



Durrington

Emigration

ARRIVAL AND SETTLEMENT to 1850

- LOWER & UPPER CANADA

In all, nearly 10,000 English paupers were assisted to immigrate to British North America under the terms of the Poor Law Amendment Act between 1835 and 1847 and probably as many more were helped to leave in 1831–34 before the legislation came into force. Of those financed under the act, two-thirds arrived during the first three years, most of them from East Anglia, and another quarter of the total came in 1842–45. Norfolk and Suffolk accounted for half the assisted emigrants; Sussex contributed as many emigrants as Suffolk, 1,278 or 13 percent of the total. There the Earl of Egremont and the rector of Petworth, Thomas Sockett, had organized the Petworth Emigration Committee, which, like the Norfolk movement, antedated the new legislation. Between 1832 and 1837 the committee sent out some 1,900 paupers on chartered ships. It remained active after Egremont's death until at least 1844, sending people on regular vessels out of London. The Petworth emigrants settled widely. Tradesmen found work around Toronto while many others sailed on to Hamilton and settled in groups of families around Ancaster, Dundas, and Guelph. Some were directed to the new townships of the Western District, where one of the largest communities took shape in Adelaide Township. Kentish parishes contributed 1,189 assisted emigrants (12 percent) and Wiltshire 657 (6.6 percent). These five counties together accounted for 80 percent of the total. Many assisted emigrants scattered through the southwestern peninsula of Upper Canada; others made their way to the United States. As is often the case with assisted emigrants, their departure and arrival are documented but their movements afterwards remain obscure for the most part.

(The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples – Bruce S. Elliot)