

THE O'CONNORS ON THE MEDWAY 1857

Passengers on the Medway

A search of Passenger Lists for the Medway has resulted in more work being required to clarify the nature of the immigration. On face value, it seems that the following O'Connors came as Unassisted Passengers:

Ellen (aged 54) – wife of Michael Connor and mother of Andrew

Ellen (aged 18) – daughter of Ellen and sister of Andrew

Andrew (aged 22) – one of Ellen and Michael's eight children

Marg(aret) (aged 21) – Andrew's wife

Michael (infant aged <1 year) – son of Andrew and Margaret

An extract of the actual handwritten ship's manifest, showing Family name, given name, ages (male/female married couple, then male/female singles, children under 12, and male/female infants):

1848 1849 1850 1851 1852 1853 1854 1855 1856 1857 1858 1859 1860 1861 1862 1863 1864 1865 1866 1867 1868 1869 1870 1871 1872 1873 1874 1875 1876 1877 1878 1879 1880 1881 1882 1883 1884 1885 1886 1887 1888 1889 1890 1891 1892 1893 1894 1895 1896 1897 1898 1899 1900 1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906 1907 1908 1909 1910 1911 1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917 1918 1919 1920 1921 1922 1923 1924 1925 1926 1927 1928 1929 1930 1931 1932 1933 1934 1935 1936 1937 1938 1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945 1946 1947 1948 1949 1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955 1956 1957 1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035 2036 2037 2038 2039 2040 2041 2042 2043 2044 2045 2046 2047 2048 2049 2050 2051 2052 2053 2054 2055 2056 2057 2058 2059 2060 2061 2062 2063 2064 2065 2066 2067 2068 2069 2070 2071 2072 2073 2074 2075 2076 2077 2078 2079 2080 2081 2082 2083 2084 2085 2086 2087 2088 2089 2090 2091 2092 2093 2094 2095 2096 2097 2098 2099 2100 2101 2102 2103 2104 2105 2106 2107 2108 2109 2110 2111 2112 2113 2114 2115 2116 2117 2118 2119 2120 2121 2122 2123 2124 2125 2126 2127 2128 2129 2130 2131 2132 2133 2134 2135 2136 2137 2138 2139 2140 2141 2142 2143 2144 2145 2146 2147 2148 2149 2150 2151 2152 2153 2154 2155 2156 2157 2158 2159 2160 2161 2162 2163 2164 2165 2166 2167 2168 2169 2170 2171 2172 2173 2174 2175 2176 2177 2178 2179 2180 2181 2182 2183 2184 2185 2186 2187 2188 2189 2190 2191 2192 2193 2194 2195 2196 2197 2198 2199 2200 2201 2202 2203 2204 2205 2206 2207 2208 2209 2210 2211 2212 2213 2214 2215 2216 2217 2218 2219 2220 2221 2222 2223 2224 2225 2226 2227 2228 2229 2230 2231 2232 2233 2234 2235 2236 2237 2238 2239 2240 2241 2242 2243 2244 2245 2246 2247 2248 2249 2250 2251 2252 2253 2254 2255 2256 2257 2258 2259 2260 2261 2262 2263 2264 2265 2266 2267 2268 2269 2270 2271 2272 2273 2274 2275 2276 2277 2278 2279 2280 2281 2282 2283 2284 2285 2286 2287 2288 2289 2290 2291 2292 2293 2294 2295 2296 2297 2298 2299 2300 2301
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Yet the above, together with three other brothers, also appear as Assisted Passengers on the Medway in 1857.

A separate part of the Manifest however shows just the other brothers:

Fenton (aged 19) – brother of Andrew

Michael (aged 20) – brother of Andrew

Patrick (aged 24) – brother of Andrew

And here is a copy of the handwritten Manifest showing them as Labourers/Irish:

Wm. Loughlin	Mr. Mott	20	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	21	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	22	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	23	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	24	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	25	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	26	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	27	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	28	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	29	Clark	English
Wm. W. W. W.	Mr. Mott	30	Clark	English

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Note that these three brothers had each reduced their age down by around 5 years (real age is estimated based on Baptism records), possibly to make themselves more “attractive” as young, fit labourers. But generally, the Irish of this era, perhaps through ignorance, didn’t place great store on such niceties as birth dates and ages.

The Medway was just one of a large number of boats bringing immigrants to Australia during and after the Gold Rush. For example, in 1857 alone, the year the O'Connors arrived, there were almost 30 boats carrying a total of nearly 10,000 immigrants with about half of the arrivals being Irish. There were also more than 80 deaths at sea on these voyages but thankfully only one on the Medway.

1857 - Shipping from UK to Victoria with Assisted Passengers

Victoria

Return of Ships and Emigrants dispatched by Public Funds to Victoria, in 1857, 1858, and up to the 31st March 1859.

[illegible]

Display a menu

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The following is the news clipping identifying the arrival of the Medway on 19 December 1857:

Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848 - 1957), Monday 21 December 1857, page 4

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.
HOBSON'S BAY.
TIDE TABLE THIS DAY.—Low water, 12.50 a.m.; high water, 6.50 a.m.; low water, 1 p.m.; high water, 6.15 p.m.
December 20.—6 a.m.: Wind E., light; weather fine.—5.30 p.m.: Wind E.S.E.; weather fine.
ARRIVED.
December 18.—*Alert*, brig, 171 tons, P. Patterson, from Cape Town 26th October. Passengers—cabin: Mrs. Stourbirt and child, Mrs. Brenneker, Miss Poulsen; and five in the steerage. — Martin, agent.
December 19.—*Wanderer*, brig, 140 tons, J. B. Smith, from Sydney 13th inst. Passengers—cabin: Mr. and Mrs. Holloway and family, and two in the steerage. J. J. Clarke, agent.
December 19.—*Antelope*, Swedish barque, 400 tons, E. H. Halberg, from Valparaiso 19th September, via Tahiti 13th ult. Passengers—cabin: Messrs. Sullivan, J. Von Becherer, Stewart. Melchior and Co., agents.
December 19.—*Robin Gray*, barque, 291 tons, David Dick, from Dundee 8th August. Passenger—cabin: Mr. David Haggard. Graham, Sands, and Co., agents.
December 19.—*Storm Bird*, s.s., J. B. Sydesiff, from Port Albert. Wm. Bayles and Co., agents.
December 19.—*Medway*, ship, 651 tons, James B. Kennedy, from London, via Plymouth 17th September, with 250 Government immigrants; J. S. Wilkinson, Esq., surgeon-superintendent, W. P. White and Co., agents.
December 19.—*Hebe*, Dutch ship, 551 tons, A. H. Kiehl, from Hong Kong 14th October.

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Interestingly, the passengers on the Medway were deeply impressed with the work of J.S. Wilkinson, the surgeon-superintendent, as evidenced with the following newspaper report.

Testimonial by Medway Passengers for the Surgeon-Superintendent

From The Argus Friday 1 January 1858, page 1

SHIP MEDWAY.—At a Meeting of the Passengers of the ship Medway, from England, bound to Melbourne, Australia,

It was proposed by Mr. John Robert Osborn, from Bath, schoolmaster, and seconded by Mrs. Grace Lee, from Bristol, nurse—

“That an humble testimonial be presented to John Sebastian Wilkinson, Esq., the Government Surgeon-Superintendent, for his skilful and humane conduct to the emigrants during the voyage; his kind and indulgent manner, together with his gentlemanly bearing, having gained him the respect and affection of all on board. The fact of his skill in the adoption of sanatory measures for the prevention of disease, the extraordinary facility and promptitude with which any complaint that occurred during the voyage was met and treated, and no death having occurred from disease contracted on board the ship, must evince great care, talent, and experience.”

It was therefore resolved—“That an humble testimonial of a case containing a silver kuffe, fork and spoon, elaborately chased, be offered to John Sebastian Wilkinson, Esq., in the hope that he will appreciate the motive and goodwill of those who have only a little to bestow; but at the same time that little is offered with every mark of gratitude and respect, whether in admiration of his professional talents, or his virtues as a man.”