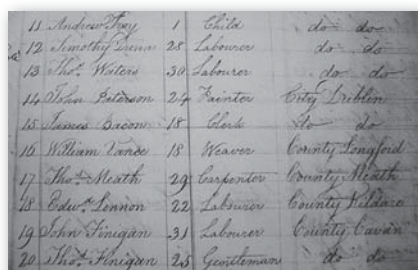


# Irish immigrants on the *Vermont*, June–July 1812

Masters of vessels were not required to submit passenger lists to U.S. Customs Collectors until 1 January 1820. Some early (1789–1819) federal passenger lists do exist, however, and they are valuable records linking immigrants between the old and new worlds. This article will focus on the passenger list of the *Vermont*, which departed from Dublin, Ireland, circa 19 June 1812 bound for New York. There's a story to go with it, as there is behind every immigrant's arrival record.

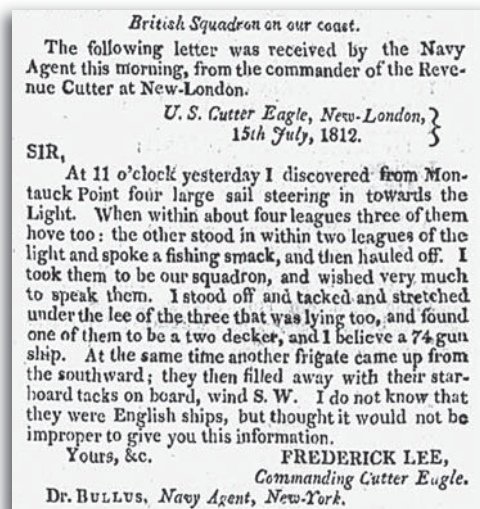
## Dublin, Ireland, June 1812

Luck smiled on the eighty-three Irish men, women, and children, and three Americans who boarded the American vessel, *Vermont*, at Dublin in June 1812. The Irish would soon realize their dreams of starting a new life in America, and the Americans would return home. The *Vermont* had sailed frequently between New York and foreign ports such as Dublin, including Göteborg, Sweden, and Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Holland.<sup>1</sup> Its availability to carry cargo and



11 Andrew Troy	1	Child	do do
12 Timothy Quinn	25	Labourer	do do
13 Thos Waters	30	Labourer	do do
14 John Peterson	24	Painter	City Dublin
15 James Bacon	18	Child	do do
16 William Jones	18	Weaver	County Longford
17 Thos McNath	29	Carpenter	County Meath
18 Edw Lennon	22	Labourer	County Kildare
19 John Finnigan	31	Labourer	County Carlow
20 Thos Finnigan	25	Gentleman	do do

Detail of the passenger list of the *Vermont*, dated at sea, 19 June 1812, in National Archives Microfilm Publication M2095, Lists of Passengers Arriving at and Departing from the District of Fairfield, Connecticut, 1804–1889 (1 roll). Complete list on pages 44–45.



New-York Weekly Museum, Vol. 1,  
Issue 11 (18 July 1812), p. 43.

passengers to Dublin was advertised in New York newspapers several times in early 1812.<sup>2</sup> The *Vermont* may have been one of the last American commercial vessels to leave a British port for the next several years.

The *Vermont*'s passenger list was dated "at sea" on 19 June 1812. The U.S. Congress had declared war on Great Britain the previous day, but neither the crew nor the passengers of the *Vermont* knew that. Ocean voyagers now faced both the hazards of the sea and the hazards of war. The British could seize American commercial vessels as prizes of war, and American authorities could seize vessels for trading with the enemy. The Irishmen onboard the *Vermont* could be taken and impressed into service in the British navy.

## Danger on the coast, July 1812

Danger hovered on the American coastline. On 15 July 1812, Captain Frederick Lee, commanding the U.S. Revenue Cutter *Eagle*, sighted four large sailing vessels near Montauk Point, at the eastern end of Long Island, which he suspected were English warships. He notified Dr. Bullus, the U.S. Navy agent at New York City. Other letter writers reported possible British warships with

prize vessels in tow off Gardiners Island, also at the eastern end of Long Island, as well as the capture and subsequent release (minus \$780) of the American schooner *Louisa*, which put in at Black Rock, Connecticut.<sup>3</sup>

On 17 July 1812, Lee spied the *Vermont* off the coast of Connecticut. He ordered the *Eagle* to catch up with the *Vermont* and made her master, Captain Samuel C. Nicoll, understand that his ship was to be boarded and searched. Nicoll produced a passenger list and cargo manifest, which Lee took, and it became part of the records of the Collector of Customs at New London, Connecticut.<sup>4</sup> The *Vermont* either proceeded to New York or, perhaps, put in at a Connecticut port. Hopefully the *Vermont's* passengers went on to successful lives in America.

## Epilogue

Nicoll was surely a brave and daring seaman, since he afterwards became a privateer authorized by the U.S. federal government to capture enemy vessels during the war. While commanding an appropriately named vessel, the *Scourge*, he captured at least ten ships that carried valuable cargo. One prize ship contained a “very elegant chandelier” that he donated to the Episcopal Church in Stratford, Connecticut, and it provided light to worshippers for many years.<sup>5</sup>

Lee continued in Revenue Cutter service, winning fame and glory with the *Eagle's* crew because of a heroic struggle against the larger British brigantine, *Dispatch*, on 11 October 1814. The *Dispatch* was guarding the *Susan*, a captured American merchant ship. Badly outgunned, Lee was forced to beach the *Eagle* on Long Island. Then his men dragged the *Eagle's* guns to a 160-foot bluff and continued firing at the *Dispatch*. When the Americans ran out of cannonballs, they retrieved the cannonballs fired at them by the *Dispatch* and

*Continued on page 46*



*Portrait of Captain Frederick Lee, who commanded the cutter Eagle during the War of 1812. Painting courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard Museum.*

There is little information on the uniforms worn by officers of the Revenue Marine/Cutter Service. Here Captain Lee is portrayed in a period uniform of the U.S. Navy, which is probably what most Revenue officers wore, the majority of whom had seen service in the Continental or State navies, and/or the U.S. Navy at one time or another.

The earliest surviving written description of a Revenue service uniform dates from 1819. The officer was described as outfitted in a “neat and becoming suit of blue, a body coat, trimmed with brass buttons, having for a design an eagle perched upon an anchor surrounded by stars. The pants and vests were blue, with tall, round hats, black cockades, leather stocks and cut and thrust swords.” Coast Guard Academy collection

Text from <[http://www.uscg.mil/History/uscghist/USRCS\\_Uniform\\_Photos\\_1889.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/History/uscghist/USRCS_Uniform_Photos_1889.asp)>.

## The *Vermont's* passenger list

"Manifest of Passengers on board the American Ship Vermont, Sam<sup>l</sup> C. Nicoll, Master, from Dublin to New York dated at Sea June 19<sup>th</sup> 1812."

No.	Names	Age	Occupation	Residence
1	John Brennan	29	Labourer	City Dublin
2	Patrick Fox	19	Clerk	Grannard Co. Langford
3	James Coughland	25	Labourer	County Kildare
4	Andrew Shoughny	25	Clerk	do do
5	James Nowlan	21	Labourer	do do
6	Rich <sup>d</sup> Chreighton	19	Sadler	County Cavan
7	Rob <sup>t</sup> Furgeson	44	Gentleman	United States of America
8	Rob <sup>t</sup> Chreighton	11	D <sup>o</sup>	County Cavan
9	Mich <sup>l</sup> Troy	33	Labourer	County Kildare
10	Ellen Troy	25	Wife	do do
11	Andrew Troy	1	Child	do do
12	Timothy Dunn	28	Labourer	do do
13	Tho <sup>s</sup> Waters	30	Labourer	do do
14	John Paterson	24	Painter	City Dublin
15	James Bacon	18	Clerk	do do
16	William Vance	18	Weaver	County Longford
17	Tho <sup>s</sup> Meath	29	Carpenter	County Meath
18	Edw <sup>d</sup> Lennon	22	Labourer	County Kildare
19	John Finigan	31	Labourer	County Cavan
20	Tho <sup>s</sup> Finigan	25	Gentleman	do do
21	Hugh Golliper	23	Labourer	do do
22	Patrick Lee	25	D <sup>o</sup>	do do
23	M <sup>c</sup> Kowen	26	Clerk	do do
24	Charles M <sup>c</sup> Kiernian	28	Carpenter	County Cavan
25	Hugh Gillaspie	34	Weaver	County Monaghan
26	Barney McCabe	22	D <sup>o</sup>	Do do
27	Betty Manner	30	Wife	do do
28	Walters Burnes	16		do do
29	Mary Burns	14		do do
30	Margaret Govers	6		do do
31	Child born at Sea			do do
32	Barney M <sup>c</sup> Kenny	35	Weaver	do do
33	Nancy M <sup>c</sup> Kowen	25		do do
34	James M <sup>c</sup> Kowen	26	Farmer	do do
35	John M <sup>c</sup> Kowen	3		do do
36	Jane M <sup>c</sup> Kowen	1		do do
37	Peter Smith	32	Farmer	do do
38	Anne Smith	29		do do
39	Mary Smith	8		do do
40	An Infant			do do
41	Rob <sup>t</sup> Savage	30		America
42	John Field	32		do
43	Tho <sup>s</sup> M <sup>c</sup> Graine	34		County Meath
44	Tho <sup>s</sup> M <sup>c</sup> Graine	5		do do
45	James M <sup>c</sup> Graine	4		do do
46	Edw <sup>d</sup> M <sup>c</sup> Mahon	36	Labourer	County Monaghan
47	Marg <sup>t</sup> M <sup>c</sup> Mahon	30		do do
48	Laurence M <sup>c</sup> Mahon	6		do do
49	James M <sup>c</sup> Mahon	2		do do
50	Nancy Fox	23		do do
51	Andrew Woods	25	Carpenter	County Meath
52	John Dunne	21	Taylor	County Kildare

No.	Names	Age	Occupation	Residence
53	Owen Courtney	35	Labourer	Monaghan
54	James Reilly	21	Tailor	County Cavan
55	James Ashworth	50	Weaver	County Wicklow
56	John McDonnell	21	Clerk	City Dublin
57	Mary Ashworth	50		County Wicklow
58	Tho <sup>s</sup> Ashworth	20	Weaver	do do
59	Anne Ashworth	18		do do
60	Jonn Ashworth	24	Weaver	do do
61	Cath <sup>e</sup> Ashworth	21		do do
62	James Ashworth			do do
63	Nicholas Monserat	27	Clerk	Dublin
64	James Kearney	31	Clothier	Kildare
65	Etty Kearney			do
66	John Kennier	26	Farmer	Monaghan
67	Sarah Kennier	20		Monaghan
68	John Paterson	22	Weaver	Cavan
69	John Jackson	47	D <sup>o</sup>	do
70	John Cummerford	19	Labourer	County Killkenny
71	Rich <sup>d</sup> Howlin		Millwright	
72	Pat McKoerman	19	Labourer	James Town
73	Bart <sup>w</sup> Dempsey	30	Labourer	County Wexford
74	John Gelson	23	Clerk	Dublin City
75	Cath <sup>e</sup> Gelson	33		do do
76	Charles Gelson	14		do do
77	James Gelson	12		do do
78	Pat <sup>k</sup> Kearney	30	Clothier	Kildare County
79	Ellen Kearney	26		do do
80	Esther Kearney	6		do do
81	John Kearney	3		do do
82	Matt <sup>w</sup> Perang	27	G	City Dublin
83	Thos Crawford	23	Miller	County Longford
84	Mary Rice	27		City Dublin
85	Peter Reynolds	28	Musick Master	County Meath
	Turns McKurnoar	21	Labourer	D <sup>o</sup> do

85 [*sic*, 86] Passengers with only their necessary wearing apparel & Beading [*sic*, *Bedding*].

#### List of Stores

Beef 10 Barrells

Pork 3 do

Bread 7 do

Wine 2 Dozens

[signed] Sam<sup>l</sup> C. Nicoll

I Fred<sup>k</sup> Lee certify that the within manifest was produced to me this day as the original manifest of the cargo on board the ship Vermont whereby Samuel C Nicoll is Master.

In witness whereof I have hereunto sign<sup>d</sup> my name this 17<sup>th</sup> day of July 1812

[signed] Fred<sup>k</sup> Lee

Commanding Cutter Eagle



## Irish

*continued from page 43*

shot them back. They used the ship's logbook for cartridges when their supplies ran out. Lee and his crew fought until the British vessel left. A few hours later the *Dispatch* returned and hauled the *Eagle* away, but Lee and his crew escaped.<sup>6</sup> From 1816 to 1829, Lee commanded the fourth revenue cutter named *Eagle*.

## Other 1789-1819 federal passenger lists

NARA has published early (1789-1819) federal passenger lists in several microfilm publications.

- District of Fairfield, Connecticut. Three pre-1820 passenger lists are in NARA Microfilm Publication M2095, *Lists of Passengers Arriving at and Departing from the District of Fairfield, Connecticut, 1804-1889* (1 roll). The *Argonaut's* passenger, John Parker, mariner, age 40, native of Philadelphia, arrived 8 June 1804, from Antigua. The *Enterprise's* passenger, James Birce, merchant, age 28, native of Scotland, arrived from Antigua on an undated record. Finally, there is the lengthy passenger list of the *Vermont*, dated at sea, 19 June 1812.
- New Orleans, 1813-19. During the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration produced typewritten transcripts of passenger lists stored at the U.S. customs house in New Orleans. Passenger lists dated 1820 and later were eventually accessioned into NARA, but those predating 1820 were not and are presumed to be lost. WPA transcripts are reproduced in NARA Microfilm Publication M2009, *Work Projects Administration Transcript of Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1813-1849* (2 rolls).
- Philadelphia, 1800-19. Cargo lists of vessels arriving at Philadelphia, 1800-19, were annotated with passenger names. The lists are reproduced in NARA Microfilm Publication M425, *Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1800-1882*, rolls 1-29, and are indexed in NARA Microfilm Publication M360, *Index to Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1800-1906* (151 rolls).

## Notes

1. Vessel arrivals and departures (clearances) at U.S. and foreign ports were frequently mentioned in newspapers. Mentions of the Vermont include "Gins, Linens &c.," *New-York Gazette & General Advertiser*, 11 September 1809, p. 2; "Holland Gin," *Public Advertiser* (New York, New York), 15 September 1809, p. 3; "Arrivals at N. York, Since Last Number," *United States Shipping List & Prices Current* (New York, New York), 22 November 1811, p. 1; "Marine List," *The Columbian* (New York, New York), 22 November 1811, p. 3; "Marine Departures," *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, 5 February 1812; "Marine List," *Ming's New-York Price-Current*, 8 February 1812, p. 3; "Arrived This Day," *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, 16 June 1812, p. 3; and "Lang & Turner's Marine List," *New York Gazette & General Advertiser*, 19 June 1812, p. 2.
2. "For Dublin," *New-York Gazette & General Advertiser*, 17 January 1812, p. 1, and repeated in later issues. The same advertisement was in the *Mercantile Advertiser*, 21 January 1812, p. 1. The Vermont and other vessels wanting outward bound cargo are listed in "Vessels (advertized) Outward-bound," *Ming's New-York Price-Current*, 1 February 1812, p. 3.
3. "Postscript. From the Evening Post, of July 17. British Squadron," *The American* (Ballston Spa, New York), 21 July 1812, p. 3; and "British Squadron on our Coast," *New-York Weekly Museum*, 18 July 1812, p. 43.
4. Reproduced in M2095, *Lists of Passengers Arriving at and Departing from the District of Fairfield, Connecticut, 1804-1889* (1 roll).
5. Samuel Orcutt, *A History of the Old Town of Stratford and the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut* (New Haven, Conn.: Press of Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor/Fairfield County Historical Society, 1886), 431-33.
6. "Loss of the Cutter Eagle," *Connecticut Courant*, 25 October 1814, p. 4; "The Revenue Cutter Eagle," *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, 14 October 1814, p. 2. For the viewpoint of a passenger on the *Susan*, see "Extract of a letter from a Gentleman in New-Haven to his Correspondent in this city, dated October 13th," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, 18 October 1814, p. 2; see also "Eagle, 1809" online at <[http://www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Eagle\\_1809.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/history/webcutters/Eagle_1809.pdf)>; and Scott E. Walden, "The Revenue Cutter Service: Nine Cutters and the War of 1812," online at <[http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/RCS\\_War\\_of\\_1812.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/history/articles/RCS_War_of_1812.pdf)>. The Revenue Cutter Service (Coast Guard predecessor) had several early vessels named *Eagle* (built in 1793, 1798, 1809, and 1816), but it is the 1809 *Eagle* that was involved in the incidents described in this article. 🌳

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