US Immigration 1800s

US immigration 1800s Era, was the decade of a prime influx of people from Europe.

Where Were Immigrants Coming From In The 1800s?

US immigration in the 1800s was overwhelmingly from Ireland, England and the Scandinavian countries. They came from other countries in Europe, too. Asia also was a source of immigration during the 1800s. Often overlooked are the forced immigrants - those brought in through slavery.

Reasons For Immigration To America

People looked for opportunities elsewhere when land ownership in their native country became difficult, when their governments...
were oppressive, because of religious persecution, with food scarcity, or when they couldn't support themselves and their families.¹

Ireland had a severe famine - often called the "Great Hunger." The origin began with potato blight, but was influenced by Political Maneuvers. Crops from their own island were shipped to England, regardless of Ireland's need. Desperate victims, approximately one million, died during the mid 1800s.

Steerage deck of ocean steamer passing the Statue of Liberty: Sketch by Staff

Artist from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper: July 2, 1887.

Two million 1800s Irish immigrants escaped this "potato famine" by scraping together funds. Some only went as far as where the food went - to Britain: particularly Liverpool, Scotland, and Southern Wales. But many Irish immigrants went to Australia, Canada and the United States.²

To their credit, about half the immigrants were women: 52% exactly! When one family member arrived and found employment, they used savings to help others get passage.¹⁰

The main Asian ethnic group of 1800s immigrants were Chinese. Seafarers and merchants came first. The California gold rush attracted more. Others for work: agriculture, serving households, fisheries and the railroad. Many also to escape the Taiping Rebellion.⁴
Western Immigration & Settlers

In The 1800s

During The 1800s, immigrants from Europe often trekked Westward. Their goal was rich farmland or fertile parts of California. But they met stark deserts and difficult mountain ranges. Some decided to settle in suitable areas prior to reaching their original goal.⁷

Another motivation was the California Gold Rush. Chinese immigrants, others from South America, Mexico, and also Europe were headed there to seek riches.⁷

Freed former slaves (recent ancestry from Africa) came West in the 1800s. After the Constitution’s 13th Amendment was ratified at the end of 1865.⁸ Many had experience with cattle in their lives on plantations, farms and ranches. They used that experience working as cowboys. They found more acceptance and camaraderie within ranks of the cowboy unit, than in general public life.⁹

About 1/4 Of 1800s Cowboys Were African Americans

Nat Love

Canada
All these ethnic groups made their way to Tombstone Arizona during this time of widespread US immigration in the 1800s. Native Americans lived on the land, and they battled these new people who were laying claim to it.

Tombstone’s population in 1882 was itemized as 559 Irish, 423 Hispanics, and 245 Chinese. There was also a sizable Jewish and German population.

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**Irish Immigrants In The 1800s Wild West**

- **Patrick Joseph Sullivan** - Born in County Cork. Settled in Caspar Wyoming as a sheep rancher. Became the town mayor, then a Wyoming senator.

- **Billy the Kid** - Actually born Henry McCarty. He used an alias William H. Bonney, but most know his famous outlaw name.
  a. Born in NY. His widowed mother remarried and moved to Silver City New Mexico when he was about 11.
  b. A few years later his mother died. That’s when he began stealing, getting in trouble.
  c. He went to South-East Arizona, and worked on the Hooker Ranch.
  d. But mostly, Billy the Kid was in New Mexico.
Millions of Irish immigrants came to America in the 1800s. Once landed on the East coast many came West to escape extreme discrimination. Its origin was from traditions of the British in their native land. It continued in Eastern American cities that they tried to adopt as their own. As many immigrants were also from the British Isles.

Many came to mining camps, hoping that discrimination wouldn't follow them West. Irish were part of Tombstone's population.

Some were recent Irish 1800s immigrants to the U.S., and others were second generation. They held strong connections to their "mother country." This support system helped withstand discrimination and improve their own lives in their new country. A part of that was boosting Ireland's organizations:

- Irish Land League - A local organization, a branch of that in Ireland. They sponsored events at the Tombstone Driving Park. Typically Irish festivals.
English Periodical Had a Cartoon Ridiculing the Irish for Their Poverty

1800s Arizona Irish Immigrants

- **Nellie Cashman** - Among the most well known! Born in 1845: as Ellen Cashman in County Cork.
a. Around 7 years old, she immigrated to Boston with her mother & sister. When they migrated to San Francisco Nellie was 20 years old.

b. Her first business was in a Nevada mining town. The 1873 Pioche Daily Record had an ad for the Boarding House of Miss N. Cashman, Proprietess. She left before the town’s mines gave out. She seemed to have an instinct for that!

c. Next she went to British Columbia, then Tucson AZ, then Tombstone. She led the funding for construction of the Tombstone Catholic Church, a Historic Site today.

d. She promoted the local Irish Land League. She ran business ventures in town, including the Russ House. She tried staying neutral in the town’s political divisions. But her method seemed to include, somehow, playing both sides of the fence!

It Helped to Advertise They Had “Eastern Waiters & White Cooks”

- **John Harris Behan** - Prominent man in Tombstone’s history. John was born in Kansas City Missouri.

a. His father was born in County Kildare, Ireland. John’s heritage was half Irish.

b. He moved to California as a young man. He worked in mining and for a stagecoach company.

c. During the Civil War, John joined Carleton’s Column of Union Volunteers, which brought him to Arizona. He fought in the Battle of Apache Pass. Afterwards he worked in Tucson. Then obtained a government clerk position in Prescott.

d. In Prescott he got into mining again. Also real estate. He worked sawmills, in bars and with stage lines. Accolades from the
Indian battle got him his first lawman position. Later John was elected County Sheriff and then to the legislature. He was in & out of law and politics. He married, but gained a promiscuous reputation. He began his association with Josephine Marcus at that time.

In 1880 he moved to Tombstone. With law experience, John was elected Cochise County Sheriff. That's when he became familiar with Ike Clanton, John Ringo & Curly Bill Brocius. Then got more notorious from his involvement with events surrounding the Gunfight at the OK Corral.

- **Ned McGowan** - A Crazy Career: the Notorious?

  ![Ned McGowan](image)

  a. Edward "Ned" was born in Philadelphia of Irish parents. He grew up there, became a lawyer and got into politics. Pretty much immediately he became controversial. He had a temper. Was even in a knife fight in the state legislature! People also said he was quite the gregarious personality!

  b. Ned McGowan (no apparent relation to us, by the way!) went West to California. There he was continually at odds with a vigilante committee running San Francisco. Eventually he fled the area. Went to British Columbia, East of Vancouver.

  c. Still controversial! Some SF Vigilance Committee members were there and continued feuding with him. Area native peoples, miners, Royal troops and local politicians all became involved. Racial and international tensions were provoked.

  d. McGowan led his friends into brawls, with opposition instigated by the vigilantes. The event known as *McGowan's War*: not a gunshot fired - eventually settled in court!

  e. Ned left B.C. in February 1859, lived in Tombstone AZ by mid-July, 1882. He became a well-known local. In September 1882 he was requested as a second for a duel between two newspaper editors, one at the Epitaph. Dr. Goodfellow came along for treatment as necessary. A dispute about the chosen firearms deactivated the plan, and the duel was nastily canceled on-site!

  f. He worked awhile in the Oriental Saloon on Allen Street, as a Faro Gambling Game look-out. During a game, one player shot another. Ned saw the whole thing. So he ended up a witness at the trial.

  g. In early 1884 Ned moved to Washington DC for a Federal appointment. He returned to California in mid 1889. Ned met a sad end, dying in San Francisco at St. Mary's Hospital. He was age 84. He's buried in Holy Cross Cemetery.

  From the June 14, 1893 Tombstone Epitaph, Page 2
This Epitaph article goes on to say the duel "trouble arose over some newspaper articles" and also states "McGowan was at one time clerk of the 9th legislature at Prescott and was well known all over the territory."

- **Mary & Martin Costello** - Another Irish heritage pioneering name you’d notice in the Tombstone Cemetery. In fact roaming that cemetery, you’ll see quite a few Irish names there. Those buried in the 1880s and early 1900s, down through today.

- **Charles L. Cummings** - Pioneering family in Tombstone. Charles came to town in 1880.
  a. A determined businessman, he first worked for the mines and water company.
  b. Owned a mining interest, but opened The Tombstone Pharmacy.
  c. Served as City Treasurer and at the state legislature.
  e. He’s buried in The City Cemetery.

- **Thomas H. Corrigan** - This Irish immigrant opened one of the first saloons in Tombstone’s *Old Wild West*.
  a. His saloon is apparently the earliest documented in town, opened in 1879: the Alhambra.
  b. Had a stunning bar with a sort-of throne-like Gothic chair in the center.
  c. Was on Allen, midway between 4th & 5th.

- **Frank & Tom McLaury** - These brothers were gunned down, killed by the Earps & Doc Holliday in *Tombstone’s gunfight*.
  a. The family’s history was sheep farming. A tradition in rural Ireland.
  b. Both brothers born in upstate NY. Their father was educated, became a lawyer. Another brother was a lawyer.
  c. The family moved to Iowa when Frank & Tom were boys.
  d. As young adults, they came to Arizona. The rest is history!

**Mexicans In 1800s Tombstone**

The Mexican Community did intermix into Tombstone town. Arizona Territory had been part of Mexico, and this ethnic group lived there already. Many Mexicans got involved in mining. Although Mexicans worked alongside white miners, they weren’t always treated the same. In social circumstances, sometimes they all got along and were part of a group. Other times there were strained relations.

The Mexicans often lived in a specific part of town. Referred to as the “Mexican Quarter.” It covered the block of Fremont south to Allen Street, between 1st and 2nd Streets.
**Chinese Immigrants - 1800s In Tombstone**

The Chinese population mainly kept to themselves, in their own community. Chinatown was contained in a few blocks. Almost to Fremont south to Toughnut, from around 1st to 3rd Streets.

Commercial interests sought Chinese labor to work the mines and railroads. Many Asians also farmed and sold vegetables to area markets. Some worked as cooks and household domestics. They opened laundries.

Local residents were suspicious of this unique group, with customs that seemed odd. Some local Tombstone residents even formed an “Anti-Chinese League” - which put pressure on businesses to rid Tombstone of the "yellow peril." To boycott using Chinese business. It also instigated some violent incidents.

The contractor building the Courthouse in Tombstone began using four Chinese brick-makers. The League was outraged, demanding explanation. The contractor did: we "could not get white labor to do the same kind of work. The white men habitually worked a day or two and quit."6,13

But the anti-Chinese sentiment got support with the government's Chinese immigration act: the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Naturalization of Chinese already in the U.S. became illegal. Plus long-range effect was a cut-off of further Chinese
Jews also immigrated, to escape religious persecution in Eastern Europe. After arriving in the U.S., some made their way West.

Fred Harvey was ahead of his times in hiring practices when beginning his hotel/restaurant chain that followed stops on the Santa Fe railroad in the 1800s. Two of his prized employees were Jewish.

A small Jewish population came to the Old West, to settle and live in Tombstone Arizona.

Other European Immigrants made their way to the Wild West, and to Tombstone Arizona. Most of those were from Germany, Scandinavia, and Great Britain.

The First Non-Native Explorer Of Tombstone

An 1848 German immigrant, Frederick Brunckow was the first person to investigate mining in Tombstone’s territory. With a mining degree, and a bit of European mining experience, he was hired by an American mining company. He did well and was rapidly promoted. In 1859 he began his own company with three professional miners and Mexican laborers. See the Whole Brunckow Mine Story>

1800s Tombstone Jewish Immigrants

From the Tombstone Weekly Epitaph - Sat., Dec. 16, 1882 - pg. 3

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The following new books have been recently added to Sol Israel’s circulating library:

Mark Twain’s English as She is Taught
Bret Hart’s Millionaires of Rough and Ready
Bret Hart’s The Crusade of the Excelsior
Marion Crawford’s Saracinesca
Balzac’s The Alkahest, or the House of Calas
Balzac’s The Two Brothers
Balzac’s Caesar Birotteau
Balzac’s The Country Doctor
Balzac’s Eugene Grandet
George Meredith’s Novels
Lusk’s The Yokel of the Showak
Stinte’s Buchholz Family. (Second Part.)
Dudley Warner’s Their Pilgrimage.
Subscription $1 a month; single copies loaned for 25 cents.

References


After certain states passed immigration laws following the Civil War, the Supreme Court in 1875 declared regulation of immigration a federal responsibility. Thus, as the number of immigrants rose in the 1880s and economic conditions in some areas worsened, Congress began to pass immigration legislation. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and Alien Contract Labor laws of 1885 and 1887 prohibited certain laborers from immigrating to the United States. The general Immigration Act of 1882 levied a head tax of 50 cents on each immigrant and blocked (or excluded) the entry of idiots, lunatics, and convicts. Immigration records, more popularly known as "ship passenger arrival records," may provide evidence of a person's arrival in the United States, as well as foreign birthplace. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has immigration records for various ports for the years 1800-1959. Part 2: 1538-1819. What We Have: Until January 1, 1820, the U.S. Federal Government did not require require captains or masters of vessels to present a passenger list to U.S. officials. Thus, as a general rule, NARA does not have passenger lists of vessels arriving before January 1, 1820. The history of immigration to the United States details the movement of people to the United States starting with the arrival of Filipinos in California in 1587 and first European settlements from around 1600. Beginning around this time, British and other Europeans settled primarily on the east coast. In 1619, Africans began being imported as slaves. The United States experienced
successive waves of immigration, particularly from Europe. Immigrants sometimes paid the cost of transoceanic