

requests me to tell you to inform Mrs Cartwright she had received a letter from her son in America which I am desired to say is a very satisfactory one.....

“The following in the party shipped from Aynho

“William Tebby wife & 4 children John Turner wife & 4 children Francis Ansty wife & 2 children Andrew Howes wife & 4 children Benjamin Howes wife mother brother & 4 children Joseph Goodwin wife & 5 children George Bye wife & 5 children Harry French Alfred Borton William Giles Richard Bygrave David Peckover John Watts and Charlotte Ansty James French wife & 7 children all of whom I left as I before stated at ten o'clock this morning in good health and spirits at the mouth of the Irish Channel with every prospect of passing it comfortably at this point we were in sight of the Welch mountains covered with snow at which point the steamer left her in full sail;

“We remain sir your obt humble servants

“Wm Scott and Edward Holloway”

Poor Law Amendment Act 1834

The pattern which emerges is of a growing number of families emigrating, funded in a variety of different ways, some paying for themselves, and some paid for by individuals or groups of ratepayers. To this list can be added isolated cases like that of the vicar of Mixbury and Fimmere (the brother of the 1st Earl of Selborne, Lord Chancellor in Gladstone's administration) who in the 1840s-60s offered to pay for the emigration to Canada of any unmarried girl in his parish who became pregnant.¹¹ But the big change came with the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 which, in addition to enforcing a system of workhouses in an attempt to drive paupers off poor relief and into work, created a mechanism by which public funds could be used to assist the poor to emigrate to a British colony. Parish councils were authorised to borrow money, to be deposited in a Parish Emigration Fund Account held by the Poor Law Guardians (those who managed the local Union workhouse), which could be spent on the emigration of poor persons “having settlement in the parish” (that is entitled to poor relief in the parish). The Guardians would then pay the paupers' emigration expenses from that account, in accordance with rules laid down by the Poor Law Commissioners in Whitehall.

The conditions, as laid down by the Poor Law Commissioners in 1840, were:

¹¹ Personal evidence from the 4th Earl of Selborne.