**European Emigration to the U.S. 1851 – 1860**

Source: <http://www.pbs.org/destinationamerica/usim_wn_noflash.html>



Although the Irish potato blight receded in 1850, the effects of the famine continued to spur Irish emigration into the 20th century. Still facing poverty and disease, the Irish set out for America where they reunited with relatives who had fled at the height of the famine.

**Background**Between 1845 and 1850, a devastating fungus destroyed Ireland's potato crop. During these years, starvation and related diseases claimed as many as a million lives, while perhaps twice that number of Irish immigrated — 500,000 of them to the United States, where they accounted for more than half of all immigrants in the 1840s. Between 1820 and 1975, 4.7 million Irish settled in America. In 2002, more than 34 million Americans considered themselves to be of Irish ancestry, making Irish Americans the country's second-largest ethnic group.

The "Famine Irish" represented the first major influx of Irish immigration into America.

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| Gone to AmericaThroughout the Famine years, nearly a million Irish arrived in the United States. Famine immigrants were the first big wave of poor refugees ever to arrive in the U.S. and Americans were simply overwhelmed. Upon arrival in America, the Irish found the going to be quite tough. With no one to help them, they immediately settled into the lowest rung of society and waged a daily battle for survival. The roughest welcome of all would be in Boston, Massachusetts, an Anglo-Saxon city with a population of about 115,000. It was a place run by descendants of English Puritans, men who could proudly recite their lineage back to 1620 and the Mayflower ship. Now, some two hundred thirty years later, their city was undergoing nothing short of an unwanted "social revolution" as described by Ephraim Peabody, member of an old Yankee family. In 1847, the first big year of Famine emigration, the city was swamped with 37,000 Irish Catholics arriving by sea and land.**Irish in New York**New York, three times the size of Boston, was better able to absorb its incoming Irish. Throughout the Famine years, 75 percent of the Irish coming to America landed in New York. In 1847, about 52,000 Irish arrived in the city which had a total population of 372,000. The Irish were not the only big group of immigrants arriving. A substantial German population totaling over 53,000 also arrived in 1847.Source: http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/america.htm |