

The Ship Blenheim

The "Blenheim" a 378 tons barque departed Greenock Glasgow Scotland on 25 August 1840. The captain John Grey and Surgeon Neil Campbell were in charge of transporting the New Zealand Company cabin and 200 Scottish steerage passengers to New Zealand. On Sunday 27 December 1840 the "Blenheim" sailed into Port Nicholson Wellington New Zealand.

One steerage family aboard the "Blenheim" were from Paisley Renfrew Scotland

- James Brown age 28 occupation labourer
- Mary Brown age 30 wife of James
- Sarah Brown age 9
- James Brown age 7½
- George Brown age 5
- Elizabeth Brown age 1½

The Brown family were the first Pioneer family to settle in the Township of Upper Hutt.

This year we celebrate 175 years since the ship "Blenheim" arrived in New Zealand.

Other Blenheim Passengers

The "Blenheim" was the 24th New Zealand Company ship to arrive in Port Nicholson Wellington. Other passengers who came from Paisley Scotland with the Brown family are:

- George Easton age 22 Baker & Mary Easton age 21
- William McConnel age 22 Baker & Elizabeth McConnel age 21 & Helen McConnel born at sea
- James Mitchell age 29 labourer & Jane Mitchell age 28 & Marion Mitchell age 5 & Jane Mitchell age 3
- John Murray age 24 ploughman
- William Nicol age 47 labourer & Janet Nicol age 35 & John Nicol age 18 labourer & William Nicol age 16 labourer & Charles Nicol age 13 & James N Nicol age 10 & Janet Nicol age 8
- James Rankin age 21 Collier
- Alexander Thompson age 28 labourer & Helen Thompson age 26

First Christmas in New Zealand

On Christmas Eve 1840 the "Blenheim" arrived at the Wellington Heads. It took the Captain 3 days to reach the safety of Port Nicholson. The passengers first Christmas in New Zealand was spent aboard the ship Blenheim.

Question

How did the "Blenheim" passengers celebrating their first Christmas?
What did they eat for Christmas dinner?

Subdivision and Streets

The Town of Melbaville Estate developer and owner of the land was George Brown. George was the son of James and Mary Brown who in 1840 arrived in New Zealand on the ship "Blenheim". Part of the proposed street developments in the Town of Bentinck and Town of Palfrey were renamed Town of Melbaville Extension No 1.

The streets named in the Melbaville Estate subdivision are listed along with their origins.

Blenheim Street was named after the New Zealand Company ship "Blenheim" which the Brown family came to New Zealand on.

Brown Street was named after the Brown family. The first family to settle in the Township of Upper Hutt

Martin Street was named after Alexander Gordon Martin who married Elizabeth Brown the sister of George Brown.

Wilson Street was named after James Wilson who married Sarah Brown the sister of George Brown.

Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 02 September 1911

Peeps into the Past

On the 06th September, 1840 the barque "Blenheim" sailed from the Clyde for Wellington with 300 passengers. Out of that number only ten survive.

Our worthy townswoman, Mrs Elizabeth Martin, (nee Brown), then one year and eight months old, was the youngest of the party. Of the other nine survivors two reside in the City, three in the Rangitikei district and four in the Wairarapa.

Evening Post newspaper 22 December 1911

The ship Blenheim, from the Clyde, reached Wellington Heads on Christmas Eve, 1840, with 300 immigrants on board. Of that number, we are informed, nine are still living, viz:- Mrs A Martin Senior Upper Hutt, Mrs J Wilson Fielding, Mr George Brown Buller street Wellington Mr and Mrs Miller and Mr James Niccol Masterton, Mr Donald Fraser and Mr Cameron Rangitikei, Mr J Brown Upper Hutt.

Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 23 December 1911

Peeps into the Past

The ship "Blenheim" hove to at Wellington Heads on Christmas Eve 1840, with 300 passengers, nine of whom are still living. The whole of the passengers were Scots.

Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 30 November 1912

SARAH WILSON nee BROWN

Obituary

On Friday of last week at Makino, another of the Upper Hutt pioneer settlers, Mrs James Wilson, entered into rest at the age of 82 years. Deceased was a native of Paisley, in Scotland, and left the Clyde for New Zealand in the ship "Blenheim" in September, 1840, and arrived at Port Nicholson on Christmas Eve of the same year.

Deceased, who; was the eldest daughter of the late James Brown, senior (the first European to take up residence east of the Gorge) lived with her parents at Lower and Upper Hutt until she married the late James Wilson some 62 years ago. It is stated on reliable authority that the couple reared a family of a dozen children, and paid for their education, the husband's wages at the time being 6 shillings per day. The Wilson's removed to Makino some thirty years ago and have resided there ever since. Mrs Wilson and her husband (who died on June 7th this year at the age of 83 were invalids for some little time past. In both instances the cause of death was old age.

The late Mrs Wilson suffered from paralysis and had been confined to her bed for close on two years preceding her death, Mr Wilson was bedridden for about five years.

There were thirteen children, issue of the marriage, of whom six sons and five daughters survive.

The funeral took place on Monday last.

Evening Post newspaper 24 December 1913

Seventy Three Years Ago

Seventy-three years ago to-day (Christmas Eve, 1840) the good ship *Blenheim*, Captain Gray, arrived off Wellington Heads from the Clyde with 300 Scottish, immigrants, who came out under arrangement with the New Zealand Company. The passage out, occupied four months, fine weather being experienced throughout. Owing to the a hard northwest gale the vessel did not got into the harbour for two days after she was seen at the Heads, and it was the 27th December before she dropped anchor off Kaiwarra. The immigrants were accommodated in a large raupo whare there, built for the New Zealand Company, and they remained under its roof until they separated to go to various parts of the Wellington district. Of the 300 who came out in her only seven are now alive.

One of these is Mr. James Brown, of Wellington (now 80 years of age), who lived at the Lower Hutt with his parents for seven years and then removed to the Upper Hutt, the family being the first settlers there. His brother (Mr. George Brown) and one of his sisters (Mrs. James Wilson), both of whom died 18 months ago, also came out in the *Blenheim*.

In addition to Mr. James Brown, Mr. James Nicol (Masterton), Mrs. Miller (Carterton), Messrs. Donald Fraser and Cameron (Rangitikei), Mrs. A. Martin, Sen. Upper Hutt), and Mr. Donald Cameron (Greytown), who were also passengers, are still alive.

Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 04 January 1913

District News

With X'mas Day came the anniversary of the arrival of the good ship "*Blenheim*" at Port Nicholson, from the Clyde in 1842 [sic]. Among the survivors of the three hundred and odd passengers on that occasion are our fellow townfolk – Elizabeth and James Brown, natives of Paisley to both of whom we tender our wish that they may have many more years. The lady is better known by her marriage name, Mrs Alexander Martin.

Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 30 March 1912

GEORGE BROWN

Obituary

We regret to have to announce the death of Mr George Brown, J.P., at 1 p.m., on Sunday last, at his residence, Buller Street, Wellington.

The interment took place at St Joseph's, Upper Hutt, on the arrival of the 9.4 train from Lambton, on Monday morning.

Requiem Mass was said by the Rev. Father L. J. Daly, Parish Priest, the Very Rev. Father O'Shea, Vicar General, and the Rev. Father Lane, (in whose parish Upper Hutt was formerly included) assisting thereat. Before the cortege moved to the grave-side, Father Daly addressed the congregation and paid a high tribute to the good qualities of the deceased. The Vicar General read the Burial Service at the grave, the responses being taken by Fathers Daly and Lane, in the presence of a large assemblage of relatives and old friends and acquaintances. We noticed among those present, Messrs. W. H. Field, formerly member for the district, R. B. Williams, solicitor; Inspector Seed, S.P.C.A.; James Gorrie, M. Clark, J. Barton, J.P. and a large contingent of local leading citizen.

Deceased was born at Paisley, Scotland, in the year 1835, and left the Clyde, for New Zealand, on September 6, 1840, in the ship "Blenheim," with his parents and a large company of other Scottish settlers, arriving at Wellington on Christmas Eve 1840. The family settled at the Hutt, and in 1853, he left for Australia, en route for the Victorian goldfields, to join his elder brother James, who had gone across the year previous.

The two brothers remained on the goldfields for some five years, and took a prominent part in all the meetings which culminated in what are known in Australian history as the "Ballarat Riots."

Returning to New Zealand, he, with his brother David, and his, brother-in-law, James Wilson, went to the Otago Goldfields in 1860, and returned to Upper Hutt a couple of years later, where he resided with the other members of the family. From 1860 to 1870 he served in the Militia, which had been called out owing to the Maori troubles.

In 1870, on the recommendation of the late Hon. Sir P. A. Buckley, Mr. G. Brown was appointed a Justice of the Peace.

The deceased gentleman was married in 1872 to Jemima, the youngest daughter of the late Robert Hunter of Lower Hutt.

For twelve years Mr. Brown represented the Mangaroa riding on the Hutt County Council, when he retired owing to failing health.

As an active member of the committee of the Wellington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Mr. Brown, after he took up his abode in the city, rendered valuable aid to Inspector Seed, who speaks enthusiastically of his work for the Society.

The deceased gentleman, on all occasions took a lively part in local and general politics, he, in conjunction with his brother James, has been a generous friend to the Sisters of Mercy, and has proved an ardent supporter of the Catholic Church locally.

Hutt Valley Independent newspaper 13 September 1913

Peeps into the Past

73 years ago last Saturday the ship "Blenheim" sailed from the Clyde for Wellington with 300 Scottish settlers. Seven of the party are still living of who two – Mrs Martin, senior and Mr James Brown are best known to our readers. The Independent wishes them "Health and Happiness."