

# People We Cannot Find

Genealogy Tips by Jeannette Holland Austin

The Great Famine in Ireland beginning during the 1840s drove the Irish to come to America. The first immigration depot was established at Castle Garden (nor Battery Park) in New York, which was a fort which stood at the tip of Manhattan since the War of 1812. By 1890, the government opened a new Bureau of Immigration on Ellis Island in upper New York harbour. It was in operation for 62 years and processed at least 12 million people! Although some people went to England during the famine, most of them took the cheapest route to America.

The first Irish cemetery in New York was in 1828 in Clinton County. The evidence of multiple graves of the Irish buried haphazardly around New York has since been revealed. It is well known that the poor Irish families received much persecution in New York which resulted in gangs. Likewise, an unknown number of immigrants drowned while en route to America. Countless numbers of sunken vessels are still being discovered today dating to the 16th to 19th centuries.

This fact reduces our chances significantly of finding certain ancestors. In addition, all Ships Manifests were not given over to the authorities upon arrival, or did not survive for some reason. A possible solution is to research deed records, wills and estates, to see what information the families mentioned.

For example, the Colonial Deeds of Georgia have certain instances concerning ships, affidavits, and mentions names of certain passengers as well.

This is where I found a casual reference to a ship wreck off St. Simon's Island in 1740 when Thomas Causton, a Magistrate of Savannah, was

drowned. In North Carolina, it is worthwhile to research the State Papers available at the NC State University.

This is where I found that the MacDonald Clan petitioned for land in Moore County prior to the American Revolution.

If you can find State documents, it is worthwhile to read the correspondence and learn the issues of the day and true causes of events!