City of Edinburgh

The *City of Edinburgh* was an immigrant ship used to remove settlers and convicts from Norfolk Island to Hobart in 1808. It was not the convict transport later used to ship convicts from Ireland to Australia, a ship of 366 tons which was built at Coringa in 1813.

The *City of Edinburgh* was a ship of upwards of 500 tons burthen. She arrived in Hobart Town on 2 October 1808, under the captaincy of Simeon PATTERSON, carrying 83 settlers and free persons, 39 women, 96 children and 8 male prisoners; a total of 226 persons, comprising 28 families.

By all accounts the journey was miserable – cold and wet.

The *City of Edinburgh* in September 1808 carried twenty-eight families to the Derwent, in Van Diemen's Land, where, according to Governor Bligh, 'she left them, in a state of wretchedness, almost naked'. (Nobbs, 1988)

A letter sent on 23 October 1808 per *City of Edinburgh* by Lieutenant Governor COLLINS from Hobart to Lieutenant Colonel FOVEAUX in Sydney, who acknowledged receipt on 10 December 1808, stated:

… I have now to inform you that, on the 2nd instant, the City of Edinburgh arrived from Norfolk Island, having on board 242 Persons belonging to that Settlement. They arrived in some distress with respect to dry provisions, their passage hither having been longer than they expected at their sailing. Several of the settlers complaining – some, that their property had been plundered on the voyage; others, that it was not forthcoming – I directed an investigation of their claims to be entered into by a bench of magistrates, the result of which is herewith enclosed. It has been found necessary to hold a survey upon some part of the provisions and slop clothing received by this ship, a copy of the report which is likewise enclosed, together with the Commissary's return of the several articles of Provisions and stores he has received, and a general statement of the inhabitants within the settlement with an account of the time the provisions now in store will last for their support at the established ration …

On 10 May 1809, Lieutenant Governor COLLINS sent a letter from Hobart Town to Viscount CASTLEREAGH, London.

… In continuation of my former reports to your Lordship on the subject of the evacuation of Norfolk Island, I have the honour to acquaint you that early in the month of October last, a ship, the City of Edinburgh, which had been chartered for the purpose by Major Johnson, arrived here, having on board the greater part of the remaining settlers and inhabitants from that settlement; and as I have reason to suppose I have now received the whole of these people that will be allowed to come here, I beg leave to enclose, for your Lordship's information, a general return of the numbers landed from the several ships and vessels employed in the removal.

Of the settlers there are but very few who are not at this moment occupied in the cultivation of their new farms, and erecting habitations of some kind for their families. The few not so employed are troublesome, discontented characters, who refuse the trifling assistance I can give them, because they cannot obtain the whole to which they have a claim …