

Irish immigration essay

[Sociology](#), [Immigration](#)



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Dorothy Mathews Eth/125 March 7, 2010 Henry Williams IRISH IMMIGRATION
IN 1850'S 2 Irish Immigration in 1850's The line of ancestry that I came from
is the Irish and English and Dutch. I am not certain about the dates, but I am
pretty sure that they emigrated around the years 1850 to 1870. The Irish left
the island of Ireland because of the potato famine that overtook their
country.

Even though undefined, Irish emigrants faced persecution from other
foreigners because they were under educated and some were Irish Catholics,
and also from little knowledge of what industrialization was. The greatest
number of emigrants was from around 1850 through the late 1870's. The
Irish had learned to farm potatoes, because of the productivity and market
prices. Towards the end of 1845 the potato crops caught a fungus which
destroyed the crops in the ground and also in the storage bins. This turned
them into a blackened putrid mass. (Immigration and Immigrants, 2000). By
the year 1846 the entire crop was destroyed.

In the interim, more than a million people died from famine and poverty. This
began the greatest influx of emigrants from Ireland. After reaching the
United States by sea, the Irish stayed mostly in a city environment because
the majority of them knew nothing but farming and the land. They did not
have the finances or the ease of buying land to farm. They stayed in the
cities and most of them ended up living in the slums with some Chinese and
African Americans. They could not get jobs because of their education and
because they knew nothing of factories and actually living in cities.

Most were used to living on farms and farming the land. IRISH IMMIGRATION IN 1850'S 3 Most of the Irish immigrants faced many prejudices and segregation. The nativists and the other immigrants were afraid of them because of their religion and beliefs. They were forced to live in slums and in poverty because they could not find jobs. The only work they could find was in servitude and menial labor jobs. They were under educated and poor. The Irish were thought to be stupid and ignorant, so they stayed to themselves.

The Irish emigrants entered a land with new social and cultural differences. At this time the African Americans and Asian Americans were involved in disputes, along with the European Americans. Add to this the disruptions between the Catholics and Protestants and there was not much peace in the neighborhoods. During this time, they developed political partisanship which brought into line a group called the Know Nothing Party and later the American Protective Association (APA). Neither of these parties lasted for long, but the Irish were later associated with the new Democratic Party.

Also during this time, Irish immigrant soldiers played a big part in the Civil War during the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg (Immigration and Immigrants, 2000). Irish Americans also were involved in disturbances against the Chinese on the west coast which eventually led to Chinese American banishment from America. During this time when the Irish immigrated to America, they suffered from many discriminations, including segregation, racism, and redlining. They were stopped from buying properties, because no one wanted to sell to them.

They did not want them in their neighborhoods, or shopping where they shop. They were thought to be ignorant, and beneath the mainstream of people and only good for menial positions. IRISH IMMIGRATION IN 1850'S 4

By the end of the 19th century, because of all the negativity that they had experienced by coming to America, the Irish had solidified their communities and turned back to the Church. The catholic churches in Boston, Massachusetts grew and were able to build and renovate many churches.

The Irish families had learned new jobs, and between all the members of these families, they contributed to the growth of the Church in many cities. Soon the Irish American Catholics were associated with the Democratic party. In the 1880's and the 1890's, the Irish Americans elected quite a few officials to different positions. Although the Irish Americans were undefined when they arrived in the United States, they assimilated into the country and eventually grew into strong and eager Americans. Most of them came from poor families, but with strong visions and many strong backs, and resolution, they formed strong bonds and strong communities.

They leave a long legacy of pride and ambition. Somewhere along the line they married into other groups and other races, and from these came good Americans. I am proud to be among them. In answer to your final question: I identify more with the mainstream American culture, but I celebrate St. Patrick's Day and wear the green. I have never been to Ireland, but that is one of my fondest wishes. I am proud to be associated with the Irish in America. In my ancestry, somewhere down the line they married with someone of English descent and also someone of Dutch/German descent.

This Emigration was 150 years ago, so the lineage has been mixed with a variety of races, since then. IRISH IMMIGRATION IN 1850'S 5 References

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