

Home-coming Series: 1

EMIGRATION TO USA



***Hi! Uncle Sam!
Wherever there was fighting
Or wrong that needed righting
An Ulsterman was sighting
His Kentucky gun with care:
All the road from Yorktown
From Lexington to Yorktown
From Valley Forge to Yorktown
That Ulsterman was there!***

American Revolutionary ballad

The history of emigration from Ireland is dominated by the mass exodus during the period of the Great Famine and its aftermath, when more than a million people left the country for North America. In Ulster, where the effects of the Great Famine were less dramatic than in the South and West of Ireland, emigration reached its greatest peak during the eighteenth century. These emigrants were for the most part Protestant, and in particular Presbyterian.

The main cause of emigration during the eighteenth century was the attraction of the American colonies for those who were eager to improve their prospects - younger sons in particular. On 12 May 1785, John Dunlap, who was responsible for the printing of the Declaration of Independence, wrote to his brother-in-law in Strabane, Co. Tyrone, extolling the advantages of the New World: *'People with a family advanced in life find great difficulties in emigration, but the young men of Ireland who wish to be free and happy should leave it and come here as quick as possible. There is no place in the world where a man meets so rich a reward for good conduct and industry as in America'*.

The most obvious source for researchers who are descendants of emigrants to the United States of America from Ireland are the emigration records deposited in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Unfortunately emigration is not, as a general rule, particularly well documented. Most passenger lists, for example, are to be found at the port of arrival rather than departure due to the fact that the authorities were more concerned with recording those entering a country rather than those leaving. Letters written from emigrants to their relatives in Ulster

form the most substantial part of our emigration records. This sort of material can be found in many of the private collections deposited at PRONI.

Passenger Lists are another valuable source of Emigration Records. Of particular interest are:

- T711/1** List of passengers from Warrenpoint and Newry to Philadelphia and New York, 1791-2
- MIC333/1** Passenger Lists - Philadelphia, 1800-82
- MIC333/2** Passenger Lists - Baltimore, 1890-91
- MIC333/3** Passenger Lists - Boston, 1871-91
- MIC333/4** Passenger Lists - New York, 1826-27, 1840-2 and 1850-2
- T1011/1-4** Passengers from various origins arriving mainly in New York, 1802-14
- T3262** Passenger Lists from Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Londonderry, Newry, Sligo, Warrenpoint to USA, 1803-06
- T521/1** Passenger Lists from Ireland to America, 1804-06 (index available in *Deputy Keeper's Report 1929*)
- D2892/1/1-4** Passenger Books of J & J Cooke, Shipping Agents. Sailings from Londonderry to Philadelphia, Quebec, St John's, New Brunswick, 1847-71 (see also **MIC13**)

A number of emigrants lists are available on the shelves of the Public Search Room, including:

The Famine Immigrants: Lists of Irish Immigrants Arriving at the Port of New York, 1846-1851 (seven volumes, published in 1983) which contains data from the original ship manifest schedules for the Port of New York, deposited in the National Immigration Archives in the Balch Institute in Philadelphia. Besides names, other details recorded include age, occupation, native country, port of embarkation and arrival date. This is now freely available on-line at www.ancestry.co.uk

Irish Passenger Lists 1847-1871, contains lists of passengers sailing from Londonderry to America on ships of the J & J Cooke Line and the McCorkell Line.

Passenger Arrivals at Port of Philadelphia, 1800-1819.

Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, 1820-1821.

Immigrants to New England, 1700-1775, contains an alphabetical list compiled by Ethel Stanwood Bolton.

Lists of Emigrants of America, 1635-1776, contains lists of passengers, including Irish emigrants, who departed from English ports.

Many of the emigration archives that are deposited in PRONI have been indexed and either transcribed or digitised and form part of the Emigration Database of the Centre for Migration Studies which can be accessed in PRONI and at certain public libraries.

In the National Archives in London, passenger lists from 1890-1960 can be found in the Board of Trade archive (BT 27) but exact place of residence is rarely given before 1922. The earliest Board of Trade passenger lists are now being published on-line at www.ancestorsonboard.com

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Home-coming Series: 2

EMIGRATION TO CANADA



... a Canadian likes his religion, and dislikes the Bostonnes; he likes smoking tobacco and drinking rum, and dislikes spending his money extravagantly. These appear to be his chief partialities and repugnancies ...

Journal kept probably by an army surgeon named Samuel Holmes
in 1814 and 1815 (PRONI Ref **T/1970**)

Settlers of Ulster stock set up home in every Canadian Province and played an influential role in the national life of their adopted home. A considerable number of letters deposited at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) relating to the period 1815-45 are from emigrants writing from Canada. This is not necessarily confirmation, however, that the authors settled in Canada. Many Ulster people migrated to the United States via Canada. It was cheaper to travel to Quebec from the port of Londonderry than to go from Belfast or Liverpool to Boston or New York. The voyage was also usually shorter. The first large-scale settlement of Upper Canada came when Loyalists - many of them Scots-Irish - fled from the United States during the American War of Independence. A second wave of immigration, coming directly from Ulster, consisted of disbanded soldiers and small farmers hit by the agricultural slump which followed the Napoleonic Wars. Canadian territory in the post-Napoleonic war era was attractive in that there was less competition for it than for land on the eastern seaboard of the United States. One visitor to Canada in the early part of the nineteenth century commented that *'from the number of Irish and Scotch who have found their way into Canada by a detour through the States, for few or none have come direct, and from the satisfaction they express with their situation and prospects, one might be led to consider this country as the natural receptacle for our superabundant population. But the northern Irish only, chiefly from the counties of Down, Antrim, Londonderry, Tyrone and Donegal, have as yet, settled in the province ...'*

By far the largest collection of Canadian material in Northern Ireland can be found in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). These records cover a vast range of topics and illustrate the close relationship between Ulster and Canada for more than two centuries. There is a vast body of emigration material which includes shipping lists, school records,

travelogues and regimental records. Of interest is the publication *Northern Ireland & Canada: A Guide to Northern Ireland Sources for the Study of Canadian History, c.1705-1992* available for reference in PRONI.

Of particular interest to researchers interested in emigration to Canada are the passenger lists, the most important of which are listed below:

Three volumes of passenger lists, February 1847-1849, February 1850-August 1857, March 1858-July 1867, of J & J Cooke, shipping agents, Londonderry. The Canadian destinations are Quebec and St John's, New Brunswick, with details also being given for Philadelphia and New Orleans. **D2892/1/1-3**, see also **MIC13/1-5**.

Typed transcripts, compiled in 1984, of notices which appeared in Canadian local newspapers, mostly the New Brunswick Courier, 1830-46, and the Toronto IrishCanadian, 1869. The notices include queries as to the whereabouts of various persons who had emigrated from Ulster to Canada and the United States. **D3000/104/1-10**

Typed transcripts, compiled 1984-5, of notices inserted in Canadian local newspapers by passengers arriving from Ireland. The newspapers were the New Brunswick Courier and the Saint John Morning News, covering the period 1828-58. There are also summaries based upon these notices which list the passengers involved, their ports of embarkation in Ireland and the dates of arrival in Canada. **D3000/104/11-13**

List, 1833-34, of emigrants from Coleraine parish, Co. Londonderry, giving information on the names, ages, religion, townlands of residence and date of departure of those involved. The destinations are also given and include St John's, New Brunswick and Quebec. **T768/1**

Passenger list, 11 May 1847, issued by A.C. Buchanan, Chief Agent for Emigration at Quebec, giving the date of sailing, the names of the ships involved, their point of departure and the number of passengers carried. **T3168/1-3**

Many of the emigration archives that are deposited in PRONI have been indexed and either transcribed or digitised and form part of the Emigration Database of the Centre for Migration Studies which can be accessed in PRONI and online: www.dippam.ac.uk.

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Home-coming Series: 3

EMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA



We are employed in the Governor's botanic gardens ... we could reach almost off our scaffolds to the lemons and oranges, fig trees, pomegranates, peaches, etc, and the parrots sitting on the trees beside us in flocks ... all differing from the northern part of the globe

David Fairley, carpenter from Londonderry who emigrated to Australia in the mid-1830s

Australia emigration, as a mass organised movement, did not get going in a major way until the 1820s, after the disruption of the Napoleonic Wars. The distance involved, and the logistics of the journey, meant that the numbers going to Australia as compared with North America were much smaller. For the same reasons emigration to Australia was much more controlled. Regulation was applied at points of departure in Britain and Ireland and at entry points in Australia.

There were also government-assisted schemes such as the emigration of workhouse inmates to Australia. Labour had become extremely scarce in Australia around the time of the Famine in Ireland and the colonists in New South Wales and Western Australia pressed the Colonial Office to secure more settlers. Arrangements were made with the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners for a scheme of assisted emigration and the first 5,000 adults were sent in 1847.

Some Ulstermen were to travel to the southern hemisphere as convicts. Convict settlements were a feature of Australian society for nearly a century until the transportation system was progressively withdrawn from 1840 onwards. In that year New South Wales was removed from the system. It was followed by Tasmania in 1852 and Western Australia in 1867. The main reason for this was that the Australian colonists came to regard the convict system as a stigma on those who had chosen to emigrate as well as the criticism in both Britain and Australia because of the inevitable brutality of certain aspects of the convict system. Those

emigrants who arranged their travel to Australia were generally better off than those who left Ireland for North America. The costs involved in shipping out to Australia were obviously much higher. Australia, therefore, attracted a significant proportion of emigrants with the resources to set themselves up in business or on the land in the expanding agricultural hinterland of the costal settlements. The descendants of these Ulster emigrants were to play a significant role in the shaping of Australian society.

The following records are of particular importance:

Indexes to male convicts transported to New South Wales, 1830-1842. **MIC468/1**

Indexes to male convicts transported to Western Australia, 1850-1868. **MIC468/1**

Passenger List on board 'Catherine Jamieson', which sailed from Leith to Port Philip, Victoria, Australia, 1841. **T3036/6**

Register of Girls' Friendly Society - sponsored emigrants from various counties in Ireland, 1890-1921. **D648/9**

Indexes to births, deaths and marriages in New South Wales, Australia, 1787-1899. **MF4**

For details of assisted emigration from the workhouses see the records of the Boards of Guardians. **BG.**

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