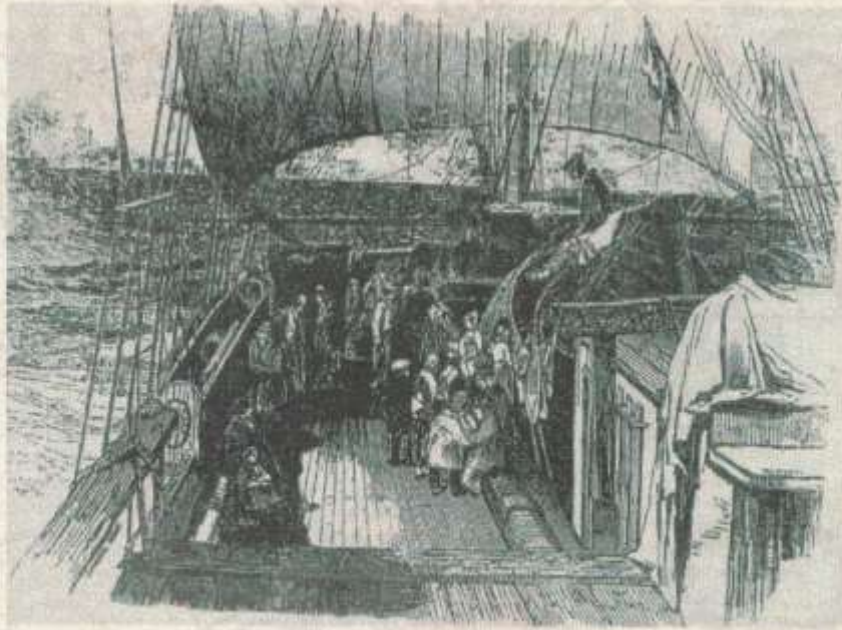


*Crossing the Atlantic
in the 1800s*



At Sea

Kathleen M. Witheridge

For the Witheridge Reunion, held at Lansing, Michigan, USA, on Saturday, August 28th, 1999

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Having a meal on board ship

CONDITIONS AT HOME

One of the main reasons for emigration was the poverty in England. Farm labourers were making very little money and finding it extremely difficult to survive. From the 18th century, families had started to move to North America, being the 'Land of Opportunity'. Residents from the small Devonshire villages emigrated to North America, wrote back home to their friends and families, advising of how much money could be earned, and that they ate meat, fresh fruit and vegetables in abundance. Naturally, the emigration snowballed, drawing relatives, friends and neighbours overseas.

By the 1860's the village of Halberton, near Tiverton, Devon, was described as follows:

"The general sanitary conditions of the village was very bad. Picturesque as they were externally, many of the peasant's cottages were unfit for the housing of pigs. Pools of stagnant water stood in many parts of the parish. The whole village was very badly drained, open sewers ran through it, frequently trickling down from the cottages into the village brook, from which cattle quenched their thirst and the villagers and their children often drank."

(Taken from 'Towards Quebec by Ann Gifford)

PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

In the 1840s and 1850s, the steerage fare (3 class) varied from £3.10s to £5. The 'Isaac Webb' a large emigrant vessel of 1850, charged f./4 for steerage passengers and from £6 - £7 for cabin passengers (2' class), including provisions.

Many parishes assisted with the fares because it was cheaper to send the poor away, rather than have them stay at a cost of £9 per year in the Workhouse, or at £2 per year on Highway Relief. Some landlords paid £10 for each emigrant to provide the whole of the passage money and in addition, paid a £5 allowance for outfitting each person.

A Canadian settler advised a group of four steerage passengers to provide themselves with the following, for their trip: 16-18 pecks (*a peck is one quarter of a bushel*) of potatoes, in a barrel with a lock on it; 40 pounds of good beef, well salted in brine; 15 pounds of butter; 3 pounds of coffee; 3 or 4 dozen old bottled beer, which has less chance of flying than if new; some dozens of eggs, packed with salt; 6 cod fish, cut dried for keeping; milk does not keep well; no sweetmeats are relished at sea; a few oranges, which at times taste very pleasant to a parched palate; some cheese; 8 pounds of treacle, in a flagon; 1 stone (*14 pounds*) of barley; a good deal of pepper and mustard; plenty of carrots, turnips and onions for broth; these will keep all the voyage; 28 pounds of fine ship bread; 8-20 loaves, baked hard; 1 boll (*a round pod or capsule of a plant containing seeds*) of oatmeal, 6 packs baked into bannocks (*a type of cake, particularly popular in Scotland*) and cakes, very well fired and flat for packaging; some white puddings; some suet for dumplings. A few candles and a white iron lantern with horn; 1 bottle of vinegar to use in water on board ship; 1 bottle of castor oil; 2 or 3 dozen colocynths and rhubarb pills; 6 pounds of Epsom salts and 1 pound of senna - these medicines are very expensive here.

They were also advised to take tin items as follows:

A water can to hold the supply of water; wash basin; baking dish; tin pot to fit in ship's stove for broth, etc; can for drinking from; pot to hang on stove for heating water; tin plates for meals; small tin dishes for tea or coffee; tablespoon and teaspoon, knife and fork for each individual. All should be marked and all packages should not only have locks, but be kept locked, and the keys taken out. This had to be carefully attended to, as loss of articles on board were infrequent, and such losses could not be supplied.

It was advised that strong linen or sacking bags were useful for potatoes, but oatmeal and flour should be kept in a strong barrel or flax-seed cask.

The list of necessities for emigrants to North America, were as follows:

- bedding, blankets, sheets, etc.,
- pewter plates or wooden trenchers knives
- forks, spoons, metal cups and mugs
- tea kettles and saucepans
- a large tin can or watering pot
- working tools of all descriptions

Single men must have a bed or mattress, a metal plate, cup or mug, knife, fork and spoon. A bed tick rather than a feather bed was recommended for the journey. The tick could be stuffed with straw and an old piece of carpet put under the tick would help keep the occupant warm.

The following clothing was the lowest outfit recommended to parishes for their labourers, including articles they may possess:

- fur cap
- warm, great coat
flushing jacket (*a flushing jacket was made out of tough, thick, woollen cloth*)
and trousers
canvas frock (*a workers smock or overall*) and two pairs of
trousers duck frock (*made out of strong linen or cotton*
material) and trousers
- 2 jersey frocks
- 4 shirts
4 pairs of
stockings 3 pairs
of shoes

Finally:

- a Bible and Prayer Book
- women were to have the same in proportion and especially a warm cloak

Having completed the practical preparations for the journey, there remained one very important package:

"Emigrants should take with them a good character, (if they had the happiness to possess one), fairly written and well attested, also copies of marriage and baptismal registers or any other certificates or papers likely to be useful, the whole to be enclosed in a small case".

(Taken from The Great Migration by Edwin C Gillet)

PARTING SORROWS

On January 2nd 1841, an advertisement appeared in a local Plymouth, Devon, newspaper, "Premises Wanted in Plymouth for an Emigrants Depot". At this time, emigration had become very inviting, both to Australia and North America. By 1842 premises were selected by The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission for an official Government Emigration Depot. It was described as being a large and comfortable abode with a fine view of Plymouth Sound. It was capable of affording shelter and a temporary home for 700 emigrants, whilst awaiting for their vessel destined to sail them to a distant land.

Plymouth has a long association with colonisation beginning with the 'Pilgrim Fathers', who set sail for America in 1620. Its old quays are scattered with stones and plaques, commemorating journeys to new lands all over the world.



Mayflower land at Plymouth

Emigrants were met at the railway station, or the various steamboats from Scotland and Ireland, and directed to the Depot. Vans conveyed their luggage free of charge. They were then admitted to the premises at any hour of the day, or night on production of their embarkation orders as issued by the Agents General. The usual day for assembly was Monday. Emigrants would

embark on their ship on Wednesday or Thursday of the same week. Their embarkation orders were handed to the Depot Master, who would satisfy himself that they corresponded in number and age as specified, he then entered their names in the arrival book and luggage was taken to the luggage stores.

Before shipment, the emigrants were asked to open their luggage up to guard against any prohibited articles being put on board ship, such as feather beds or pillows, firearms, offensive weapons, gunpowder, matches, beer, spirits or perishable food.

The dormitories were an example of cleanliness and comfort, with whitewashed walls and good ventilation. The men had berths arranged in rows, giving each a space of about two feet, with a partition dividing them. The single women were put in their own separate mess, where they slept in pairs and having double the space of that given to the men. They were allowed to choose their companions, and a matron was put in charge. No men were admitted.

The beds were of cocoa fibre to discourage vermin and the blankets were changed frequently. Each bed had an extra loose linen cover to facilitate frequent washing.

Married couples were given berths in the form of enclosed bunks, up to four feet wide and nine feet long, provided with curtains to ensure the occupants privacy. There was space for an infant, and another bed for the children. Each bed was carefully, and securely screened. Baths were available at a moments notice, providing both hot and cold water.

The kitchen was a large paved stone room, with apparatus for baking and boiling food for 1,000 at a time. The meat was cut into pieces of seven and one half pounds in weight for a mess of ten, and served in large earthenware dishes with potatoes. Soup was made for the children in the boiled meat coppers, as an addition to their diet.

At meal times a bell was sounded, and the Captain of each mess received the meals in exchange for a ticket, ensuring speed and efficiency. The food, carefully selected, and inspected, provided a varied diet.

The enlargements to the site included an open air space for exercise and amusement. Several rooms on ground level, adjacent to this yard, were left open at one end to give shelter in wet weather.

When their stay extended to include a Sunday, emigrants were encouraged to go to a place of worship, although a chaplain was available for the emigrants spiritual care.

It was felt that a stay of three or four days, in this well ordered, clean home, with good food, and under the gentle discipline of the Depot rules, would enable the people to disembark in health and comfort, a medical exam having eliminated any suspicious cases that would be a danger to the whole community on the vessel.

On embarkation to the ship, a final muster was made, and the emigrants passed before the officer of the Board of Trade, the medical officer of the port of Plymouth, and the dispatching officer of the Colonial Government. Names were ticked off as they boarded the steamer alongside the Depot wall. This transported them direct to the emigrant vessel in the Sound.

Viewed from the twentieth century, the Depot takes on the feel of a 'camper's hostel', but ahead of these people, was a journey of discomfort and maybe danger, in a wooden sailing ship that could take up to four months to reach its destination, depending upon where they were going.

CONDITIONS ON BOARD SHIP

In 1835 - 1836, an Act of the British Parliament reduced the passengers from four to three for every five tons. Legislation was passed in 1842 to remedy the bad conditions by insisting that bedding had to be aired on deck twice per week, weather permitting, and the ship had to be fumigated with vinegar at the same intervals. Passengers were ordered to clean themselves regularly on the upper deck. Passengers were urged to bear in mind that their arrival in North America in high spirits or in ill health depended upon their attention to these rules. Not until the Act of 1847, was there any regulation that adult passengers of different sexes, unless husband and wife, should be berthed separately.

Some of the features on the 628 ton emigrant ship "St. Vincent", in 1844, which accommodated 240 passengers. The length between decks was 124 feet, the height 6 feet 4 inches and the breadth of the main hatchway was 25 feet 3 inches. Stationary tables and benches were located mid way between the rows of berths throughout the length of the ship, beneath the tables were plate racks and water carriers. Hanging shelves were secured between the beams. The double berths were 6 feet x 3 feet and single berths were six feet x 2 feet, each being separated from the next by a partition extending from top to bottom. Seats were fixed at the outer extremity of each bed place. Water closets for females were located on either side of the deck, but those for the male passengers were on the upper deck.

Conditions in general were far superior in the North Devon ships to the ships leaving Liverpool, full of Irish emigrants. The condition of these ships, was sometimes appalling. On occasions, towards the end of the voyage, the water became entirely useless. When it was drawn out of the casks it was no clearer than that of a dirty kennel after a heavy shower of rain; so that its appearance alone was enough to sicken one, but its worst quality, it had such a rancid smell that to be in the same area was enough to turn one's stomach. On occasions, the ships' water could be made usable, even if still repulsive, by the addition of vinegar or another more pleasing liquid, such as peppermint, if available. On a typical vessel in 1847, each adult received one pound of meal or bread daily, children under fourteen years, one half of that quantity, and those under seven years, one third of that quantity, was distributed five days a week, and biscuit, which was good, was given out the other two days. The overcrowding on these emigrant vessels, defective diet, bad water and the lack of medical supervision, lead to cholera and ship fever, many of the passengers did not make it to North America.

A ship named "British Tar" was frequently used as an emigrant ship in the 1830s. It was 383 tons and built in Sunderland in 1824. The crew on ships of this size usually numbered twenty or less. This ship was fitted in a substantial manner with a double row of berths, each six feet square, running each side of the whole length of the between-decks of the ship from the bulkhead of the Captain's cabin to that which bounded the seamen's quarters.

A partition was built across this central area before the hatchway and another towards the main

mast, by which the emigrants' quarters were divided into three parts. Each part having its own separate access. The division forward was the quarters of the boys and single men over fourteen years of age. The other two divisions were given to families and single women. The contract stipulated that there was to be one water closet between decks, but one Superintendent said in his log that there were two, one for each of the families' and women's sections. There would have been at least fifty people using these two water closets. Two cooking hearths were provided for the passengers, and another for the ship's crew, plus sufficient coal for cooking. Forty tons of 'good and sweet water', in proper casks, were put on board for the sole use of the passengers.

The 'British Tar' being 383 tons, could therefore, legally have taken 287 passengers including crew. In fact, she only carried at most, 118 passengers plus crew. Some emigrant ships crammed people on by putting a further row of berths down the centre of the steerage, blocking the central passageway and leaving no gangway or space for tables at which passengers could sit and eat. Many owners of emigrant ships required passengers to take their own food, which was often stored along with other luggage around or within the passenger's berth. The 'British Tar' supplied provisions and a storage room for luggage.

Laundry was a very difficult task. Clothes had to be washed in salt water, and lines of dripping garments suspended (if the necessary lines and hooks had been taken on board) on wet days within the steerage, or strung up on deck when weather permitted. In such conditions, the garments would hardly ever be totally dry, and the salt water would create skin complaints. How did the mothers of small infants cope, did they take along disposable rags? Certainly older emigrants were advised by earlier travellers to wear their oldest clothes and shoes on board ship.

Keeping the children amused in these very confined spaces was a huge problem. Advantage had to be seized at any opportunity to send them on deck to run off surplus energy. It was suggested that older children could help clean the berth space, and also assist the sailors scrubbing the decks.

There was no serious illness on the 'British Tar' and no loss of life. The worst health problem was an epidemic of measles affecting twelve children. This was classed as a minor epidemic, as none of the children died. A large number of passengers suffered from sea-sickness which usually struck in bad weather, but the remedy for this was usually a cup of coffee and a lie down. There was one happy event on board when a passenger gave birth to a daughter. The delivery took place within the confined space of the family berth, in close proximity to the other family groups.

Usually the voyage took between 35 and 45 days, depending of course on the weather conditions. All ships entering Canada had to anchor at Grosse Island, some thirty miles from Quebec, and used as a quarantine depot for emigrants arriving in Canada. Any cholera or other epidemics had to be reported. In 1834 a Proclamation was made that all ships with cases of cholera, fever, small pox or severe cases of scarlatina or measles on board should be put in quarantine, and all patients suffering from any of these diseases should be sent to hospital. There could be thirty or more ships awaiting clearance at any one time.

THE SHIP BRITISH TAR,

A 1. coppered and copper fastened,

Burthen 383 Tons per Register,

is engaged by the PETWORTH EMIGRATION COMMITTEE,

to sail from

PORTSMOUTH

FOR

MONTREAL, DIRECT,

On THURSDAY, the 17th. of APRIL next,

(Passengers must be on board before 6 in the Evening of Tuesday, the 16th, or at latest by Noon on Wednesday, the 16th.)

with Emigrants from different parts of the County of SUSSEX.

The Committee have much pleasure in stating, that they have provided as a Gentleman of high responsibility, a SURGEON of nearly 30 years standing in the Navy, and whose practice has been considerable, both on shore and afloat, to take the entire charge of the Emigrants who go on the BRITISH TAR. He will have the control of all the arrangements in YORK, Upper Canada, (or in any other Port at the head of Lake Ontario); and though he will not be authorized on the part of the Committee, to incur any expence for Conveyance, &c. beyond the head of the Lake, yet he will, with the assistance of the Government Agents, use his best endeavours towards forwarding the different Parties to those places where they have Friends already settled, or to which they may wish to proceed, and also in finding Employment for those who have no particular engagements.

A large number of Passages being already engaged on board this Ship, applications must be made as early as possible to Mr. J. PHILLIPS, Petworth; of whom, or of Mr. KENNAED, 20, Panny Street, Portsmouth, further Information may be obtained.

A few Cabin Passengers could be accommodated, and Berths may be secured in the intermediate Cabin, at a small advance on the Steerage price.

Petworth, March 22nd. 1834.

J. Phillips, Printer, Petworth.

SHIP INFORMATION

Information on a few of the ships which sailed from Devonshire to Quebec, which was kindly provided by the National Maritime Museum. Greenwich, London, England:

The Barque '**DEVONIA**' - 463 tons or 950 tons burthen (*loaded*). Built in Prince Edward Island in 1848 and owned by R. Heard. Registered at Bideford, Devon with the Master being Heard.

The Barque '**SECRET**' - 372 tons or 600 tons burthen (*loaded*). Built in Prince Edward Island in 1846 by R. Heard. Registered in Bideford, Devon with the Master being J. Farthing.

The Barque '**CIVILITY**' - 248 tons or 450 tons burthen (*loaded*). Built at Vernon River, Prince Edward Island by Thomas Richards, who signed the Builder's Certificate for George Heard of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. She was registered there in 1842, 247 tons, 94.6 feet x 20.2 feet x 15.5 feet. In May, 1843, she was transferred to Bideford, Devon, as owned 64/64ths by Richard Heard. During ten years of Heard ownership she made many Atlantic crossings and once made the spring crossing to Charlottetown in 23 days. In 1848 she made two round trips, leaving for the second one from Plymouth on August 8¹. The following February she was advertised as sailing from Bideford for Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia, taking goods and passengers on or about April 2', she cleared Prince Edward Island for the Miramichi on June 14", She returned to England and sailed again from Bideford on November 12th. 'Civility' was sold in 1852, and was presumably used as a collier. It is believed that she was lost or broken up in late 1855 or early 1856.

(Information taken from 'Towards Quebec' by Ann Gifford)

British Barque '**GIPSY QUEEN**' - 839 tons burthen (*loaded*). Built in 1847 by John Jeffrey of Quebec and owned by Kirk & Co., port of registry Alloa. Official number - 15055. 475 tons; length - 144 feet - breadth - 29.2 feet and depth - 21.3 feet. History, 1852/1853 Lloyds register - Transferred to J. Miller and Co., and registered at Newcastle. 1856/1857 Lloyds register - Transferred to Rawle and Co., and registered at Plymouth. In 1857 she was in Lloyds class AE1, but was nearing the end of her time in this class by virtue of her construction from witch hazel, fir and spruce, and also employed iron bolts in her construction. Lloyd's did not allow ships to remain more than six years in such a class without major renovations. On April 17th 1857 she left Plymouth, Devon, under master Edward Johns and arrived at Quebec, Canada on June 1' 1857 (45 days). Loss - Abandoned in a sinking condition on October r 1866, having sprung a leak and sustained severe damage in a gale on October whilst on a voyage from Quebec to Falmouth, master Rawle, cargo - timber.

(Information provided by Reg Walter of Erin, Kent, and extracted from Lloyd's records)

The full rigged ship '**OCEAN QUEEN**' - 1000 tons burthen (later converted to a barque rig). Built in 1845 at New Bideford, Prince Edward Island, by William Ellis for James Yeo of Port Hill, Prince Edward Island, who signed the builders certificate. 630 tons - 122.4' x 27.55' x 21.5'. She was officially recorded 'foundered off Scilly May 19" 1865', bound from Newport with coal for Halifax, Nova Scotia. She sprang a leak on May 17th 1865 and was abandoned on May 19th. Her crew of 18 were picked up by the barque 'Ilygeia' of South Shields, bound for Barbados towards London, and later put on board a Scilly pilot boat.

LETTERS SENT BACK AND FORTH

Darlington, Canada West
October 22nd 1843

Honoured Master and Mistress, I now set down to write you a few lines and I hope that it will find you in good health as it leaves me at present, thank God for it.

I will now give you an account of the passage we had and a little account of this country as far as I know it.

We sailed from Plymouth on Monday, April 10th 1843, and we had a speedy and safe passage, thank God for it. The seamen said they scarcely ever knew such a good voyage out so early in the spring. We had but one storm all the way over, and that was the Saturday and Sunday week after we left Plymouth, but there was no danger. I was very sick for the first two weeks - I was not in very good health for the whole of the passage, but not worse than I expected I should be.

We saw land for the first time on the first of May. We had then been out three weeks. The land looked very rough and very cold for there were mountains of snow on the hills. We saw a great many islands as we passed along, and it looked very rough and as mountainous as any I ever saw in my life. Some of the tops of the mountains looked almost as high as the clouds, and we saw a very large waterfall just before we came to Quebec.

We anchored in Quebec harbour on Monday, May 15th 1843 and we laid there until the Wednesday evening, and then we started for Montreal which is about 120 miles, which cost 5s.

We landed on Montreal wharf on the Thursday morning and in the evening we started for Kingston which is about 260 miles and cost 15s and 2/6d a head for luggage, and that was a long and troublesome voyage, and the most expensive. It is all rivers and lakes.

We landed on Kingston wharf on the Monday evening following, and on the Tuesday evening we started for Darlington, and we landed on Darlington wharf the Thursday afternoon about 4 o'clock, and if ever I was glad it was then.

Mr. T.C. who came out a year ago was down on the wharf waiting for Mr. R. and his family, and he took us back to Mr. S's, and there we stopped until father bought his farm, which is 100 acres, joining of Mr. C's farm, the blacksmith who came out from N.T.

The land here is very good in general and much better to work than the land in England. They are all English people in this settlement, except for one family which is Irish.

This is, I can assure you, a free country; any person can enjoy himself with his own earnings,

for there is no tithe to pay, no church rates to pay - for there are no poor here, or but few, and they are people who will not work.

If any person comes out here and will be industrious he will do much better than he can at home. I think for my part that it is a good country for the labouring class of people. I will just give you the prices of work, etc. Labourers here get for common wages 2/6d a day and their board - that is 2/- of your English money in sterling - and in haying time 3/9d, and wheat and harvest 5/- a day. You can judge whether they can get that in England or not. The blacksmith's is a good business in this country, they get very high wages indeed, and carpenters likewise. Tailors get good wages for their work - 25s to 30s for making a coat and in some towns get 35s; and for making a vest 5s is the lowest - that is a dollar - and 6/3d for some, and for making a pair of trousers just the same. When I go out to work I get a dollar a day, so I think I can do better here than I could at home. I have not had my hands full of work since I have been here, but I have done several pounds worth and I am in hopes that I shall get more trade soon, as the fall is the smartest time for the tailor trade. They get their own cloth manufactured here for the winter.

Shoemakers get good wages here. Boots with no iron in them are the general wear in this country. We are very light shod to what we used to be at home.

I expect there have been some favourable accounts come back of this part, so I will just state to you for what reason it is. There are a great many that come out here, and because they can't get a good situation in a few days they get very much discouraged and they talk of going back again. There were three young men that came out in the same vessel with us that came up as far as Kingston and then they turned back again without knowing anything about the countryside than what some told them on the warf. Whilst I was on the warf some gave me a bad account of this part. I might have been discouraged, but I thought I would persevere, and try to know whether it was as bad as it was represented or not. They said that there was not any good bread to be seen, not any good meat of any sort - but I can assure you, Sir, that I have found it to be quite the reverse. There is the best of living in this country- the labourer lives equal with the farmers. There is the best of mutton, veal, pork and lamb and preserves of every description. As my paper is almost diminished I will just give you the prices of grain, potatoes, etc. Wheat is 3/6d per bushel, that is 2 pecks, oats 10d per bushel and potatoes 10d per bushel - beef is 2 V2d and 3d a pound and pork in proportion.

One good thing I almost forgot and that is to let you know that a tailor is not obliged to go to work to harvest just to get the farmer's work - if they do not go out they get their dollar a day as another man. I went out 8 days and earned 2 pounds, and I don't think any tailor earned that at home.

My best respects to you all....I hope that no one will be offended because I have not mentioned any names. So I conclude with my best wishes to you all, I remain Sir, your Humble and Most Obedient Servant,

John Bragg, junr

(Clipping from The Cornish and Devon Post', Launceston, Cornwall, England)

Bradworthy, Devon
England
March 16th 1857

Dear Brother and Sister,

I take the earliest opportunity of answering your letter, which I received last week, and am glad to hear that you and the family are all well, as thank God it leaves us at present. Also William and John's families are all well and dear old Father as well as he is in general. More than old age is praying upon him or making its appearance on him. He was very glad to hear from you and He together with myself, are glad to find that you are contented and doing well, and like the country well also. We were all sorry to hear of your dear little boy being born blind, and we hope it may please the Almighty to bless him with the sight of which we all enjoy, which would be a blessing indeed for him. John and Mary May have had three children since you left, two maidens and a boy. And William and Miriam May have buried one of their little boys, called Silas. It is my intention to come over with you this Spring. I am now preparing for the voyage. I intend to go over in the Vessel called the "Gypsy Queen" on the 14th of April next. We shall leave Plymouth. I mean to take six shovels with me. I intend to go direct to my children and perhaps stay there a little while, then I hope we shall be able to manage, so as to be able to see each other. There are a great many going to America this Spring. Thomas Tremeer and family, Wm Barrett that married Hugh Oke's daughter "Ann", Samuel Hopper and family, Mr. Richard Walter of Ryall and family, James Row and **Richard Witherage**, and many young people besides. Some of our gentleman farmers are talking about emigrating to America another year. Namely Mr. Ashton of Silsworthy, Mr. Ashton of Alsworthy, and Mr. Charles Walter, Jun., of Lymscott. The times have been first rate for farmers in England for the last three years. The price of wheat is come down from 24s. to 15s per bag - Barley 10s, Oats 5s, Potatoes 5s/2 per bag, Pork 6d, mutton and beef 7d to 8d per lb. Butter 1/1d per lb.

I have worked with Francis Edward Lees Esq. who is living at Weston for a year and a half for 10s per week, and a quarter of an acre of ground dressed for potatoes and as many turnips as we can use besides our standing wages. There is a new Gentleman's seat built at Weston. You would not know it to be the same place at first sight were you to see it. It is now called West Down. It is likely to become a very pretty place.

As poor old Father is very frail and badly off, I am sure he would be glad of a trifle if you felt disposed to give it to him. If you wish to send him anything I think you had better send it to my John, and when I get over I will undertake to send it to a man who will give it to Father, without anyone knowing it so that it may do him good. My son's address is John May, Columbus, Whitby, Canada West, North America.

This with our sincere love to you, hoping all are well as it leaves us. We remain, Your affectionate brother and sister,

Thomas and Grace MAY

DARLINGTON,
February, 1871

My very much respected Mother, after a long silence between you and me i now take the opportunity of advising you with a few lines hoping it will find you in perfect health as it leaves me at Present thank God for it, i shall make a few statements in the way of apology for this long silence between us. (first) in goneby days i wrote two letters and sent them to my Brother-in-law - John - Walter - and on them letters i inserted my best respect to you stating my circumstances also and i also desired of Brother John Walter to write me a letter in return and let me know how all the family was, including your self on the letter that he ought to have sent me as an answer to what i sent him. another reason was that i did not write i thought you would not believe me if i wrote the whole truth - i could sign some other reasons but let this suffice at Present, - and i do hope when you receive this letter you answer it imediately as i should like to hear from you and all your family in england - My wife and me have a great many times told together of you when the day is over and retired from labour and sitting by a cheerful fireside - its then we have a social chat of old times, we have very often wished you here to partake of a cup of tea with us, as we have generally plenty of tea of the first rate quality in the House and we don't forget to replenish the teapot with it three times a day - sometimes with the best curley green - and different sorts we use besides of Exelent - quality so that we can at any time furnish the table and suit the taste of all friends and neighbours that pay us a visit, - i will endeavour in this short Epistle - to describe where we live and manner of living, in the first place - we live in the township of Darlington - its close by a road side surrounded by a great number of kind people. about 3 Miles from the flourishing town of Bowmanville where we can purchase any sort of thing we need. - perhaps you may suppose that we are deprived of many comforts. which you enjoy. but thank God we never once regreted of coming to this country as yet - we have a very fine house to live in - i don't mean to say we have a gentleman's seat to reside in - we have our House very neatly furnished with good furniture we have two good feather Beds all fitted out such as curtains counterpanes Quilts Blankets Sheets - our rooms are lay'd with double flooring and our rooms are all paperd - and our bed room floors are covered with carpets -

i have in addition to my house one acre and half of good land i consider the land to be as good as any on Whitley farm i have on some part of it a good Orchard. - i have had some years - more than one Hundred Bushels of apples so we can always have plenty and some to spare, i have a nice Mare - she is 7 years old - so when we want to go on a Visit or to church - or Market we need not walk. - i have two Buggys - one when new cost 20£ pound the other cost 40 pounds - the mare - i drive is worth now this Present time 30£ - Hand's cost - me 6£ - i have two Cows and we generally raise two pigs every year - which gives us plenty Port - i almost forgot to tell you we have a good cutter to ride in so that we can in winter get over the snow without much trouble so now to sum up the whole i don't know we want any thing to make us comfortable, at Present, James Moore jr and Mary your grand Children give their love to you they have 6 fine Children, - they rent a farm - not far from us 112 Acres they are doing well - got a good stock of Horses & Cattle and some Money out of Interest. i believe they live equal as well as any fanner in Bradworthy.

Mary Ann is living a long distance from us i think its about 200 Miles - She is married to a man called Elias Perkin - she has 7 children. the last birth was two twin Boys her husband is a very nice Christian man a clafs leading belonging to the Wesleyan Methodist - they have 100 Acres of land of their own they are getting along very comfortable they live in the township of Repel near Owen Sound County of Grey. John W Moore is a Methodist Minister been traveling Preacher for the last two years. He is married about 18 Months ago, Miriam and her Husband which is John Witheridge give their love to you they are living close by us, their farm joins with my place. Miriam hath four children - alive - Buried two - John Rents his fathers farm. they

are getting along very well - Joshua & his wife give their love to you they have one child Joshua is a school Teacher - gets 97£-10s per year we saw him & his wife yesterday. they were all well - he told me he should not teach school much longer - 2 years would be the most. - he has made a great Proficiency in learning - he is thoroughly acquainted with all the english Branches - he is also a Clafsical Scholar - understands Latin Greek - Hebrew and French - can translate it into English

Joshua your Grandson, intends when two years is expired to go to a College to study for a Minister and after that he will be able to get a situation and live a gentleman not only so he may be an instrument in the hand of God of winning souls to Christ - and in the mean time directing his own steps through Gods afsistance that he may at last be saved, - i have made mention to all your Grand children - except - Richard - and i am sony to say i cannot inform you much about him. - when i came to Canada first - i put him with Mr Samuel Mason to learn the Harnefs and saddle making, when out of his time. and he had learned his bufsinefs, he went to the United States - about 10 years ago, and i have not heard from him since

Dear Mother-in-law grattitude flows in streams from my very heart when i think of your kindness to me and my children i never shall forget it this side of the grave, where we are all fast Hastening - I have longed to see you many a times to converse with you about all my temporal concerns and also of our spiritual welfare, but it does not appear at Present that ever we shall meet on this earth but I hope to meet you in heaven. the Lord hath promifsed in his holy word that he will not withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly and it is shown to me by God in every instance Blesings tempral & Spiritual i have received at his hands i have no reason to complain in the least of temporal Blesings - food and raiment House home and habitation is given to us by the Lord - our table is always at meal times spread with abundance of food - such as good white Bread & Butter pies and cakes besides mean & Potatoes in summer we get Plenty of fruit - such as Gooseberrys Currants Red and Black, - rasperrys - three kinds Red Black & White. pears plums and Cherrys. strawberrys in abundance and many other sorts besides to numerous to mention, we gather them and then Preserve them for the winter use - i heartily wish you was here. to join with us to morrow so that we might have a merry meeting round our table, and partake of our preparations above described - we generally purchase one pound of tea at a time. and 3 pound of currants - and sugar more or lefs we have always in the House - we can get all sorts of Groceries of the best quality at moderate Prices - we very often grind 6 Bushels of Wheat at a time.

(worn) s you would like to know a little about the climate in this country - i am well aware that England is a more moderate clime (than ou)rs in Canada - but what of all that, we pals our time along in Canada a great deal more cheerful that a great many people in England. (perhaps you would ask for what reasons) i can quickly tell you, first, it is a free country and the people in general are more accomadating in this country and willing to render afsistance when its needed. the labouring man can earn more, he can earn a great deal more wages and when employed by the farmer he always gets his board and sits with his employer at the same table, and if you will allow me to draw the contrast between this country and england, - i now insert it as a stubborn fact that cannot be denied by a truthful man. that the labouring clafs of People live better than the generality of farmers in England.

there is another thing that i shall mention before i close these temporal statements - we are not shorn of Religous Priveliges we have the same lord over us as you have in england and his bounties are shed forth upon us in very rich abundance our land is filled with plenty of every good and desireable thing, he giveth us our crops in due season so that we can enjoy them, only view the contrast for one moment between Canada and England, both under British Government, same laws and every thing, but the aristocracy appear to be of

a very different disposition. to what they are in england, they don't look with disdain on a poor man in this country as they do home, people here don't hate to see a man wear a good coat or a good pair of Boots or any other suitable garment to appear decent on the sabbath day - as they do in england if a man is sick and need releif they give it to him with a free heart don't force him to sell his cow or starve as they do in england. Dear Mother-in-law Please excuse me for freedom of plain truths. i am well aware that you are exempt from all these things that i have just Hinted above, for i know that you was always kind and affectionate to every Person. and gave away all your abilities would afford i am sure it will be said of you as of good Comeilus they Alms - are come up for a Memorial before - God - Prayer to god is also required of us which i hope you are constantly engaged in i pray for you in my simple way every day and all my relations may God afsist us to do his will on earth that at last we may meet in heaven where parting will be no more.

Dear Mother-in-law i must now by way of conclufsion for this time draw to a close, only Please give my best respects to all your children and Grand-children be so kind to remember me to all enquiring friends i also give my love to my son Wm & his wife and Children he hath sent to his Brothers about coming to Canada - i think they will help him if he is fully bent of coming tell him to send them a letter again imediately - stating all Pertickulars what money he needs i shall not Persuade him any more my self observe his own mind, as he is wel aware what he can do for himself in Canada, my wife Christian Moore remembers her love to you and to her Brother Wm Oke and Betsy and to all their Children and to all enquireng friends she wishes to get a letter from her Brother - or her Nephew young Wm or some of the family - tell her Brother Wm Oke that Christian thinks that he cannot think that he has a Sister existing. because she hath sent to him a great many times by letters, and mefsages by people going home and it avails nothing as yet but when people get up in the world i suppose they learn the way in forgetting their own relations and don't count them worthy of notice

Please tell Wm Oke his (worn) still survives although now very weak - she has been nearly three years confined to her Bed but during her sicicnefs she has not wanted any thing. So no more at Present - Please write imediately and send all the news you can if you write little or much i shall gladly receive it - but if you write as much as I have written to you i shall be better pleased still - after that communications i hope will not cease between me an you as long as life shall last -

i still Remain your
Affectt Son-in-law
JAMES MOORE

My adrefs
James Moore - Senr Base Line
Darlington Bowmanville P.O.
Ontario

Note: The above letter was written by James Moore (1804-1885) to his Mother-in-Law Miriam (7'rathen) Walter (1788-1880) of Whiteley Farm, Bradworthy, Holsworthy, North Devon. James had been in Canada for over 10 years.

I have transcribed this letter (spelling as in copy sent to me). The letter originates from Reg. Walter of Erith, Kent, England.

Hamilton, County Wentworth

22nd April, 1857

Mr. William Yeo

Dear Brother;

When I look at the date of your letter I feel ashamed that I have not replied to it sooner but my apology is, first, Brother Ben was buying a farm and I wished to see it settled before I wrote you immediately after which, John Ashton buried his only son, shortly after which he buried a daughter and his wife. Soon after which sister in law G. Yeo was expected to die also I went to see her, who I am happy to say is recovered, since which I have purchased a farm about 6 miles from here from, but owing to a defect of the Title, I have to relinquish it, please accept these as my reasons for not writing sooner. I were glad to hear that your family were in the enjoyment of good health when you last wrote to me, I hope all is well with you still. I am very sorry to hear of the affliction of Mr. and son and others, the frailty of human nature is ever before us, and ought to warn us of our vanity in the world. and lead us to walk in such a path as to be able to put our trust in the Almighty who alone is able to save us to the end which may the Lord in his mercy grant.

I believe Benjamin has written to England since he purchased his farm but as I do not know if you will see his letter I will give you a faint idea of the place. The farm consists of 160 acres of land upwards of 100 acres of which is cleared land -- free from wood or stumps (although at the time I saw it the land was covered in snow) yet I believe from testimony of others, that land is good almost precisely similar to the land he has been farming which I have described to you on former occasions it is in good locality for market, mills and being about 4 miles from Paris and 3 miles from Brantford, both thriving towns. The farm is bounded by the Grand-River on one end (quite a large river perhaps 20 or 30 rods wide at that place) and altogether I would consider it a desirable farm. There is a rise in the land (dividing the flats as it is termed, from the table and above) that runs across the farm under or at the foot of this hill are the Barn cattle sheds etc. into which water is conveyed from the spring issuing out of the side hill, but pipe this has to be done.

The Barn is 100 feet long with a stone stable cattle stalls Root cellar and underneath one of the best homes in the neighbourhood good shade for cattle and sheep hog pen etc. The dwelling house is rather the worse for wear, but will last many years, the Barn etc. is one of more importance.

The price he pays is seventeen hundred and fifty - pounds (\$1750.00) this month the balance on or before the 30th December next. The price is a little over \$1400 sterling or your money - which according to what people in that neighbourhood value their land at, is cheap. And I hope Ben will do well by it. I believe Bro. Ben will live on the same place that he has been on (the last seven years) and his son Ben (who is about to get married to a farmer's daughter close by) will go on to the place Bro. has bought. I would rather have seen Bro. Ben on his own place, but I believe they think young Ben would not suit the old Gent Caperon? who owns the farm they are on, hence their decision to remain where they are.

When down to see sister-in-law Grace Yeo I of course saw Thomas's place. Thomas seems highly pleased with his place, and no doubt it is a desirable place also, but I fancy people in that neighbourhood value their land far too high, he tells me he could get two thousand pounds currency for his farm, but I must say that I should not like to give that amount or anything approaching it. In fact I purchased a place of 100 acres only six miles from Hamilton, one of the best markets in Canada. A stone road leading to within one mile of the place, a small river runs across the farm on which is a saw-mill in good repair except the dam which would require £20 - £30 to repair. A good Barn sheds etc. and two small dwellings (the best house has been burnt) about half has been under cultivation though not free from stumps. I bought the said place at auction for £610 currency. I did nor any one I believe at the sale did not know of any defect in the title. Although I have since found it out, but the money refunded which I paid as well as my expenses, but I do not consider the place worth twice the money - only I preferred to give it up altogether, rather than hold it as things must stand until it can be set right. It is no good entering into details of the matter. Brother Tho's place is well watered and will eventually

become a nice farm, and no one with the same means will do more to improve it. He has made an addition to the house, making it far more convenient and he's doing his utmost to make it what he wishes.

And it is astonishing considering his age, etc. That he is able to do so much. I wish he wouldn't exert himself so much it must shorten his days, but he bears up well and good spirit but sickness in the family, when I last saw him, had bowed him down. Grace had an inflammation in the lungs, they telegraphed to tell Mary Jane Lavory that they thought she was not likely to live many days - and so M.J. Lavory was expecting every day to give birth to a child I persuaded her not to go but went in her stead - the weather was intensely cold at the time. I am happy to say her mother is better and the daughter is over her confinement she was at our house yesterday and I think she is looking better than I have seen her for some time. I have as little as possible to do with Lavory yet. I had to speak to him once lately - I hear that a dissolution of partnership is likely to take place between John and Samuel Ashton. John has had a great trial in the loss of his wife and two children - indeed he has buried three - and has only one left - the oldest daughter a fine child. Mary Jane Lawry has as fine a family as I ever saw, two boys and three girls. We have four girls and one boy living - buried three. We expect a further increase soon if all is well. I saw Samuel Ashton and wife when I was in Darlington and settled with him for the Tombstone etc. and I am very glad to find it done in such a manner. Thos paid his share although I did not request it.

I find that I am fast filling up my sheet - you ask for more particulars concerning Minnesota - I am sorry that I have not much to add by way of encouragement my opinion of the land etc. is unchanged but I am led to believe from recent accounts that the winters are more severe than we would wish, that the country is filling up with a mixed multitude with whom law and order is not much respected, add to which there is a great demand for all the necessaries of life there compared to the supply - which all tell on persons, going there with families - I believe it's a good place for young men - married especially - to begin life - neither you nor I would likely be pleased with it. The rapid rise of the price of land in Canada inclined many in that direction. I fancy that there has been a great amount of over speculation in Canada the last few years. And it begins to show itself in failures, in the high price of money, etc. money being worth from 10 to 20 percent per annum - many realize even more than the latter by buying mortgages, notes of hand etc. and many there are who will suffer the consequences where some have been made rich.

Respecting Mr. & Mrs. Carters enquiry after Wido Carter and family, I am glad to inform them through you that Mrs. Carter and children are all well but I have nothing more encouraging to say as to their affairs that I said in my last - that there will not be anything after the affairs are wound up, indeed believe the executors are putting off the evil day as far as possible to give Mrs. C. all the benefit they can. One of the executors told me, that he thought the estate would not pay 2/6 in the £ - everything is very dear, and I almost shudder when I think the family. A widow with four children such times as the present, and nothing to depend on, is a hard case. Mutton is 9d per lb., been 7 1/2 per lb., pork 9d, potatoes 6/3 per basket, wheat 6/3 per bus., eggs 1/3 per doz, butter 1/6 per lb and other things in proportion. Mrs. C. gets £1 a week I believe as yet, but as soon as the creditors demand a settlement, there is likely to be an end to it. I find that I have nearly filled up my sheet and find I has omitted many things which I should like to have written, I must leave it for the present, all of your friends here desire to convey their love to you, and your family and my wife, joins me in wishing you every blessing, we shall be glad to see you or any of yours at any time and althoughts. I cannot say that I will expect you will pay us a visit, perhaps some of the younger members of the family may. I can say welcome; there is room enough and to spare.

I am always your affectionate Brother

JOHN YE0

(This letter was provided by Bruce Elliott of Ottawa and was obtained from the 'Toms Collection' spelling as in copy provided to me)

NOTES REGARDING JOHN YEO

John Yeo (1813-1884), a native of Bradworthy, Devon, left there on 31 March 1835 and travelled to Plymouth on horseback, on foot and by light van from Tavistock. His ship, the 'Cosmopolite' weighed anchor on 4 April, not setting sail until the next day, and arrived in New York City on 12 May - 35 days. Some of the group then took a steamboat to Albany, up the Hudson, an overnight trip.

At Albany he wanted to get in touch with his friend Roger Francis whose address he vaguely remembered as Vischers Ferry and found that about a week previous a man with wife and family "had gone thither to see a brother who was living near". Some of Yeo's fellow emigrants then left for Ohio.

Accompanied by his friend William Piper, Yeo hoofed it for two or three days, sometimes along mere trails and, before reaching Vischers Ferry, found that though Roger Francis had been living there "about a year ago", he was now living at Clifton Park, at a Mr. Kennedy's. Arriving there on a Sunday he found that Roger had gone to a class meeting with his brother. Shortly after Roger and Henery returned, all being pleased to see each other. Roger was a farm hand, living in at the Kennedy's, and receiving \$14 per month and board and lodgings.

Piper and Yeo tried unsuccessfully to get work locally and left for Albany, seeking work on the way. Henery Francis' wife and two children were stopping in a house he had rented in Albany. Piper and Yeo took food (left over from their voyage) from their stored boxes, and had Sarah cook it for them, but stayed in the American Hotel. In the meantime, Henery arrived home.

Piper, Yeo and Henery then travelled to Schenectady by the Albany and Schenectady R.R. where Henery left them. Piper and Yeo left by boat on the Erie Canal to Rochester, along the way having to decide whether they were going to Ohio or Canada. At Rochester they transferred to a steam boat the 'Oswego', crossing Lake Ontario to Toronto. The next day they left for Hamilton (a village) which took them five hours on the 'Britannia', where Yeo soon found work.

William Piper, (always a pessimist), and some others who had crossed the Atlantic with Yeo, were not quite so fortunate and, (stupid idiots), returned to England! Yeo ended his days there and was buried beside the old stone church at Ryckman's Corners, south of Hamilton.

(This information was provided by Bruce Elliott of Toronto)

US National Archives microfilm M237-26, list 269 Barque "Cosmopolite" (Peter Smith, master),
 373 13/94 tons burthen, arrived New York City 13 May 1835 from Plymouth.
 (Please note that George Witheridge was a passenger on this barque)

Name	Age	Occupation			
Henry BASTARD	49	Farmer	Hy HICKS	26	Farmer
Elisabeth "	49	Wife	Wm BAMBURY	25	Farmer
Elisabeth "	23		Henery FRANCIS	42	Farmer
Philip "	20		Sarah "	30	Wife
Robert "	18		James "	10	
Thomas "	16		Henry "	8	
Henry "	14	Farmer	Salina	6	Children
Martha "	12	Farmer	Sally	4	
William "	10	Farmer	Peter "	1	
James VARCO	21	Farmer	Jos MOORE	31	Farmer
John HATKINSON	25	Farmer	An n "	30	
Henry HASLITT	13	Wife	John "	10	
John LEIR	21	Child	James "	8	
Jas. HOLMES	21	Labourer	Richard "	6	
Wm HEMPHILL (?)	21	Son	W m "	4	
John THOMAS (?)	30	Son	Margaret "	2	
James P--?-	30	Wife	Thomas "	1	
John ALLIN	25	Farmer	Edward "	2/mo	
Elisabeth "	25	Farmer	Thomas CARR	18	Labourer
Dorothy "	9/mo	Child	Wm PIPER	24	Labourer
Thos PARKIN	50	Wife	John HODGE	20	Labourer
Wm BRIMACOMBE	50	Farmer	John DIAMOND	33	Labourer
Wm "	16	Labourer	Elizabeth "	30	Wife
Samuel "	13	Wife	Elizabeth "	9	
Richard WALTERS	22	Son	John "	7	
Mary "	22	Son	Sarah "	5	
		Occupation	Mary Ann "	4	Children
			Nathaniel "	2	
			Peter "	1	
			John YE0	21	Gentleman
			Geo WITHERIDGE	22	Farmer
			Richd OSBURN	23	Farmer
			An n "	26	Wife
			Wm CURTIS	50	Farmer
			Ann "	48	Wife
			Robt CURTIS	25	Farmer
			Jane "	20	Wife
			W m "	2	Child
			Ann "	2/mo	Child
			John GIFFUN	20	Farmer
			John CARRY	74	Farmer
			Jane "	66	Wife
			Wm ANDREW	50	Labourer
			Elis'h "	51	Wife
			John "	25	Labourer
				26	Wife
			Mary "		6/mo Child

Thos (?)	21	Labourer
Jane "	19	Wife
Susan "	17	Spinster
Samuel "	9	Child
Lucy "	11	Child
Matthew"	7	Child
Jas ANDREW	4	Child
Wm MALLET	47	Shoemaker
Jane "	42	Wife
W m "	11	
John "	9	
Samuel "	8	Children
Richard"	5	
Jane "	4	
H y "	2	
Eliza ANDREW	18	Spinster
Sam! SAUNDERS	30	Farmer
Jane "	29	Wife
Mary "	6	
John "	4	Children
Grace "	24/mo	
Samuel "		
Richard BAMBERY	44	Farmer
Salina "	20	
Thos "	18	Children
Wm ALLIN	25	Farmer
Susan "	21	Wife
John "	6/mo	Child
Wm ALLIN	25	Farmer
Grace GORRIL	60	Spinster
Elis'h "	13	Child
Elis'h BROWN	35	Spinster
George "	11	Child
John WALTER	15	Farmer
Wm WALTER	21	Farmer
Richard JEWELL	22	Farmer
Compton REID	36	Farmer
Richd SHORTRIDGE	25	Farmer
Thomas PASCOE	19	Farmer
John VANSTON	7	Child
Thos KENNEDY	20	Farmer
James ROAR	30	Farmer
Wm BATES	30	Farmer
Mary BATES	26	Wife
John "	3	
Mary "	9/mo	Children
Thomas BATES	26	Farmer
Jane "	24	Wife
James YEO	66	Labourer
Elizabeth "	58	Wife
Joe "	20	

Mary " James "	14
William "	10 Children
Richard	8
CROCKTON John	20 Farmer
SHORTOP	19 Gentleman
Nicholas CREWS	29 Gentleman
Mary CREWS	34 Wife
George BINNERY	20 Gentleman
Richard BROAD	29 Gentleman
Mary STONE	40 Spinster
John YEO	18 Gentleman