

Embargoed until 0.01am 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007

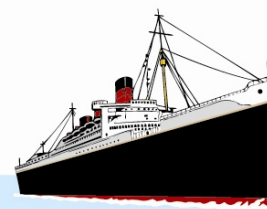
**RECORDS OF BRITISH EMIGRATION TO DESTINATIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE  
GO ONLINE FOR THE FIRST TIME**

**Historical UK ship passenger records available online for the first time at  
[www.ancestorsonboard.com](http://www.ancestorsonboard.com)**

From today everybody will be able to access the first comprehensive database of passenger lists from ships departing the UK on long-distance voyages to destinations including North America, Australia, India and South Africa between 1890 and 1960 online at [www.ancestorsonboard.com](http://www.ancestorsonboard.com).

This new online resource has been developed by one of the leading UK-based family history websites findmypast.com\* in association with The National Archives. The passenger record series BT 27 covering 1890 – 1899 will go live from today, followed by the remaining decades between 1900 and 1960 over the next six months.

The easily-searchable and user-friendly database will enable would-be genealogists and family historians alike to view digitised images of the original ship passenger records online, which contain over 1.5 million pages, listing the 30 million passengers who travelled on long-distance journeys from UK ports. It has taken a 125-strong full-time team nearly a year to complete the mammoth process of digitising these original documents.



## **Mass Migration**

The new resource includes passenger records from the period of mass migration between 1890 and 1914 when an estimated average of 131,000 people emigrated from Great Britain to other parts of the globe every year\*.

## **New Discoveries**

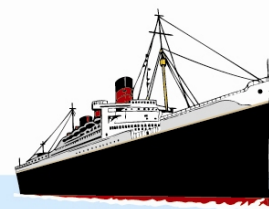
These invaluable records will also provide a new avenue of research for people who have come to a 'brick wall' in their family tree research using UK records. As well as every ship passenger record containing the names of each passenger, the name of the ship, the date and UK port of departure and the destination port, the records may also include the address, age, marital status, occupation and nationality of each passenger, providing invaluable details that could help uncover more branches of a family tree and further insights into a family's history.

## **Historical Insights**

The passenger lists also open up new insights into family history and social trends. For example, the lists reveal the story of the Jewish migrants who fled persecution and poverty in Russia to escape to South Africa in search of a new life via British ports.

Other insights include the passenger lists of the 'charity children' who travelled to America and Canada for new beginnings, such as the Barnardo's children and the 'Quarriers' from the Glaswegian Orphan Homes of Scotland.

Elaine Collins, Commercial Director at findmypast.com, says: "The availability of the passenger lists from ships that left British ports in this period is an invaluable tool for people tracing relatives they believe may have left the UK during this period. The passenger records may well provide a missing link for many genealogists who have



hit a brick wall in their research, as well as helping those outside of the UK to trace back to their British heritage.

“Previously these records were only accessible from The National Archives in London, but now everyone can easily research their ancestors’ voyages over the Internet from the comfort of their own home, anywhere in the world.”

Dan Jones, Head of Business Development at The National Archives, says: “We are delighted that we have been able to work with findmypast.com to put these records online. These records were previously only available onsite at The National Archives and we hope that digitisation will open up a hugely valuable resource for genealogists and social historians all over the world. The National Archives prides itself in making the information we hold accessible to everyone and working with partners such as findmypast.com helps us to achieve this.”

**ENDS**