

THE IRISH IN CANADA NOTES

The Irish left their homeland for a number of reasons. Limited job opportunities, famine, disease and evictions in the mid 1840's, religious and political oppression under the Penal Laws and British rule, government and landlord supported emigration of farmers and laborers. Most left because they felt there was no other choice.

From the book, *Journey of Hope*, by Kerby Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller:
In the 19th century, when so many left Ireland, a common theme in their poems, letters, and songs was the feeling of being homesick for the small village they came from, their family and friends and the culture they left behind. "For Irish country folk, every rock, tree, hill and glen in their immediate locales had special significance, linking them to their ancestor's mythical or historic deeds"

"Before the era of mass emigration, most rural dwellers were peasants who lived in crowded villages called clachans in which several dozen one-or-two room, thatch roofed and mud or stone waled cabins clustered together, housing families related to one another by blood or marriage. The peasants were very poor and usually illiterate, but their villages were virtually self-sufficient. Each clachan had weavers, shoemakers, thatchers and others who provided most of life's necessities. Each also boasted musicians, singers, poets, and storytellers who gave their life meaning, community and joy."1

Main Ports of Departure: Liverpool, Glasgow, Cork, Limerick, Dublin, Sligo, and Belfast.

According to Professor Mark G. McGowan, (Prof. of History, U of Toronto), Irish emigrants fled to France's Canadian empire in the 17th century and fishermen and mariners arrived in Newfoundland around the same time. In the three decades immediately prior to the Famine close to 450,000 Irish migrated to the British North American colonies.

Most of the Irish settled in rural areas, and a minority in the major cities. The Irish migration was specific to certain areas linked by chain migration and shipping routes to specific colonies and areas in the colonies.

Canadian timber merchants were making money supplying the British Navy and they realized they could make extra profit if, instead of returning to North America with empty vessels after delivering their cargo, they loaded their ships with would-be settlers.

In the 1760s ads appeared in Ireland's Ulster province offering "industrious farmers and useful mechanics" the opportunity to emigrate to British North America (Canada) with the promise of at least 200 acres of land per household.

Some 300 new settlers took up the offer, arriving in Halifax, and the following year they were joined by 170 immigrants who sailed from Londonderry and settled the New Dublin area.

Another large group of Irish immigrants arrived in 1823-1825. These people were mainly Catholic paupers from counties Clare, Cork and Limerick; they created a 2000-strong settlement in Peterborough, Ontario (named after Peter Robinson who commissioned the twelve ships that carried them).

Each household was given a cow, basic implements and three bushels of seed potato to get them started on a new life.

This was successful, and was followed by several years of active emigration, principally from Britain (which then included Ireland). In 1831 alone, 34,000 Irish immigrants arrived in Quebec.

Some emigrants came to Quebec in another way; they were taken by force because of raids made by the French and their First Nations allies along the borders of New York, New England, and even Virginia.

Another group consisted of soldiers and “men of means” fleeing Ireland in the 17th century; many of whom enlisted in the French army and navy and found themselves posted to Quebec

The Irish also became the principal inhabitants of St. John’s which in turn became a dispersal point for further Irish migration throughout what would become Canada’s Maritime Provinces.

Because of the navigational and trade ties between Saint John New Brunswick and the ports of Queenstown/Cobh and Londonderry/Derry, that Protestant Irish migrants would be heavily represented among those who landed in the Bay of Fundy region. Irish Protestants from the midland counties and from Ulster created migration chains between Ireland and central Canada.

Maritime settlements were religiously diverse. Irish Catholics dominated Newfoundland, Halifax, and Prince Edward Island, while Irish Protestants were close to half of the Irish population in New Brunswick and the majority in northern Nova Scotia.

Irish migration to the interior colonies of Upper and Lower Canada came through the port of Quebec City, or north through the Hudson River corridor to Montreal, via New York, or later via the Erie Canal from Albany to the Niagara region.

Unlike Irish migration to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, where most were coming from the southeast of Ireland, or emigrants to New Brunswick who came mainly from Ulster and western Munster, Irish migrants to the port of Quebec came from all counties and many came through the English port of Liverpool.

In the 1820s and 1830s, Irish laborers were prominent in the building of the Welland Canal, which allowed navigation to circumvent Niagara Falls, and the Rideau Canal which linked the towns of Kingston and Bytown (renamed Ottawa in 1855) on the Ottawa River.

Families from Ireland were attracted by cheap farmland in the St. Lawrence Valley, the Talbot Settlement on Lake Erie, the Ottawa Valley, and in the one million- acre Huron Tract in what is now western Ontario.

Irish Catholic settlement was more robust in the cities and rural areas of Lower Canada (Quebec) and in pockets across Upper Canada (Ontario). The former province was attractive because Roman Catholicism was publicly practiced and recognized in law since the passage of the Quebec Act in 1774.

There was a large Irish Catholic settlement in Montreal, Canada's largest city, where Irish Catholics soon came to understand that they had a "double minority" status. They were a religious minority among the Anglophones of the city, and a linguistic minority among the French Canadian Catholic majority in Montreal. As a result, this group of Irish migrants clung and promoted their Irish identity as a badge of distinction from their neighbors. and Montreal became a hotbed of Irish nationalism for generations. In Toronto, Irish Catholics lived in caution in what had been termed "the Belfast of North America".

In Upper Canada, Irish Catholic farmers were prominent in what is now Renfrew County in the Ottawa Valley, Lanark County, Adjala Township north of Toronto, and in the Huron Tract lands of Biddulph Township. Other townships in the Tract contained a large number of Protestant migrants.

British North American (Canadian) ports became more desirable to ship owners and some landlords because fares were cheaper than to the United States, standards looser or non-existent, and ports were less punitive financially about landing potentially sick passengers.

Although there is a popular myth that America closed its ports in 1847, the evidence suggests that 119,000 Irish migrants landed in US ports in "Black '47. It should be noted that in the United States the Famine migration marked the rapid increase in Irish immigration, whereas in Canada and the other British colonies, Irish migration rapidly dropped and paled in significance to the preferred destinations of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and New Orleans, after 1847.

Given the prominence of Irish migration to British North America prior to 1846, Famine migration did not significantly alter pre-Famine settlement patterns, except in a few cities like Hamilton and Toronto. In fact, many Famine migrants to Canada simply used the British colony as a way station on route to the United States.

Most of the Famine refugees were Catholic but there were also Irish Protestants. In Toronto in 1847 approximately 20% of the 1,124 Irish dead were Protestant. In Quebec, of the seven hundred Famine Orphans accommodated and placed in Canadian families, at least 100 were Protestant.

Many also died at sea; the exact number is unknown, although Whyte himself estimated it at 5,293. During the crossing bodies were thrown into the sea, but once the ships had reached Grosse Isle they were kept in the hold until a burial on land became possible.

After passing through quarantine, the Canadian authorities provided assisted passage to migrants so they could go upriver. They helped pay for transportation up the St. Lawrence to Montreal and then on to destinations in Upper Canada like Kingston, Toronto and Bytown (Ottawa). Many of the migrants continued their journey into the United States, but many also stayed and established themselves in Canada. Some migrants received land grants and settled in farming communities near to those with whom they shared kinship links.

Irish migrants also settled in the growing cities of Canada. Quebec, Montreal and Toronto which developed large Irish communities. Urban Irish became laborers in factories, or itinerant workers on the various canal construction projects.

For those emigrants hoping to find religious freedom in their new land, they found that religious conflicts were still a part of their lives in Canada. Tensions between the Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics were widespread in Canada in the 19th century with episodes of violence especially in Atlantic Canada and Ontario.

In New Brunswick, from 1840 to the 1860s sectarian violence was rampant in Saint John resulting in some of the worst urban riots in Canadian history.

The city was shaped by Irish ghettos at York Point, and suppression of poor, Irish-speaking peoples' rights led to decades of turmoil. The division would continue to shape Saint John in years to come.

The Orange Order with its two main tenets, anti-Catholicism and loyalty to Britain, flourished in Ontario. Although the number of active members may have been overestimated, the Orange influence was considerable and comparable to the Catholic influence in Quebec.

GROSSE-ISLE (AKA THE ISLAND OF SORROWS)

Grosse-Isle is the largest island in the Detroit River; it's 10 miles long and one mile wide. It's actually two islands divided in half by the Thorofare Canal.

In 1847 it was expected that more Irish would be coming, but the Canadian authorities were unprepared for the mass of people that came in that year - more than 398 ships were inspected at Grosse-Isle.

On arrival the ship's captain had to assure the authorities that their passengers were free from disease. If there was fever onboard, they had to fly a blue flag. The island's chief medical examiner, George Douglas, recorded that by mid-summer the quarantine regulations in force were 'physically impossible' to carry out, making it necessary for the emigrants to stay on board their ships for days. He believed (wrongly) that washing and airing out the ships would be enough to stop the contagion spreading between infected passengers.

Robert Whyte, author of the *1847 Famine Ship Diary: The Journey of a Coffin Ship*, described how on arrival at Grosse Isle the Irish emigrant passengers helped the crew to clean the ship, expecting to be sent either to a hospital or to Quebec after their long voyage.

They were examined briefly, the doctors left for a few days and when they returned, doctors allowed passengers to walk past them and only examined people who looked feverish. So many people were allowed to pass as healthy, only to succumb to their sickness once they had left Grosse Isle. (symptoms took a week to show up) A lot of those who passed the quarantine checks at Grosse Isle became sick not long afterwards. Some died in the camp for the 'healthy' tents on the eastern side of Grosse Isle.

In June, Dr. Douglas warned the authorities of Quebec and Montreal that an epidemic was about to strike. On the previous Sunday between 4,000 and 5,000 'healthy' passengers had left Grosse Isle, of whom Dr. Douglas estimated two thousand would develop fever within three weeks.

In July, Whyte recorded the neglect of his fellow passengers, who 'within reach of help' 'were to be left enveloped in reeking pestilence, the sick without medicine, medical skill, nourishment, or so much as a drop of pure water' Whyte contrasted this with the condition of German immigrants arriving at Grosse Isle who were all free of sickness, 'comfortably and neatly clad, clean and happy'.

Besides a shortage of accommodations, there was a shortage of doctors and nurses. Dr. Douglas tried enlisting nurses and doctors from among the healthy female passengers with the promise of high wages, but fear of disease meant none accepted. Nurses were expected to sleep alongside the sick and share their food; they had no privacy, often caught the fever themselves and were not helped when they fell ill. Prisoners from the local jail were released to carry out the nursing, but many stole from the dead and the dying. All of the medical officers involved became ill at some stage, with four doctors dying of typhus.

Quebec, Montreal, Kingston and Toronto all experienced typhus outbreaks that year.

Typhus: a bacterial infection spread by fleas, lice or chiggers that causes sudden fever, head and body aches and rash that leads to organ damage and pneumonia or septic shock if untreated.
It's estimated that from its opening in 1832 to its closing in 1932, almost 500,000 Irish immigrants passed through Grosse Isle on their way to Canada.

A large number of the families that survived continued on to settle in Canada West (now Ontario) providing cheap labor. In comparison with the Irish who went to the United States or Britain, many Irish arrivals in Canada settled in rural areas, in addition to the cities.

GROSSE ISLE SURNAMES: Barron, Barnes, Boyd, Dever, Donnelly, Doyle, Farrell, Fitzgerald, Gallagher, Kelly, Kennedy, McCarty, McHugh, Mulligan, Murphy, O'Brien, O'Connor, Ryan,

Sullivan, Walsh, and many others, found in archival records and memorial lists. You can search these names on the Parks Canada and Library and Archives Canada databases.

MONTREAL

From 1800-1947 many of the Irish who landed in Montreal saw Lower Canada as a steppingstone towards English speaking Upper Canada and the United States. By 1825, the Irish population, who lived mainly in the western area of the city, was about 3,000/25,000 people,

From 1820-1830 there was steady growth in Irish immigration via the St. Lawrence River, with many using Montreal as a gateway to Upper Canada or the U.S. The Irish settled permanently in the working-class neighborhoods of SW Montreal; Pointe-Saint-Charles (along the St. Lawrence River), Saint Henri, Griffintown, and Verdun in the SE area of Montreal. They also settled in Goose Village formerly known as Victoria town because it's next to the Victoria Bridge.

By 1830, Irish residents (Catholics and Protestants) formed established communities, involved in politics and commerce, and bonded over shared heritage.

From 1847 - 1848, an estimated 3,000 to 6,000 Irish died from ship fever in sheds set up at Windmill Point, Montreal. Their remains were discovered in 1859 by workers building the Victoria Bridge linking Montreal, Quebec to Saint Lambert to the south. The workers erected the Black Rock memorial in their honor. Its inscription reads:

"To preserve from desecration the remains of 6000 immigrants who died of ship fever A.D.1847-1848 this stone is erected by the workmen of Messrs. Peto, Brassey and Betts employed in the construction of the Victoria Bridge A.D.1859."

One immigrant who did survive was the grandfather of Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Co.

MONTREAL SURNAMES: Cullen, Donovan, Doyle, Flynn, Frawley, Keating, Kelly, Kennedy, McCarty, McGarrigle, McLaughlin, Murphy, O'Brien, O'Connor, Power, Ryan, Sullivan, Sweeney, Walsh

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John is known as "Canada's Irish City" and between 1815-1867, more than 150,000 immigrants arrived in Saint John from Ireland. This changed the city's character from what was largely Loyalist-Protestant to the addition of Irish Catholics. Between 1845-47 about 30,000 Irish arrived, more than doubling the city's population. It had become the second busiest entry port in Canada.

Those who came in the earlier period were mainly tradesmen, but with the famine many were farmers or unskilled laborers.

After the partitioning of the British colony of Nova Scotia in 1784 New Brunswick was originally named New Ireland with the capital in Saint John.

By 1871, 55 per cent of Saint John's residents were Irish natives or children of Irish-born fathers. However, the city was split with tensions between Irish Catholics and Unionist Protestants.

From the 1840s onward, sectarian riots were rampant in the city with many poor, Irish-speaking immigrants clustered at York Point. In 1877 a fire destroyed 2/5 of the city of Saint John with more than 1600 structures destroyed and 13,000 people left homeless. It started in a storehouse in the York Point Slip area and within 9 hours it had destroyed 200 acres that included churches, six banks, 14 hotels, 11 schooners and 4 wood boats. Like many Victorian area cities, the buildings were made of wood and packed tightly together.

By 1850, the Irish Catholic community was Saint John's largest ethnic group. In the census of 1851, over half the heads of households in the city registered themselves as natives of Ireland.

The Miramichi River Valley had significant Irish immigration in the years before the famine. Though coming after the Scottish and the French Acadians, they made their way by intermarrying with the Catholic Highland Scots, and to a lesser extent, with the Acadians.

The early Irish came there because it was easy to get to with lumber ships stopping in Ireland before returning to Chatham and Newcastle, and because it provided economic opportunities, especially in the lumber industry. They were mainly Irish speakers, and in the 1830s and 1840s there were several Irish-speaking communities along the New Brunswick and Maine frontier.

Quarantine hospitals were located on islands at the mouth of the colony's two major ports, Saint John (Partridge Island) and Chatham-Newcastle (Middle Island).

Those who survived their journey settled on agricultural lands in the Miramichi River Valley and in the valleys of the Saint John and Kennebecasis Rivers. The land wasn't great for farming though, so Irish families began moving to the colony's major cities of Portland, Maine or Boston within a generation.

As in Newfoundland, the Irish language survived as a community language in New Brunswick into the 20th century. In the 1901 census there was a mix of Catholic and Protestant families, and a number described Irish as their first language.

NEW BRUNSWICK SURNAMES: Brennan, Cavanaugh, Donnelly, Doyle, Hickey, Keenan, Lynch, Murphy, Sweeney, and Walsh. Also Clark, Kelly and McGourn, settled around areas like Miramichi, Saint John, and Memramcook.

NEWFOUNDLAND

The large Irish Catholic element in Newfoundland in the 19th century played a major role in Newfoundland history and developed a strong local culture of their own. They were in repeated political conflict—sometimes violent—with the Protestant Scots-Irish "Orange" element.

In 1806, The Benevolent Irish Society (BIS) was founded as a philanthropic organization in St. John's, Newfoundland for locals of Irish birth or ancestry, regardless of religious persuasion. The BIS was founded as a charitable, fraternal, middle-class social organization, on the principles of "benevolence and philanthropy", and had as its original objective to provide the necessary skills which would enable the poor to better themselves. Today the society is still active in Newfoundland and is the oldest philanthropic organization in North America.

Newfoundland Irish Catholics, most from the southeast of Ireland, settled in the cities of St. John and the Avalon Peninsula while British Protestants, mainly from the West Country, settled in small fishing communities. Over time, the Irish Catholics became wealthier than the Protestants which gave incentive for Protestant Newfoundlanders to join the Orange Order.

Newfoundland's political history changed hands a number of times. It was under early British colonial rule with representative government (1832) to a Responsible Government in 1855, then a self-governing Dominion status from 1907-1934 followed by a voluntary period of British rule because of an economic depression 1934-1939.

Representative government: *citizens elect Members of Parliament (MPs) to the House of Commons to make laws and decisions on their behalf, operating under the British Westminster system with federal, provincial, and local levels of government. Elected officials represent specific geographical areas and are accountable to Parliament and the people, with the Prime Minister and Cabinet forming the executive branch.*

Responsible government: *the executive branch (Prime Minister & Cabinet) must maintain the confidence / support of the elected House of Commons to stay in power, making the government accountable to the people through their representatives, not just the Crown.*

Self-governing Dominion status: *(1867) a semi-autonomous entity within the British Empire, managing its own domestic affairs but relying on Britain for foreign policy and defense and was a gradual evolution towards full independence.*

Newfoundland didn't join Canada in the 19th century primarily because its people and leaders believed it was better off remaining a separate British colony. Its economy was heavily reliant on the cod and seal fisheries, with its exports directed toward Europe, particularly Great Britain, and the United States. Canada was a rival.

This was the first and only country to willingly *give up* its self-governing Dominion in 1934, due to severe debt, asking the UK to temporarily suspend its constitution and rule it via a Commission of Government until it could be self-supporting again.

In 1948, a referendum was held with Irish Catholics supporting a return to independence as it existed before 1934, and the Protestants supported joining the Canadian Confederation. Newfoundland joined Canada by a 52–48% margin.

Canadian Confederation: the process by which three British provinces – the Province of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were united into a single federation called the Dominion of Canada

Along with traditional names, the Irish brought their native language. Newfoundland is the only place outside Europe with its own distinctive name in the Irish language, *Talamh an Éisc*, "the land of fish".

Eastern Newfoundland was one of the few places outside Ireland where the Irish language was spoken by a majority of the population as their primary language. Newfoundland Irish is of Munster derivation and was still in use by older people into the first half of the twentieth century.

Family names, the people's features and coloring, the predominant Catholic religion, the prevalence of Irish music – even the dialect and accent of the people are so reminiscent of rural Ireland that Irish author Tim Pat Coogan has described Newfoundland as "the most Irish place in the world outside of Ireland"

According to the 2001 Canadian census, the largest ethnic group in Newfoundland and Labrador is English (39.4%), followed by Irish (39.7%), Scottish (6.0%), French (5.5%), and First Nations (3.2%).

The largest religious denomination according to the 2001 census was the Roman Catholic Church, at 36.9% . The major Protestant denominations make up 59.7% of the population, with the largest group being the Anglican Church of Canada at 26.1% , the United Church of Canada at 17.0% and the Salvation Army at 7.9% with other Protestant denominations in much smaller numbers.

The Pentecostal Church made up 6.7% of the population and Non-Christians made up only 2.7% of the total population, with the majority of those respondents indicating "no religion"

According to the Statistics Canada 2006 census, 21.5% of Newfoundlanders claim Irish ancestry (other major groups in the province include 43.2% English, 7% Scottish, and 6.1% French). In 2006, Statistics Canada have listed the following ethnic origins in Newfoundland; 216,340 English, 107,390 Irish, 34,920 Scottish, 30,545 French, 23,940 North American Indian etc.

NEWFOUNDLAND SURNAMES: (majority from SE of Ireland) **Bambrick, Burke, Byrne, Dillon, Fitzgerald, Halley, Hanlon, Hogan, Houlihan, Kelly, Murphy, Neville, O'Brien, Power, Quigley, Ryan, Walsh, and Whelan.**

Nova Scotia

About one in four is of Irish descent, and there are good records for genealogists and family historians.

Many Nova Scotians who claim Irish ancestry are of Presbyterian Ulster-Scottish descent. William Sommerville (1800–1878) was ordained in the Irish Reformed Presbyterian Church and in 1831 was sent as a missionary to New Brunswick. There, with missionary Alexander Clarke, he formed the Reformed Presbytery of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in 1832.

Catholic settlements in Nova Scotia were traditionally restricted to the urban Halifax area. Halifax, founded in 1749, was estimated to be about 16% Irish Catholic in 1767 and about 9% by the end of the 18th century. Although the harsh laws enacted against them were generally not enforced, Irish Catholics had no legal rights in the early history of the city. Catholic membership in the legislature was nonexistent until near the end of the century. In 1829 Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, of Irish parentage, became the first of his faith to become a lawyer and helped to overcome opposition to the Irish

There were also rural Irish village settlements throughout most of Guysborough County in Erinville (meaning Irishville), Salmon River, Lake/Ogden, and the Bantry district. In Erinville/Salmon River Lake Irish last names are prevalent and an Irish influence is apparent in the accent, the traditional music of the area, food, religion (RC) and lingering traces of the Irish language. In Antigonish County there are other villages of Irish provenance, and still others can be found on Cape Breton Island in New Waterford, Rocky Bay and Glace Bay.

NOVA SCOTIA'S SURNAMES: Nova Scotia's Irish population is over 20% and includes: **Barry, Boyle, Byrne, Collins, Doyle, Kelly, McMullen, Murphy, O'Brien, Ryan, Sullivan** and **Walsh** are the most common but **Delaney, Donnelly, Donovan, Duggan, Farrell** and **Fitzgerald** are also seen in records.

In areas like Margaree, Cape Breton, records highlight families with surnames such as **Burns, Carroll, Coady, Doyle, Dunn, Fortune, Hayes, Kiley (Kieley), McDaniel, McGarry, Miller, Murphy** and **Tompkins.**

ONTARIO

The Irish had been coming to Ontario in small numbers from the 17th century in the service of New France as missionaries, soldiers, geographers and fur trappers. The Irish built canals and railways and worked in mining and logging.

New France – the territory colonized by France in North America beginning in 1543 and ending with the cessation of New France to Great Britain and Spain in 1763.

The Irish arrived in large numbers between 1817-1825 even before Ontario's internal routes had been built. It was a popular destination because the land and climate were good and there were jobs. By 1850 Quebec and the Maritime provinces could no longer compete with it and increasingly lost their people to Ontario.

The Ottawa Valley was the focal point of the region's timber trade and by 1881 people of Irish ancestry dominated 53 townships in an almost continuous line of settlements that straddled 8 counties.

There were three colonization leaders who helped them to found major communities in Ontario:

Peter Robinson who led hundreds of County Cork settlers to the Ottawa Valley and the Peterborough region in 1821 and 1823,

Richard Talbot who led a smaller group of Tipperary settlers to the Ottawa Valley and Middlesex County in 1818

James Buchanan assisted hundreds of Irish living in New York (USA) to relocate to Durham and Peel counties in 1816-1817.

By the 1850s the Irish had settled in large numbers across Ontario. They concentrated in eastern Ontario and in farmland regions north and west of present-day Toronto. They also settled in large numbers on the Canada Company lands in the Huron Tract in western Ontario and on the newly opened territory to the north of it. At this time many poor Irish were assisted through public schemes to come to Ontario where they found employment in the cities and towns.

By 1881 Simcoe County's southern half was 60 % Irish and the county had the highest proportion of Irish in the whole of Ontario, largely due to the fact that many Irish canal workers had worked in the building of the Erie Canal and after it was completed (1826) had headed north to Ontario to take up farming.

ONTARIO SURNAMES: Brennan, Connors, Doyle, Duffy, Hogan, Kehoe, Kelly, McCarthy, McManus, Maguire, Murphy, O'Brien, O'Connor, O'Sullivan, Ryan, Sullivan and Walsh. The **Brennans and McManuses** settled in areas like Kent, Lambton, Hastings, and Toronto. These names often come with specific county origins in Ireland (e.g., Tipperary, Kerry, Wexford).

PARTRIDGE ISLAND

Partridge Island is located in the Bay of Fundy off the coast of Saint John, New Brunswick and was the first quarantine station in North America often referred to as "Canada's Ellis Island".

Hundreds of thousands of immigrants were processed here, with about 30,000 of them Irish. In 1847 alone, 16,000 immigrants, most of them from Ireland, arrived at Partridge Island. 600 were buried on the island in mass graves on a site with a Celtic Cross memorial to those who died. (link to article on backyardhistory.ca, "Nellie McGowan's Quarantine Journal from Partridge Island") It continued as a quarantine station until 1941.

PARTRIDGE ISLAND SURNAMES: Casey, Hearn, Mandeville, McGrath and Power. Other surnames in the region are **Breen, Buckley, Connolly, Daly, Fox, Higgins, and Molloy.** Others are listed on the blog, *A Letter from Ireland*.

THE PRARIES/PRAIRIE PROVINCES

These are further west than areas previously settled and include Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

There were some politicians who thought that the assisted migrations of Irish settlers would lead to the establishment of a 'New Ireland' on Canada's prairies or at least raise the profile of the country's potential as a suitable destination for immigrants. The Irish press however continued to warn potential emigrants of the dangers and hardships of life in Canada and encouraged would-be emigrants to settle instead in the United States

Irish migration to these areas were from two distinct groups: those who came from eastern Canada or the United States, and those who came directly from Ireland. Many of the Irish-Canadians who came west were already assimilated, in that they spoke English and understood British customs and law. The biggest issue they faced was religious; many of the original "English" Canadian settlers in the Red River Colony were Irish Loyalist Protestants, and members of the Orange Order. About 10% of the population of Saskatchewan during 1850–1930 were Irish-born or of Irish origin.

THE PRARIES SURNAMES: Brady, Cassidy, Doyle, Farrell, Finn, Fitzgerald, McGurk, McLaughlin, McGuire, McMahan, O'Connor, Power, and Sullivan.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Before the 20th century, Prince Edward Island had been divided between Irish Catholics and British Protestants (including Ulster Scots from NI). In the second half of the 20th century, this sectarianism ended after two events occurred. First, the Catholic and Protestant school boards were merged into one secular institution; second, the practice of electing two MLAs for each provincial riding (one Catholic and one Protestant) was ended.

According to professor *emeritus*, Brendan O'Grady, (history professor at the University of Prince Edward Island), the majority of Irish immigrants had already arrived on the island *before* the famine. Only one coffin ship landed in 1847.

The first waves of Irish immigrants (10,000) came in 1763. From 1800 - 1850, "10,000 immigrants from every county in Ireland" had settled in Prince Edward Island and represented 25% of the Island population.

From 1767 – 1810 English speaking Irish Protestants were brought to the colony as colonial pioneers to establish the British system of government with its institutions and laws.

In May 1830 the first ship of families from Co. Monaghan, recruited by Father John MacDonald, arrived on the Island to settle in Fort Augustus in what became known as the Monaghan settlements, forming the largest group of Irish to arrive on the Island in the first half of the 19th century.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND SURNAMES: Most common are **Murphy** and **Murray**. Also seen in records are **Corrigan, Cullen, Dolan, Fallon, Gaffney, Hynes, Keane, Kelly, Lavin, Molloy, O'Donnell**. Also **O'Malley, Clarkin, Duffy, Hughes and McKenna** from Co. Monaghan.

QUEBEC

Irish established communities in urban and rural Quebec. They arrived in large numbers in Montreal in the 1840s and were hired as laborers to build the Victoria Bridge, living in a tent city at the foot of the bridge.

The Irish settled in large numbers in Quebec City and establish communities in rural Quebec, particularly in Pontiac, Gatineau and Papineau where there was an active timber industry. However, most would move on to larger North American cities.

The Irish constitute the second largest ethnic group in the province after French Canadians.

QUEBEC SURNAMES: **Kelly, Murphy, O'Brien, Power, Ryan, Walsh,** and **Whelan** a lot of whom emigrated from Cork, Kilkenny, Wexford and Galway. Also a lot of Mac/O' names (MacMaster, O'Neill) Doyle

MISC.

Until 1867 settlers from Ireland didn't need to apply for citizenship because they were British subjects – until 1922.

The "**Fifty Lives Project**" refers to the *book Fifty Irish Lives in Canada 1661-2017* and is a collection of 50 biographies of Irish individuals who shaped Canadian history covering famine-era immigration, communities, politics and culture.

Mellon Centre for Migration Studies (link in source list) - The Irish Emigration Database (IED) is a virtual archive of original primary material which has been transcribed, digitized and key-word

searchable. The documents are related to Irish migration to North America from 1700-1950. There are 17 categories of documents including emigrant letters, newspaper articles, shipping advertisements and passenger lists relating to Irish migration to the United States and Canada

ancestorrecords.org – BMD, court, US census, service records

canada.ca (library) – search Irish Canadians

barrygriffin.com – maps

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1. Kerby Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Journey of Hope, The Story of Irish Immigration to America*, Chronicle Books, 2001

[https://www.ireland.ie/en/canada/ottawa/news-and-events/news-archive/overview-irish-migration-and-settlement-in-canada/#:~:text=The%20Famine%20period%2C%201845%2D1852,%2C%20and%20Halifax%20\(2%2C000\).](https://www.ireland.ie/en/canada/ottawa/news-and-events/news-archive/overview-irish-migration-and-settlement-in-canada/#:~:text=The%20Famine%20period%2C%201845%2D1852,%2C%20and%20Halifax%20(2%2C000).)

https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Finding_an_Irish_Ancestor_Using_Canadian_Records

<https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/immigrants-grosse-ile-1832-1937/Pages/immigrants-grosse-ile.aspx>

<https://www.irishamerica.com/2022/09/grosse-ile-island-of-sorrows/>

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<https://secondaryhistory.learnquebec.ca/1840-1896/irish-immigration>

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Montreal surnames

