. Without the occurrence of any thing worthy of notice the sore healed up perfectly and she was dismissed cured on the 25th August to Duty.

Honor Baldwin [?] 28 6th September At Sea No. 14

Latitude 0° 36' S Longitude 27°-20' W Temperature 80°

Complains of a red painful swelling of the left breast which shews some disposition to point near the nipple and an obscure fluctuation can be perceived. Foment for half an

hour with warm water and afterwards apply an emollient poultice. This is to be repeated three or four times a day.

7th Continue the treatment of yesterday

8th The abscess burst and discharged a considerable quantity of well conditioned healthy pus. Continue the emollient poultice, which was continued until the 10th when the discharge had almost entirely ceased and the sore was dressed with Turner's berate. The cavity filled up rapidly with good healthy granulations, and by the 14th the sore was almost quite cicatrized over, and the patient at her own request was dismissed to her Duty.

GENERAL REMARKS [still to be completely transcribed – this report may be of general interest but is not necessary to the Baldwin story]

It would be no easy matter to conceive a situation, where the human frame could be more likely to be operated upon by all the ordinary causes of disease than that of a number of female prisoners who, from having forfeited the laws of their country, are assembled on board ship, for the purpose of being conveyed from their homes, their families, and their friends, few of them with much prospect of ever again beholding these objects of endearment. Whatever may have been their previous sufferings, it is not till the distressful moment of final separation from the land of their fathers from the home of their infancy that they awaken to the full consciousness of this wretchedness; In their miserable condition neither memory nor forecast can afford them any comfort, they are shut out from all Pleasurable recollections of the past and open still to fearful foreboding for the future. In such a state it might reasonably expected that in the [this needs to be recopied

It is the only fatal case that occurred during the voyage, and from the great improbability that a child of that tender age would survive the difficulties of the long voyage we had before us, I objected to receive it, but the unhappy who had been brought from Warwick gaol, earnestly entreated to be taken on board and

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and I at length assented. I believe that orders have been issued from the Secretary of State Office to gaolers forbidding them to bring female prisoners who are suckling for embarkation, however it would appear the extent the attention is paid to their orders for several women were brought to the Sovereign in that condition.

[page 2 line 5]The numbers eight, nine and ten in the Journal are cases [line 6] of mild ... it will .. shortly after .. and may I think be ascribed to that disturbance in the [line 9]balance of the circulation almost ... occasioned by a transition from a cold to a hot climate. It is remarked in the Journal that a great number of women were complaining about this time, but their complaints were in general trifling with much symptomatic of that change in the distribution of the fluids and of the ? to congestion is generally ? informed by the inhabitants of ? on their first appearance between the tropics

[line 18] time, but in leaving England about the beginning of August as ? a ship might accomplish the whole voyage to New Holland without witnessing a greater variation of the thermometer than sometimes occurs in our own proverbially changeable climate in the course of four and twenty hours; while a ship quitting England in either of the months of January or February must necessarily be exposed to great and sudden transitions of transpirations; at the period of her departure, bleak weather holds his ? reign, and by the expiration of fifteen days, she not infrequently finds herself in the intertropical regions, "Semper sole ? et torride semper abigne" ??? From which, altho

undergoing a ? degree of scorching She emerges to encounter all the inclim? Of an Australasian winter.

When circumstances will permit the season to be chosen for the transportation of convicts to New South Wales, it may be worthy of being held in mind that from the middle of July to the middle of September is the most eligible period for their departure from England.

[page 3 line 1]A few cases of a disease resembling mild Scarlatina and

[page 3 line 9]With reference to the first consideration the weights of medical authority

[page 4]With respect to the second and third considerations the ages of the persons amongst whom the disease appearance readily [?] account for its limited range, Adults are by no means susceptible of the contagion of Scarlatina, And as to the mildness of the symptoms, that accurate observer of diseases ... , after recommending the patient to be purged by some g..the medicine sited to his age and ... observes , " Simplier have at naturali ...[latin] " an in many more instances under the ...of a rash inciting no alarm.[page 4, line 11]Whither it can pass through the system unobserved or not, I believe it will be readily admitted that no

the peculiar nature of the prisoners situation may have had some effect in predisposing them to disease, however it appears to me that the existing causes must have been in the atmosphere, the only cognizable changes that had taken place in it were a very considerable reduction of the temperature and increase of the humidity and this disease's appearance was immediately preceded by several days of thick foggy and drizzling rains, which by increasing the conducting power of the air rendered that diminution of the temperature more

[line 24] These few remarks on Scarlet fever were suggested to by reflecting on the case of Mary Dunn at page 32, in whom the symptoms of Scarlatine had been the least igno..ial, and in whom I consider [?] that the pneumonia symptoms, were an ... in favour of that strong connexion which has been observed to exist between the mucous membrane of the barondhii and intinous[?] diseases. It is true that the symptoms in this case do not resemble those which are considered to be strictly diagnostic of Bronchitis, but on closely interrogating the patient, who had been ailing for some days before she complained, it appeared that the symptoms originally were more slocae to thos of bronchitis; it is therefore probable that the inflammatory action commended in the mucous membrane and afterwards extended tot he parenchymatous substances of the lungs.

In the case of rheumatism, No 24, it will be observed that, on the fifth day of the disease, all the symptoms suddenly subsided, and that symptoms of laryngitis immediately I am disposed to ascribe this phenomenon to the transfer of the ? action fro ? parts primarily aaffection to the muscles and cartiledge

Robt Malcolm
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24th Decr 1827