



Immigration and Emigration

Between 1815 and 1929, an estimated 11.4 million people left Britain for overseas destinations, part of a European wide phenomenon. Emigration was related to the growth of the international economy and emigrants invariably moved to places where they would expect to find an increase in their incomes. The main destinations for British and Irish emigrants were America and Canada, and later, Australia.

Liverpool

Liverpool was the primary port for emigration, some 60 per cent of emigrants set out from there. The years 1847-1851 saw 2,769 passenger ships sail from Liverpool, carrying 765,159 passengers to ports worldwide. In the 100 years between 1830 and 1930, several million emigrants passed through Liverpool to start new lives abroad.

Journey Conditions

In the early days emigration was an option only for the desperate or very tough. There was little chance of returning home and postal communication was of a poor standard. The trip could take 35 to 40 days on average but up to twice as long in bad weather. Conditions on board were often horrific; especially travelling 'steerage' (the cheapest quarters), where malnutrition and disease were rife. In the earliest years emigrants literally camped between decks, sleeping on narrow wooden bunks. They provided and cooked their own food and took their own utensils and bedding. Washing and toilet facilities were minimal. There was almost no privacy and ventilation below deck was negligible. Regulations

were gradually passed, however, to improve conditions. For example, in 1842 each passenger had to have at least 10 square feet of space between decks. In 1849 the food ration was to increase and in 1852 sickbays were meant to be provided. Unfortunately, government regulations for the inspection of emigrant ships were barely enforced because of the lack of officers, so the emigrant's journey often remained an extremely uncomfortable experience.

The Rise of Steam

Conditions for emigrants began to improve with the advent of the steam powered ship. The steamship was faster than the sailing packet, virtually cutting the voyage time to America in half. The steamship *City of Glasgow* set the precedent in 1850 when a profit was made by carrying 400 emigrants in steerage. By 1863, 45 per cent of British emigrants to America travelled by steam and just three years later this figure had risen to 81 per cent. In 1903 the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company introduced the transatlantic crossing, whilst *Lake Champlain* made the first sailing from Liverpool to Quebec and Montreal in April with 1,017 steerage passengers. The major sailing packets continued till after the Civil War, but three of the five largest (Red Star, Blue Swallowtail and Dramatic Lines) all closed down before 1878. By the summer of that year even the famous Black Ball Line was forced to close down. The Red Swallowtail Line was the last to go in 1880.

America and Canada

The first known settlers to arrive in America from England landed at Virginia in April 1607. This set the precedent for a sea traffic that increased dramatically from a stream of intrepid adventurers to a flood of desperate emigrants searching for a new and better life. The tide of emigration to America and Canada reached its peak in the nineteenth century, largely due to the potato famine of 1845 which especially hit Ireland. Between 1847 and 1854 it is estimated that 1,600,000 Irish left their home land never to return. The majority of this number set out for the United States and Canada, but sadly many never reached their destination. Calculations indicate that over the following 60 years another 6 million left Ireland, never to return, with 80 per cent settling in the USA.

Other emigrants desiring a new life in America and Canada included those who sought political or religious freedom, convicts and those who went as 'indentured labourers'. By the 1830's America had gained a reputation for freedom and equal opportunities which was a powerful magnet for the oppressed peoples of Europe. Nineteenth century thinkers advocated the large scale emigration of paupers as a way to alleviate the problem of poverty. A number of societies were formed to assist emigrants, but in reality most emigrants had to fund themselves.

The Black Ball Line was the first and most famous American packet ship line to carry emigrants from Liverpool to America from 1818, later eclipsed by the Black Star Line in the 1850s.

In 1855 the world's first immigrant landing depot was opened at Castle Garden in Manhattan. The next 40 years saw 7,690,606 foreigners pass through this gateway to the nation. By 1890 however, money and criminal problems forced Castle Garden to close, replaced by the more efficiently controlled depot on Ellis Island, in New York Bay, which functioned until 1954.

Growing resistance to high levels of immigration in America led to the Emergency Immigration Restriction Law in 1921 which introduced a quota system which set a limit on the number of immigrants allowed into the USA. The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 set an upper limit of 150,000 immigrants in any one year. Each nationality was assigned a percentage of this amount according to its contribution to the existing population. In 1952, the Immigration and Naturalisation Act codified existing legislation.

Australia

Prior to 1851 very few free emigrants had made the passage to Australia. But the discovery of gold at Bathurst, New South Wales by Edward Hammond Hargraves in 1851 caused a great gold rush, which gave a major impetus to the Liverpool-Australia emigrant trade. In 1854, 41,491 people emigrated from Liverpool to Australia, with 107 vessels making the voyage.

Liverpool was famed for its excellent ships and skilled mariners, attracting gold seekers from throughout the country to its port to demand fast passage to Australia. This led to the development of several small Liverpool shipping enterprises into successful packet lines, especially the firms of James Baines, Pilkington & Wilson, and Gibbs, Bright & Co. The Black Ball Line and the White Star Line were to dominate the Australian packet scene.

Ships had been regularly sailing from Britain to Australia long before the gold rush days, for quite a different reason. Between 1787 and 1868, 158,702 male and female convicts landed in Australia from Britain and Ireland. Roughly 1,321 prisoners came from other places such as India, Canada, Bermuda and Mauritius, mostly soldiers sentenced to transportation due to military crimes. Many other prisoners started out on the voyage to Australia but never made it due to the appalling conditions on board. Colonisation of Western Australia started in 1829. Between 1850 and 1868 10000 convicts arrived in the state.

Emigrants to Australia and New Zealand were categorised in the records according to the method by which their passages were paid. Passenger Lists are described according to the type of passenger which they document:

- Free Passengers - fare was fully paid by the Government
- Assisted Passengers - Fare partly paid by the Government
- Unassisted Passengers - Paid own fare
- Bounty Passengers - Fare paid by an agent who in turn received a sum of money from the Government
- Nominated/Remitted Passengers - Friends/relatives in new country paid for emigrants' passage.

Tracing your emigrant ancestors

To start with, it is vital to try to establish the full names of family members and exact relationships within the family. Make sure that you know dates of birth, marriage, death and emigration, as you need these dates in order to gain entry to official records.

Once you have as many facts about your ancestors as you can personally gather, then you will probably want to consult passenger lists before going on to use other records to trace the emigrant's descendants. Remember that passenger lists are generally to be found in the country of destination.

We have included, in the attached table, contact details for a number of institutions that hold collections relevant to immigration and emigration and may hold records that will help you with your research. Please contact these institutions directly to enquire about the records they hold and to find out details about access and opening times.

Bibliography

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I.A. Glazier & M. Tepper, *The Famine Immigrants* (Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore)

V. Greenwood, *The Researchers Guide to American Genealogy* (Baltimore: General Publishing Co., 1973)

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D. Hollett, *Fast Passage to Australia* (Fairplay: London, 1986)

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R. Hughes, *The Fatal Shore* (Pan Books: London, 1988)

B.M. Kidd, *The Checklist of Canadian Directories 1790-1950* (Ottawa, 1979)

A. Kludas, *Passenger Ships of the World* (Patrick Stephens Ltd: Welligborough, 1975)

J.M. Maber, *North Star to Southern Cross: The Story of the Australasian Seaways* (T. Stephenson & Sons: Prestcot, 1967)

M. Maddocks, *The Atlantic Crossing* (Time Life Books: Amsterdam, 1990)

A.S. Mountfield, *Western Gateway: A History of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board* (1965)

M. K. Stammers, *The Passage Makers* (Teredo Books, 1978)

G. Wagner, *Children of the Empire* (Wiedenfeld & Nicholson 1981)

C. Wittke, *We Who Built America* (Case Western University, 1967)

Researchers should check availability, accessibility and opening times with the repositories listed before making a personal visit.

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Libraries, museums and other research institutions holdings records relating to immigration and emigration.

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
Dundee Central Library Local History Centre Dundee Central Library The Wellgate Dundee Scotland DD1 1DB  Website	Small	Small	Small	N/A	N/A
Aberdeen Maritime Museum Shiprow Aberdeen AB11 5BY  01224 337713  Website	Small	N/A	Small	Small	N/A
Kingston upon Hull City Libraries Central Reference Library Albion St Hull HU1 3TF  01482 210000  Website  reference.library@hullcc.gov.uk	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Aberdeen City Council Central Library Rosemount Viaduct Aberdeen AB25 1GW  01224652500  Website  CentralLibrary@aberdeencity.gov.uk	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
National Archives Ruskin Avenue Kew Surrey TW9 4DU Website 020 8876 3444	Extensive	Extensive (inc. passenger lists and naturalisations)	Small	N/A	Small collection of electronic resources.
McLean Museum and Art Gallery 15 Kelly Street Greenock PA16 8JX 01475 715624 museum@inverclyde.gov.uk	N/A	Small	Small	N/A	N/A
Glasgow Museum of Transport Riverside Museum 100 Pointhouse Place, Glasgow G3 8RS 01412872720 Website museums@glasgowlife.org.uk	N/A	Small	Small	N/A	N/A
Royal Institution of Cornwall Royal Cornwall Museum, River Street, Truro, TR1 2SJ 01872 272205 Website Collections Enquiries@royalcornwallmuseum.org.uk	Extensive	Extensive: inc. lists of Cornish people overseas and Cornish Memorial Scheme.	N/A	N/A	N/A

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
Family Records Centre 1 Myddelton Street London EC1R 1UW	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Guildhall Library 5 Aldermanbury London EC2P 2EJ ☎ 02073321868 🌐 Website	Extensive	Small: inc. Foreign Church Registers and Livery Company Documents.	Small	N/A	Extensive internet services available
General Register Office for Scotland 2 Princes Street, Edinburgh EH1 3YJ ☎ 0131 535 1314 🌐 Website	N/A	Collection of certificates of Scottish persons in foreign countries.	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Museums & Galleries of Wales Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NP ☎ 03001112333 🌐 Website	N/A	N/A	Small	N/A	N/A
Tyne & Wear Archives Discovery Museum, Blandford Square, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 4JA ☎ 01912772248 🌐 Website	Small	Small	N/A	N/A	N/A

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
Society Of Genealogists 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA Website 02072518799	Extensive	Small	N/A	N/A	Fiche and CD sources for Australia, New Zealand and USA.
Merseyside Maritime Museum Royal Albert Dock Liverpool L3 4AQ Website 01514784499	Extensive	Small	Small	Extensive	Merseyside Maritime Museum publish a number of emigration packs providing useful information on how to trace emigrant ancestors, covering the United Kingdom and Eire, Australia and New Zealand, and the
National Archives and Record Service 700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20408 +1 (301) 837-0700 Website	Unknown	Extensive inc. Customs passengers lists, immigration passenger lists, records of births, marriages and deaths and Census	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Immigration and Naturalisation Service 26 Federal Plaza 3rd Fl Rm 3-120, New York, NY 10278 +1 (800) 375-5283 Website	Unknown	Extensive: passenger lists less than fifty years old	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
The Department of State 2201 C St NW Ste 4, Washington 20520 Website +1 (202) 647-4000	Unknown	Information concerning births, marriages and deaths after 1900.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
The British Library of Political and Economic Science (The London School of Economics) Houghton Street London Website 020 7405 7686	Unknown	Holds microfilm copies of the USA National Archives passenger lists.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
New York Public Library 476 5th Ave, New York, NY 10018 +1 (917) 275-6975 Website	Dictionary catalogue of Local History and Genealogy Division.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
New York Genealogical and Biographical Society 36 West 44th Street 7th Floor New York, NY 10036-8105 (212) 755-8532 Website	Produces the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown



Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
The American Irish Historical Society Library 991 Fifth Avenue New York NY Website (212) 288-2263 991	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
US National Park Services 100 Centennial Mall N Ste 474 Lincoln, NE 68508 Website +1 (402) 437-5403	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Local History and Genealogy Section Library of Congress 101 Independence Ave. SE Thomas Jefferson Building, LJ 100 Washington, D.C. 20540-4660 (202) 707-3399 Website	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
The American Irish Historical Society Library 14700 Townsend Road PA 19154-1096 Website 215-305-2044 philadelphia.archives@nara.gov	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
Public Archives of Canada 395 Wellington St, Ottawa K1A 0N4 Website +1 866-578-7777	Unknown	Extensive: including Juvenile Emigrants to Canada, passenger manifests, census and voters' lists.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Records of Entry Unit Canada Employment and Immigration Commission 10th Floor 140 Place du Portage Phase IV Ottawa K1A 0J9	Unknown	Information regarding emigrants to Canada after Spring 1908.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Public Archives of Nova Scotia 6016 University Avenue Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3H 1W4 Website (902) 424-6060	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Archives Nationales de Quebec 1055 Av du Séminaire, Québec Québec G1V 4N1 +1 418-643-8904 philadelphia.archives@nara.gov	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
Archives of Ontario 134 Ian MacDonald Blvd, Toronto ON M7A 2C5 Website +1 800-668-9933 reference@ontario.ca	Unknown	Registration of births, deaths and marriages from 1869.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Provincial Archives of Alberta 8555 Roper Rd NW, Ed- monton AB T6E 5W1 Ottawa K1A 0J9 Website +1 780-427-1750 jahsena@shaw.ca	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
New South Wales Record Office 161 O'Connell Street Kingswood NSW 2747 Website 02 9673 1788	Unknown	Extensive: inc. Botany Bay Convicts Indents, passenger lists, immigration Lists (Assisted Passengers) and detailed records of men and women on early migrant ships, government ships and Bounty ships, immigrants and convicts' dependents.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
Public Record Office of Victoria Victorian Archives Centre, 99 Shiel St, North Melbourne Website +61 3 9348 5600	Unknown	Extensive: inc. passenger lists (with index) and card index to naturalisation certificates.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Battye Library of West Australian History and Archives Perth Cultural Centre, 25 Francis Street, Perth WA 6000 Website +61 8 9427 3111 info@slwa.wa.gov.au	Unknown	Passenger and convict lists for Freemantle and Albany 1829-1932.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Queensland State Archives 435 Compton Road, Runcorn Queensland 4113 Website +61 7 3037 6777	Unknown	Extensive: Immigration Department Records, passenger lists 1848 to date, records of Immigration Agents 1848 to date, Land Orders (mainly unassisted passengers) 1848 to date.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

Institution	Extent of Collection				
	Books	Manuscript sources	Illustrative material	Artefacts	Other
South Australian Archives 115 Cavan Road, Gepps Cross South Australia 5094 Website +61 8 8343 6800	Unknown	Extensive: records of ships' passenger lists from 1924-1964 and refusals of naturalisation 1921-1939.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Archives of New Zealand 10 Mulgrave Street, Thorndon, Wellington, 6011, New Zealand Website (64-4) 499 5595 general.enquiries@dia.govt.nz	Unknown	Extensive: passenger lists, embarkation registers and shipping lists.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Archives Office of Tasmania 77 Murray Street, Hobart Tasmania 7000 Website +61 3 6233 7490	Unknown	Extensive: convict lists, Governors Despatches, Board of Immigration records and passenger lists.	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown