

The journey to Australia

“Farewell, Clanranald, my heroes forever: Farewell each green
mountain, and sunny green glen; I dream of you still, and I wonder if
ever, I’ll sail down Loch Shiel to my haven again.”¹

2.1 General introduction

This chapter will begin with an examination of the history of Scottish emigration to Australia from the late eighteenth century to 1852 and will contextualise this history within migration theory. It will draw upon the Moidart emigration experience in order to demonstrate the complexity of the various migration theories and the difficulties associated with ascribing any one of the theories to the Moidart migration to Victoria.

The names of the Moidart passengers on board the emigrant ship ‘Allison’ were listed in the existing records of the Highland and Island Emigration Society (HIES). As extensive research has already been undertaken and published on the formation, development and role of this organisation in Britain, this study will largely examine the role of the HIES agents in Australia following the arrival of assisted passengers.² The views and attitudes of its

¹ This poem was written by M.Reid and published in the ‘Oban Times’ circa 1940s. The words included above are only part of the first verse. It has been reproduced in full in the unpublished manuscript written by Colin S. Macdonald of Canada and dated 1 October 1954. I am very grateful to Grahame MacDonald of Buderim, Queensland, Australia for access to his copy of the manuscript.

² See D. MacMillan, ‘Sir Charles Trevelyan and the Highland and Island Emigration Society 1849-1859’, Balfour ‘The Highland and Island Emigration Society: 1852-1858’; and Prentis, ‘The Emigrants of the Highland and Island Emigration Society, 1852-1857’.

founder, Sir Charles Trevelyan, however, featured prominently in the documentation and correspondence of the time and provide a moral and ethical lens through which to view and understand the workings of the HIES particularly as they related to the journey, treatment and reception of the Moidart passengers and contributed to the ongoing disadvantage that accompanied the people. Finally the chapter will follow each of the three voyages to determine the nature of the hardships and deprivation endured by the Moidart people prior to their arrival in Victoria.

2.2 Scottish emigration to Australia 1788-1852

Scots were amongst those who accompanied Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet in 1788. Vice Admiral John Hunter, born at Leith, Edinburgh, arrived on board the flagship HMS 'Sirius' and later succeeded Phillip as the second Governor of New South Wales.³ Major Robert Ross began his journey on the 'Sirius' but completed his journey on the convict ship 'Scarborough' as the Officer-in-Charge of the garrison of marines. He later became Lieutenant Governor of the convict settlement at Norfolk Island.⁴ As well as these early individual Scots Malcolm Prentis has identified five significant groups of Scottish settlers who arrived as pioneers in New South Wales from about 1790 to the early 1820s. Firstly, there were people who were transported as convicts and later emancipated. Secondly, a number of military personnel emigrated,

³ J. J. Auchmuty, 'Hunter, John (1737-1821)' in *Australian Dictionary Of Biography – Online Edition* <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010529b.htm> (accessed 7 November 2006).

⁴ D. S. Macmillan, 'Ross, Robert (1740-)' in *Australian Dictionary Of Biography – Online Edition* <<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020352b.htm>> (accessed 7 November 2006).

became settlers and took up land. The third group comprised the civil officials who were given grants of land, and the fourth consisted of a number of prominent merchants who also received grants of land. The fifth and last group was made up of the free immigrant settlers with capital.⁵ Prentis maintains that this early emigration itself became a catalyst for generating opportunities for further emigration. As the land was developed and farmed, many of the new land owners began to look for skilled labour to assist them in their new ventures with sheep and so turned to the experienced shepherds and their families from the Highlands as a source of labour for the new estates.

David Macmillan states in his book *Scotland and Australia 1788-1850* that “...before 1821 the Scottish element in the Australian population, apart from the official and military class, was numerically negligible...”⁶ According to Macmillan, the first applications from prospective Scottish settlers to Australia began to arrive at the Colonial Office in 1814 from “farmers or landholders, merchants or manufacturers, and military or naval officers, retired, “reduced”, or on half pay.”⁷ He explains this interest in Australia in terms of improved agricultural practices, amalgamation of small farms and increases in rent in Scotland.

Tenant farmers therefore began to look for land outside Scotland to rent. Some of these men were soldiers and military personnel returning to their communities following the Napoleonic Wars and were often men with savings or on half pay from their war service. Macmillan argues that many of the

⁵ Prentis, *The Scots in Australia*, pp. 82-85

⁶ D. S. Macmillan, *Scotland and Australia 1788 – 1850: emigration, commerce*

people seeking to emigrate were considerably wealthy although he acknowledges that others were seeking to emigrate because of bad debts incurred by borrowing money to finance improvements to their farms in the Highlands.⁸ The increase of population in the Highlands also contributed to the emigration movement. Between 7 June 1841 and 31 March 1851 (the two official Census dates for this decennial period) the population of Scotland grew by 268,558 people.⁹ The population of the Civil County of Argyll in 1851 was 89,298 persons.¹⁰ This high population figure resulted in overcrowding on the land and, coupled with the potato famine in the mid-1840s, led many people to be encouraged by Emigration Societies as well as organisations such as the Free Church of Scotland to leave Scotland.

The major emigrations of Scots from the Highlands to Australia in the nineteenth century took place over a span of 30 years between the 1830s and 1860s with the bulk of emigrants arriving in the 1840s and early 1850s. This time span includes both the 1838-9 and 1852 Moidart emigrations to Australia. In order to understand the complexities associated with Scottish migration generally and the Moidart experience in particular, it is necessary to examine several of the theories developed to explain the migration phenomenon.

2.3 Theories of migration

The reasons why people move and the underlying causes of migration have

And investment Oxford University Press, London, 1967. p. 79

⁷ Ibid. p.79.

⁸ Ibid. p. 81.

⁹ *Census of Scotland 1861, Population Tables and Report*, p. 2.

come under scrutiny and analysis by historians, politicians, sociologists, demographers and economists each with their own specific interest in this area, however the long term impact of this process on those involved is often overlooked in favour of determining the short term effects of migration on the host society.¹¹ As Roni Berger notes:

Immigration is not a single event of being uprooted from the culture of origin and leaving behind the homeland to face the challenge of assimilation into a new culture. Rather, it is a lifelong, multifaceted and multilayered, complex, and never-ending experience.¹²

Many theories, approaches and models have been developed to explain and describe the various phases and dimensions of the migration experience. Stephen Castles and Mark Miller have broadly classified these approaches or theories in three ways:

...a useful distinction may be made between three of the main approaches used in contemporary debates: economic theory, the historical-structural approach and migration systems theory (Hugo, 1993:7-12).¹³

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 60-61. The County of Argyll included the Moidart district in 1851.

¹¹ See S. Castles and M. Miller, *The age of migration*, The Guilford Press, New York, 2003. p. 21.

¹² R. Berger, *Immigrant women tell their stories*, The Hayworth Press Inc., New York, 2004. p. 9.

¹³ Castles and Miller, *The age of migration* p. 22.

In discussing the history of the British emigration phenomenon for example, Richards refers to the ‘metropolitan’ and ‘provincial’ models of migration developed by Bernard Bailyn in relation to eighteenth century British emigration. The first describes the reasons underlying the movement of young males out of large British cities such as London whilst the second is linked to the migration of families from rural areas including the earlier movements of people from Moidart to the Canadian Maritimes.¹⁴ Other theorists include Borowski, Richmond, Shu and Simmons who have identified the following four major themes or theories in relation to international migration:

- A. Push - Pull theory
- B. Social network theory
- C. Structural theories
- D. Involuntary migration¹⁵

Castles and Miller contend, however, that several of these theories lie within their own three categories. They place the ‘push-pull’ theory for example, within their economic category and the ‘social network’ and ‘structural’ theories within their migration systems theory arguing that all migrations operate at two levels of complexity whilst interacting with each other:

...[migrations] can be seen as the result of interacting macro-and micro-structures. Macro-structures refer to large-scale institutional

¹⁴ E. Richards, “Leaving the Highlands” in M. Vance and M. Harper (eds) *Myth, Migration and the Making of Memory*, Fernwood Publishing, Halifax, 1999. p. 105.

¹⁵ A. Borowski, A. Richmond, J. Shu and A. Simmons, ‘The International Movements of People’ in H. Adelman, A. Borowski, M. Burstein and L. Foster, (eds), *Immigration and Refugee Policy. Australia and Canada Compared*, Volume 1, 118

factors, while micro-structures embrace the networks, practices and beliefs of the migrants themselves. These two levels are linked by a number of intermediate mechanisms, which are referred to as 'meso-structures.'¹⁶

When each of these four theories is applied to the 1852 emigration it becomes possible to understand that the causes were complex, intertwined and embedded in the history and landscape of the Moidart district and of the Highlands generally.

A. Push - Pull theory

Highlanders had been 'pushed' out of Moidart leaving in successive emigrations for over two hundred years and resulting in a population decrease in the district. In 1852 there were a number of 'push-pull' factors operating in both Scotland and Australia many of which had been present for several generations. These included overcrowded estates in terms of population as in the case of Lochshiel and the conversion of inadequate crofting acreages into extensive sheep farms such as with the farms of Blain, Briag, Mingarry and Portavate on the same estate.¹⁷ The economic difficulties experienced by the estate owners and the resulting widespread introduction of sheep by tenants who could afford to pay higher rents than the crofters could manage contributed to the need to remove the people. The conversion of lands into extensive sheep farms in West Inverness-shire began in the 1780s and

Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1994. pp. 43-52.
¹⁶ S. Castles and M. J. Miller *The age of migration. International population movements in the modern world*, third edition revised and updated, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2003, p. 27.

combined with religious persecution of Catholics around the same time, provided a catalyst for many of the first emigrants to leave Moidart for North America.¹⁸

The mid-eighteenth century saw a long period of discontent in the Highlands following the Battle of Culloden. Traditional clan arrangements collapsed including the relationships between lairds, tacksmen and subtenants. This was accompanied by a new way of life infiltrating from the Lowlands into the Highlands.¹⁹ The recurring potato famines of 1837-1838 and 1846-52 also played a role in 'pushing' hungry and destitute people from their lands. With no funds to pay their annual rents due to a decrease in the market price of cattle at this time their ability to occupy and work the land became tenuous.

The 'pull' factors relating to the attractiveness of Victoria as a destination at this time were varied and differed according to the individual circumstances under which people left. For assisted immigrants these factors included high wages offered by a pastoral industry in desperate need of employees due to the many workers leaving in search of gold. This coincided with a time when British markets were in desperate need of Australian wool. The availability of financial and material assistance through the proliferation of emigration schemes such as the HIES also determined the new country of adoption and limited the choice of destination. The presence of extended family support networks established by earlier emigration to Victoria and New South Wales

¹⁷ See chapter 1, p. 92.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-91 in chapter one of this thesis for further information on emigration to Australia from Moidart up to 1852.

¹⁹ J. Keltie, *History of the Scottish Highlands*, Grange Publishing Works, Edinburgh. Volume 3, 1885. p. 34

and the lure of recently discovered gold, also assisted in drawing people to Australia.²⁰

Castles and Miller argue that this model as it operates in the twenty-first century has ‘human capital’ as its central concept as people arguably decide to emigrate if the process will result in a potential increase in wages. This interpretation could only be applied to those Moidart emigrants who chose to take advantage of the opportunity to leave voluntarily. They also claim that the ‘push-pull’ model is not able to adequately explain why a group of emigrants select one country over another.²¹ Those who travelled on HIES chartered ships were not at liberty to select their country of destination. This was decided for them. The extent to which members of the 1852 emigration might have selected Canada as their preferred destination given the established social networks created by previous emigrations is not clear.

B. Social Network theory

The Moidart emigrants who arrived in 1852 had very few social networks already established in Victoria from which to draw support. Those networks with direct links to Moidart and already in existence in Australia included the 1838-9 emigrants (who had largely settled outside the Colony in New South Wales) and individual Households who had arrived in Victoria prior to 1852. Therefore the Households were forced to either seek out other Highland communities in the Colony or, as the study will later demonstrate, to establish their own networks based on religion, language and common origins.

²⁰ See chapter 1, pp. 89-91 regarding the 1838 Moidart emigration to New South Wales.

This was in direct contrast to the North American experience where established communities awaited new emigrants and ensured that close Gaelic-speaking, Highland enclaves continued to exist. Canada in particular, was a very attractive destination for many Moidart emigrants.²² In referring to the Canadian experience, James Cameron notes that:

In contrast to Scotland, the farms were larger, the standard of living higher, and the houses more substantial. Generally, a nuclear family worked the land within a homogeneous ethnic and religious community with kith and kin located near by. ...By the 1850s, this transplanted Highland community...had experienced considerable demographic, economic, social, political and religious development; its pioneer phase was fading into the past.²³

The HIES assisted emigration scheme also played a significant role in helping to create an important social network in Victoria for post 1852 Moidart immigrants who arrived in 1854.²⁴ Similarly, their Catholic identity provided a communal focus and created a new social network. The study will demonstrate that this social network operated on a geographical as well as communal level. Following his arrival in 1856, Father Ranald Rankin, their former parish priest in Moidart, was welcomed into a communal network of Households spread

²¹ Castles and Miller, *The age of migration*, p. 24.

²² For a comprehensive description of the history of Scottish emigration to Prince Edward Island refer to L. H. Campey, *"A Very Fine Class of Immigrants" Prince Edward Island's Scottish Pioneers 1770-1850*, Natural Heritage Books Toronto, Canada, 2001.

²³ J. D. Cameron, ' "Erasing forever the brand of social inferiority": St. Francis Xavier University and the Highland Catholics of Eastern Nova Scotia', CCHA, *Historical Studies*, Number 59, 1992. pp. 49-64 at <<http://www.umanitoba.ca>, p.2>

geographically across the Colony before settling into a small, cohesive Catholic Highland settlement at Little River.

The emigrants were also active in creating social support networks during their journey particularly through shipboard friendships which were renewed when families settled together in shipboard clusters in remote locations in the 1860s.²⁵ At least one Household re-established contact with former acquaintances from Lochaber, a neighbouring district to Moidart through the resettlement process although the evidence for this being a planned reuniting on the part of the two Households is not available. Evidence of both these resettlement experiences will be presented in chapter four.

C. Structural theory

Structural theorists argue that global movements of people are supported or influenced by political and economic networks or legislative structures established between countries and constitute the macro-structures referred to earlier by Castles and Miller. In certain cases these structures are created by governments such as those which have emerged out of historical links between former colonies and colonial powers, as a result of relocating people to meet unmet labour needs or through investing capital as a result of international trade. The existence of these relationships often provides people with opportunities to live in another country but not always with equal opportunities and often this new arrangement is to the economic benefit of the host society

(accessed 20 June 2005).

²⁴ See page 91 of chapter one.

²⁵ The McDonald (Household 21), Graham and Ross families who travelled together on the 'Araminta' also settled together at Lake Bolac in the 1860s.

rather than to the migrants themselves.

In other situations these structures are created by individuals or lobby groups holding political or economic power within society. Squatters like George Russell established agricultural companies such as the Clyde Company which employed Moidart Households providing evidence of the strength of such structural networks in helping to meet unmet labour needs in Victoria.

These structures were also sustained by the limitations placed on the occupations of the recipients of government funded fares. The choice of destination of Britain's assisted emigrants was constrained by the limitation of publicly-funded passages to specific occupations, primarily to married agricultural labourers, shepherds, herdsmen and country mechanics, their wives and families, and to single female domestic and farm servants.²⁶ An analysis of the occupations of the men and women arriving on the three emigrant ships, 'Marco Polo', 'Araminta' and 'Allison', demonstrates that these occupations were very well represented amongst the Moidart passengers.²⁷

D. Involuntary migration theory

This theory acknowledges that, for many of the world's citizens including the Moidart emigrants the decision to flee their homes and country was one that was imposed upon them by the political, economic, religious or ecological

²⁶ Author unknown, *Rules of the Highland & Island Emigration Society*, The Scottish Archive Network, <http://www.scan.org.uk/researchrtools/highland_rules.htm> (accessed 5 July 2005).

²⁷ See the nominal passenger and disposal lists for each ship for the occupations of the immigrants arriving in Victoria. VPRS 7666, Inward passenger lists, British Ports, PROV, North Melbourne.

situations and circumstances in which they found themselves. Their very existence and future lives were dependent on the receptiveness and generosity of another country. Today people whose migration is imposed upon them include those who have been 'stolen' such as slaves or as forced labour and who enter the 'forced migration systems' forming an ever-growing community of 'involuntary' migrants around the world. The first British arrivals in Australia were the convicts (and the guards sent out with them), forcibly removed from Britain by the government thereby becoming a cohort of 'involuntary' emigrants. This theory also has relevance to the situation in which these Moidart Households found themselves in 1852. As shown in chapter one and in later chapters the combination of 'push-pull' factors and the presence of both macro and micro structures, all contributed to the difficulty of determining who in the cohort, left Moidart in voluntary or involuntary capacities.

2.4 The role of the Highland and Island Emigration Society (HIES) and preparing for the journey to Australia.

The role played by the HIES in the 1852 emigration is both complex and, to an extent, unclear but by applying the four migration theories outlined earlier to its work it is possible to identify a number of key roles played by this organisation.

Through the provision of funds to emigrants and by providing the means of transport the HIES was able to assist landlords wishing to rid themselves of small tenants. In this way the HIES became an important 'push factor' although as Devine notes; "The Society did not conspire directly with the landed classes but the emigration facilities it provided did facilitate evictions on some estates."²⁸ Evictions were not the prime catalyst for emigration in all of the Moidart Households. The writings of Charles Macdonald suggests that those Moidart Households who received assistance from both the landlord and the HIES voluntarily chose to emigrate. This cohort included the four Households from Genuig and the three Households from Kylesmor.²⁹ Macdonald is clear in his opinion that Households from other townships on the Lochshiel Estate however, were evicted from the land.³⁰

The rules of the Society were designed to enable extended families and groups of Households to emigrate with infants, young children and elderly parents as a unit, thereby making emigration an attractive proposition for young families to consider.³¹ This provided the Household with social cohesion and it was no surprise that many Households, related by kinship, opted to maintain this social cohesion by leaving and journeying together in extended family and township units.³² This same pattern of extended family and community migration can be found in the case of other emigrations of Highlanders organised by the Society

²⁸ Devine, *The Great Highland Famine*, p. 268.

²⁹ Macdonald, *Moidart; or Among the Clanranalds*, p. 261.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ For a description of the rules and regulations governing the work of the Society see *Rules of the Highland & Island Emigration Society*, <http://www.scan.org.uk/researchrtools/highland_rules.htm> (accessed 5 July 2005).

³² See extract from the Report of the Highland Emigration Society from its formation in April 1852 until April 1853 London and published in the Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer, 18 April 1854 (no page recorded) for reference to the emigration of entire families.

at this time including the departure of 36 of the 110 inhabitants of the island of St. Kilda who left in September 1852 bound for Melbourne on board the 'Priscilla'.³³ Group or communal migration was not a new phenomenon belonging only to the mid nineteenth century or to the HIES. It was clearly recognisable in examples of earlier emigrations such as the journey of a group of the Wester Ross emigrants who left for Cape Breton with their minister, Norman McLeod, in 1817. Thirty years later the group was forced through population congestion and a recurrence of famine, to leave for Australia where they unsuccessfully applied for land as community. They eventually settled at Waipu in New Zealand on land provided by the government.³⁴

Those who left under the auspices of the Society were better off in that there was greater likelihood of all members of the Household (including the very elderly and the very young) leaving as a unit. This was in contrast to those who left earlier in June on the 'Araminta' where several Households were forced to leave elderly and infirm members behind.

The HIES was formed at a time when both scarcity and abundance were operating as market forces in two countries separated by vast distances. In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland there was a scarcity of food and employment prospects but an abundance of labour whilst in the Colony of Victoria there was a scarcity of labour and an abundance of employment opportunities in the wool industry. The British textile industry required a

³³ See E. Richards, *Britannia's Children*, Hambleton and London, London, 2004, pp. 10-12 for a brief comparison of the circumstances surrounding the St.Kilda emigration and those of other emigrants leaving Britain at this time.

steady flow of raw wool to feed the woollen mills. By taking advantage of the structural economic links established between Britain and Australia the HIES was able to disembark over 5,000 Highlanders in the ports in Victoria, Moreton Bay, Hobart and Adelaide thereby enabling large numbers of agricultural emigrants to be 'pulled' into Australia.

2.5 The role and philosophy of Charles Trevelyan

Trevelyan was Assistant Secretary to the Treasury at the time of the Irish famine, and as such, was responsible for the "administration of relief measures during the famine".³⁵ He was a man who held firm beliefs about the 'correct role' (in his view) for a government to play when faced with famine and destitution. In a letter to Sir Randolph Routh who was one of the Relief Commissioners at the time of the Irish famine, Trevelyan wrote:

Besides, the greatest improvement of all which could take place in Ireland would be to teach the people to depend upon themselves for developing the resources of their country, instead of having recourse to the assistance of the government on every occasion.³⁶

This was a theme to which Trevelyan would return later when referring to the effects of the potato famine in Scotland. In his opinion (and in the opinion of the government as well) governments were wrong to assist the people in such a

³⁴ F. McPherson, *Watchmen against the world: the story of Norman McLeod and his people*, Whitcombe and Tombe, Christchurch, 1962. See also pp.87-91 of this thesis for examples of earlier communal migrations from Moidart to North America and Australia.

³⁵ Toibin and Ferriter, *The Irish Famine*, p. 68.

way as to ensure that they would become dependent on others rather than independent and looking to their own means for support. It was the role of government to ensure that the market forces of the day were able to operate freely especially when those forces included landlords and others involved in meeting the needs of industry in Ireland, England and Scotland. A reference in a letter from Trevelyan to Lord Monteagle, a landlord in County Limerick, elaborates on this view:

It forms no part of the functions of government to provide supplies of food or to increase the productive powers of the land. In the great institution of the business of society, it falls to the share of government to protect the merchant and the agriculturalist in the free exercise of their respective employments, but not itself to carry on those employments;...³⁷

Toibin and Ferriter, however, take an even stronger view regarding the possible source of Trevelyan's beliefs. They point out that Trevelyan believed the answer to Ireland's misery and destitution lay in the hands and actions of the landed proprietors and that a cure to this misery was available having been "applied by the direct stroke of an all wise Providence".³⁸ To prevent social revolution the proprietors should turn the land over to the cultivation of grain rather than potatoes in order to meet the ready market for grain in England.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 70.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 71

³⁸ Ibid., p. 72.

Professor Cormac O'Grada is of the view that Trevelyan regarded the Irish famine as a lesson in history for the people who, if they did not heed the signs and learn the lessons, would be doomed to relive the experience in times to come:

He (Trevelyan) saw the famine as a visitation of God, as a way of solving a very serious overpopulation problem and he believed that, by and large, the government shouldn't intervene very much because, in the long run, that would make things even worse. If the Irish weren't taught a lesson or didn't learn a lesson in the late 1840s then who knows in the 1850s or the 1860s, the same was going to happen again and they would have to go through perhaps, even a worse catastrophe. That was the way Trevelyan thought...Trevelyan was very well intentioned but not a very humane man. His attitudes were responsible undoubtedly for lots of deaths.³⁹

2.6 Trevelyan and Scotland

The unsympathetic attitudes held by Trevelyan towards the Irish also became very evident in Scotland as he turned his interest and support towards the Highlands and Islands and the organisation of large-scale emigration in order to alleviate a similar situation brought on by famine. References contained in his letters suggest that Trevelyan remained unsympathetic to the plight of the people, especially those on Skye. In a letter written to his aunt he accused those who attempted to help the people on Skye of being part of the problem as, in

³⁹ 'The Great Famine – part three', *The Great Famine*, televised on 11 May

his opinion, their charity resulted in the people (the lower orders) becoming reliant and dependent on outside help. Of equal concern to him was the fact that as long as the people continued to receive this aid they would remain on Skye and not want to emigrate. He wrote in 1852, the year of mass evictions and emigration from Skye:

The only immediate remedy for the present state of things in Skye is Emigration and the people will never emigrate while they are supported at home at other people's expense. This mistaken humanity has converted the people of Skye, from the Clergy downwards, into a Mendicant community; and its demoralizing effects upon the lower orders is extremely painful.⁴⁰

Trevelyan took every opportunity to publicly air his negative views about the Highlands whilst at the same time promoting the benefits to be gained through emigration by those whose lives had been spent in crofting and the raising of sheep. In an address given as chairman of the Highland and Island Emigration Committee, to the editors of the London morning papers and published in *The Inverness Courier* he alluded very clearly to his expectation that emigrants who were provided with this opportunity would agree to settle into farming rather than pursue other occupations or sources of income. In this way the public funds raised would be repaid through the labour of the emigrants in producing wool for British industries:

2003, Channel 26, (television program). Directed by P. Lawrence, BBC, MCMXCV.

⁴⁰ C. Trevelyan, Letter from Trevelyan to Miss Neave (his aunt), HIES Uncatalogued Letterbooks Book, HD4/1-4, West Register House, NAS, Edinburgh. Trevelyan continues in this letter to ask his aunt to leave the people to themselves so that they will see the necessity of emigrating 'instead of living in idleness and habitually imposing upon benevolent 131

As the Highlanders, who are all more or less accustomed to the care of sheep and cattle, will be accompanied by their families, they will be more likely to settle down upon the sheep farms than any other class of emigrants; and neither their language nor habits fit them for the active competition and sustained hard labour which would await them at the diggings.⁴¹

Trevelyan was ultimately of the opinion that the Highlanders were incapable of fulfilling any employment position other than those related to agriculture. His ethnocentric attitudes led him to believe that they were inferior to the English. He strongly believed that the Highlanders were lazy and reliant on the benevolence of others for their very existence and that while this occurred they would never “see the necessity of emigrating and working for their subsistence.”⁴² Whilst Trevelyan saw the Highlanders as inferior to himself, speaking a language lesser in status to English and generally of an indolent character, it also appears that the members of the HIES Committee also shared a similar view when describing the emigrants to their agents in Australia:

Nearly all of them have been accustomed to pastoral occupations, and by their habits are particularly fitted for employment in the bush, especially in tending sheep and cattle.⁴³

persons, 1852.’

⁴¹ Details of points made by Sir Charles E. Trevelyan in a report titled ‘The West Highlands’ and published in *The Inverness Courier* Inverness on 3 June 1852.

⁴² C. Trevelyan, Letter to Miss Neave, NAS, Edinburgh.

⁴³ A. McLeod, ‘Instructions to the agents in Australia of the Highland and Island Emigration Society’ *Geelong and Portland Bay Immigration Society records 1844 - 1854* MS 10009 and *Highland and Island Emigration Society records 1852*, State Library of Victoria, 132

Trevelyan was also convinced that, if the people did not accept and agree to emigrate to Australia, there was a greater danger pending in that the Highlanders might choose to migrate south to the manufacturing districts of England.⁴⁴ He therefore saw himself and the work that he was undertaking as 'saving' England from an invasion of 'Celts' when he stated:

...our object was to prevent this Celtic population from either starving at home or pouring over upon our Manufacturing Districts where wages are already too much reduced by the competition of the Irish; and to direct it to Australia where pastoral labour is extremely wanted and highly productive.⁴⁵

His overall view of this emigration scheme was that it answered perfectly the needs of Scotland, England and Australia.

By September 1852 the HIES was forced to extend its work beyond Skye to all the districts of the Western Highlands for two main reasons.⁴⁶ The work of the HIES was dependent on donations of money especially the promised one third cost to be borne by the proprietors. If a proprietor was willing to pay the one third cost Trevelyan was willing to include the tenants from the estate in the scheme, regardless of its location. Secondly, by the second year of its operation

Melbourne. 1853.

⁴⁴ C. Trevelyan, Letter to T. W. C. Murdoch, HIES Uncatalogued Letterbooks Book, HD4/1-4, NAS, Edinburgh in which Trevelyan states that 'We have now arrived at what we hope will be the final solution' 1852.

⁴⁵ C. Trevelyan, Letter to J. Cropper Esq., HIES Uncatalogued Letterbooks Book, HD4/1-4, NAS, Edinburgh, 1852.

⁴⁶ See footnote 2 of this chapter in order to understand why this became a requirement of the new society.

the HIES was having difficulty finding sufficient numbers of people willing to emigrate as economic conditions began to slowly improve in Scotland. For these reasons Trevelyan turned his attention to assisting the landlords and tenants on three Moidart estates.

According to the manifest extract of the 'Allison',⁴⁷ seven Households or 53 people from the Kinlochmoidart Estate, four Households or 24 people from the Moidart Estate, and one Household of nine people from the Lochshiel Estate were assisted by the HIES in 1852.⁴⁸ As mentioned on page 91 of Chapter one, signed Promissory Notes show that the HIES continued to assist Moidart Households with the Households of Archibald McIntyre, Allan Stewart and John Macdonald, all from the Kinlochmoidart Estate receiving assistance to emigrate to Victoria in 1854.⁴⁹ The fact that the HIES continued to assist Moidart Households two years after the main emigrations of 1852 strongly suggests that economic conditions on this Estate had not greatly improved. An official list of persons who had received financial support from the HIES was drawn up in 1858 by James Chant using original documents but according to Balfour "It is so inaccurate regarding places of origin, ages and family relationships as to be incapable of meaningful analysis."⁵⁰ According to this list, approximately 963 families or 4,910 individuals in total received financial support from the HIES. Balfour questions the accuracy of this total, however,

⁴⁷ Extract taken from the Allison' Manifest,
<http://C:\WINDOWS\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.IE5\LCY8WP3M\allisonO>
(accessed 18 February 2002.)

A copy of the manifest is held at the Public Record Office, Inverness.

⁴⁸ See pages 151-2 for a list of the Moidart Households officially recorded as recipients of funding through the HIES.

⁴⁹ Copies of HIES Promissory Notes signed by Moidart residents at Glasgow on the 13 July, 1854. *Records of the Geelong and Portland Bay Immigration Society*, MS 10009, Australian Manuscripts Collection, State library of Victoria.

⁵⁰ Balfour, 'The Highland and Island Emigration Society: 1852-1858', p. 563.

stating “There is evidence to suggest that there were several contingents of emigrants assisted of whom all record had been lost by the time the Society’s list was compiled.”⁵¹ He considers that clerical errors and omissions occurred for a range of reasons and these resulted in discrepancies between the names entered on the Society’s list and those entered on the passenger lists of the various ships chartered by the Society.

2.7 The Birkenhead Emigration Depot⁵²

Following their voyage by steamer from Glasgow the shipboard journey to Australia for all three groups of Moidart emigrants began at the Birkenhead Emigration Depot in Liverpool, England. Like earlier emigrations to both Australia and Canada where the Moidart emigrants boarded their vessel closer to home (Tobermory in the case of the 1838 and 1839 emigrations to Australia on board the ‘British King’ and the ‘George Fyfe’), the emigrants were usually collected by steamer. This journey usually took them to Glasgow from where they boarded either a second steamer or a train to Liverpool. The journey by steamer was for some, their first encounter with ocean travel and with the uncomfortable and pitiable conditions on board ship that awaited them. Donald McInnes, an emigrant who travelled to Australia on board the ‘Marco Polo’ in June 1852, described the treatment he and forty-two other emigrants received on board the steamer from Glasgow to Birkenhead in the following way:

We got bad usage by the Princess Royal Steamer from Glasgow

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² For a description of the establishment and operation of the Birkenhead Emigration Depot refer to K. Pescod, *Good food, bright fires and civility*, Australian Scholarly Publishing

without meat, drink, or seats - standing as sheep in a fold, and should I have my pocket full of gold I would get nothing to eat or drink below, because I was an Emigrant. We were in all well to 400 Scotch Emigrants aboard the said steamer, and we can all testify that our treatment was too cruel for Convicts.⁵³

Hardship continued to affect the lives of the emigrants to the time of embarkation. In outlining some of the difficulties associated with preparing people for emigration from Birkenhead, the Surgeon Superintendent of the 'Araminta', Dr Alfred Carr, reported that "The Depot possessed no appliances for bathing the Emigrants or of cleaning their clothes."⁵⁴ The lack of such facilities was to prove perilous for the passengers on all three emigrant vessels. The filthy accommodation and bedding arrangements in the Depot later resulted in outbreaks of measles on board the 'Araminta' in particular, causing the deaths of many infants and young children during the voyage.

By 1852, the colonial government was concerned about the shortage of labour in the pastoral industry and lack of shearers for the October/November shearing season. The government therefore sought a massive increase in the number of immigrants required. In order to attract the thousands needed, the rules that had previously prevented families with large numbers of very young children from emigrating were relaxed.

Pty Ltd., Kew, 2001.

⁵³ D. McInnes, HIES Uncatalogued Letterbooks Book, Gen Ref. HD4/ 1-4, West Register House, NAS, Edinburgh. In this letter Donald McInnes describes the treatment he received on board the steamer on route to Birkenhead and the grievances he bears about this treatment, 1852.

⁵⁴ W. B. Clarke, "Araminta" *Emigrant Ship 1852*, Self published. Enclosure Number two, 1995.

The revised rules allowed families to travel with up to four children under twelve years. Such relaxation of the previous rules was also recommended on the grounds that men with young children were less likely to desert to the goldfields on arrival. This caused an immediate increase in the numbers available as large families were common but they had not previously been acceptable.⁵⁵

This change resulted in a large number of infants and small children under five years of age travelling on each ship and contributed to the high mortality rates on board each vessel. The three emigrant ships departed Birkenhead in June, July and September of 1852. Between them they carried a total of 1,612 passengers.

The largest national group of emigrants on board each ship was from Scotland supporting the fact that Scots were emigrating from Britain in large numbers at this time. In each case Highlanders outnumbered those from the Lowlands further indicating that economic conditions in the Highlands could not support the population.

Whilst the passenger lists for each ship confirm the presence of a majority of Scots on board each ship a closer examination of the composition of the Moidart passengers according to marital status, gender and age provides another dimension to the face of these emigrants. The majority of Households consisted of family groups, many containing three generations. As mentioned

⁵⁵ J. H. Welch, *Hell to health. The history of quarantine at Port Phillip Heads 1852-1966*, The Nepean Historical Society, 1988. p.13.

above the presence of so many infants under the age of four years resulted in high mortality rates on board the 'Araminta' in particular, with an outbreak of measles that swept through both the infant and adult passengers.

The 28 single females over the age of 18 were also indicative of the Australian government's desire to attract Households with females of marriageable age. Devine concludes that the HIES may have had alternative motivations in wanting to meet the government's requirements: "It [the HIES] soon realised that the demand for unmarried women in Australia was so great that if it could provide a guaranteed supply its dealings with Australian business interests and colonial legislature would be enormously helped."⁵⁶ Their presence on board was the result of a deliberate campaign to give priority to such families. A total of 105 children under the age of 17 also emigrated on these three ships. Again, their presence supports the view of people such as Charles Trevelyan, who regarded men with large families of young children as the most suitable type of emigrant needed in Australia. These family groups were to be encouraged and selected for emigration. They were less likely to move to the goldfields and more likely to seek employment in the pastoral industry where they were assured of a home, wages and rations for their family (as well as ensuring a steady supply of wool for Britain). The following table describes the composition of the Moidart Households on board each ship, which also illustrates the new emigrant profile established by the Australian government.

Table 2.1: Composition of the Moidart Households on board each ship according to marital status, gender and age.

Composition of the Moidart Households	Marco Polo	Araminta	Allison
Total number of Moidart Households on each ship.	8	18	12
Number of married couples or couples with children.	5	14	11
Number of single males 18 years of age +	4	9	8
Number of single females 18 years of age +	3	15	8
Number of children 13-17 years of age.	6	13	12
Number of children 5-12 years of age.	8	19	18
Number of children 0-4 years of age.	2	12 arrived (4 died during voyage).	15

Source: Nominal passenger and disposal lists for the 'Marco Polo', 'Araminta' and 'Allison'.⁵⁷

Each of the three voyages requires a deeper investigation of the experiences of the passengers and the negative impact that the decisions made by those in authority, either pre-voyage or during the voyage, had on their lives. Although there were similarities between the events that unfolded on board each ship there were also hardships and difficulties that characterised each of the three voyages.

2.8 The shipboard journey

Legislation designed to protect the conditions related to comfort and safety of the passengers on board ship at this time was slow to be passed and strict regulations designed to ensure reasonable standards of health and safety were not available to the 1838 Moidart emigrants. In 1842 a British Passenger Act

⁵⁶ Devine, *The Great Highland Famine*, p. 266.

⁵⁷ Nominal passenger and disposal lists for each ship, VPRS 7666 Inward Passenger Lists- 139

was passed to regulate the minimum weekly food allowance that was required for each adult passenger resulting in improvements in the health and wellbeing of passengers.⁵⁸ Between 1820 and 1850, Haines concludes that mortality rates on board ship fell dramatically to equal those rates of mortality on land in Britain.⁵⁹ She suggests that this fall was largely due to William Redfern, the Assistant Colonial Surgeon whose report to Governor Macquarie in 1814 paved the way for the implementation of radical reforms on board convict ships. Haines points out that, as a result of these reforms:

... the monthly death rate of adult assisted emigrants bound for Australia declined from an average of 2.4 per thousand between 1838 and 1853, to an average of 1.0 per thousand between 1854 and 1892, matching adult death rates in England.⁶⁰

Emigration to America at the same time was no less perilous but the distance between Britain and America was shorter. Therefore the voyage time was shorter, fares were cheaper and the destination offered a greater possibility of emigrants returning home at some point in the future. Haines again points out, however, that despite these 'advantages' death rates on the Atlantic journey were higher than those on voyages to Australia due to the implementation of a less regulated process by government officials.⁶¹

British ports 1852-1923, PROV, North Melbourne.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ R. F. Haines, *Life and death in the age of sail: The passage to Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney. 2003. p. 12.

⁶⁰ McDonald and Schlomowitz, 'Mortality on immigrant voyages to Australia in the 19th century', *Explorations in Economic History*, 27, 1990, Table 6, p.96 and quoted in Haines, *Life and death in the age of sail*, Introduction, p. 25.

Each of the three voyages was catastrophic for the passengers involved. Yet despite these individual examples Haines reminds us that:

Nevertheless, life at sea, as on land, was appallingly hazardous for infants and toddlers, even on fair-weather voyages... When listening to the grief-stricken voices of deeply distressed parents, we need to bear in mind that numerous ships carrying large numbers of children suffered no deaths on board, or very few.⁶²

This was not the situation, however, for those Households who embarked for Victoria on the first of the two HIES chartered ships in this study, the 'Araminta'.

2.9 'Araminta'

The first vessel to depart was the 'Araminta' sailing from the Birkenhead Emigration Depot on 20 June 1852 and bound for Geelong in the Colony of Victoria. The 'Araminta' was the third ship chartered by the HIES to leave for Australia. The first two ships departed from Liverpool in January and May 1852 respectively. At the time of her departure there were 365 emigrants on board, the majority being Scottish Highlanders assisted by the HIES from the Isle of Skye. Amongst the rest of the passengers were 16 Household groups from Moidart.

The following table sets out the names of Households along with their

⁶¹ Haines, *Life and death in the age of sail*, p. 12.

township and estate in Moidart.

Table 2.2: Origins of Moidart Households on board the ‘Araminta’ by Highland estate.

Household number in Appendix A	Name of Household	Estate	Crofting township
12	John McPherson	Kinlochmoidart	Ardmolich
13	Alex. McDonald	Kinlochmoidart	Kinloch Moidart
14	Angus McDonald	Kinlochmoidart	Island Shona
15	Angus McDonald	Kinlochmoidart	Island Shona
16	John McDonald	Kinlochmoidart	Island Shona
17	Archib. McDonald	Loch Shiel	Scardoish
18	Mary Cameron	Loch Shiel	Scardoish
20	Michael McDonald	Loch Shiel	Scardoish
21	Mary McDonald	Loch Shiel	Scardoish
22	Roderick McDonald	Loch Shiel	Gaskan
24	Andrew Grant	Loch Shiel	Blain
25	Catherine Kennedy	Loch Shiel	Dalnabreac
26	Angus McNiel	Loch Shiel	Dalnabreac
28	Corbett sisters	Loch Shiel	Blain
29	Donald McDonald	Kinlochmoidart	Island Shona
31	Donald McDonald	Loch Shiel	Dorlin/Langall

Source:⁶³ 1851 Census Returns, General Register Office for Scotland (1982).

Although it is not clear how the Moidart people on board the ‘Araminta’ were financially assisted to outfit themselves and pay their passage to Australia, a newspaper article published in August 1852 confirms that the HIES was active in the Moidart district as early as two months after the departure of the ‘Araminta’ and describes how those who later travelled on the ‘Allison’ were assisted by this organisation. Given that the ‘Araminta’ was chartered by the HIES with all passengers from Skye receiving assistance from the HIES it is therefore possible that those from Moidart who left on the ‘Araminta’ were also partly financed by the HIES. In the report published in *The Inverness Advertiser* a correspondent from Moidart wrote:

⁶² Ibid, p. 13.

⁶³ General Register Office for Scotland 1851 Census Returns, Edinburgh. The spelling of place names in this case is taken from the census form, 1982.

The only thing of interest taking place with us is the continuance of emigration to Australia. The rush to get off is steadily increasing - many who could not leave formerly through their inability to pay the Government deposits having been now aided by the London Society.⁶⁴

Balfour suggests that this reference to the 'London Society' indicates that the Moidart emigrants on board the 'Araminta' were indeed supported by the HIES, although their names were not officially recorded on those surviving lists that make up the HIES records today.⁶⁵ Secondly, the same source suggests that the emigrants on the 'Araminta' had financially contributed to their own emigration as far as they were able when it was stated:

It is affecting to pass through the districts of Moidart, Arisaig and Ardnamurchan, and to witness the numerous uninhabited houses surrounded by luxuriant crops of oats and potatoes which the emigrants have made over to the proprietor at valuation.⁶⁶

By making over these crops at valuation (and possibly contributing any income received from the proprietor towards their costs although this is unknown),

⁶⁴ See a report written by a Moidart district correspondent in the *Inverness Advertiser*, Inverness 24 August 1852. Balfour, however, has a wider interpretation of this report. He states in the notes section of his article 'The Highland and Island Emigration Society: 1852-1858', that 'this reference lends weight to the contention that the hundred or so emigrants from Moidart aboard the 'Araminta' were in fact assisted by the Society.' p. 531.

⁶⁵ See the list of notes compiled by Balfour in his article 'The Highland and Island Emigration Society: 1852-1858' and published in *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* LV11 990-92, p. 563. These notes explain how the list of people assisted by the HIES came to be compiled. He also explains the nature of the many inaccuracies associated with this compilation and points out where the list is deficient in its information.

they would have complied with a major prerequisite of the HIES.

Four years of destitution and poverty on Skye and in Moidart ensured that the passengers were in a desperate situation on their arrival at Birkenhead. Alfred Carr, the Surgeon Superintendent of the 'Araminta' described the emigrants before they boarded in the following way:

When delivered into my charge at Birkenhead the emigrants with scarcely an exception were in a most filthy and disgusting condition, covered with vermin, infected with itch, and literally in rags; ignorant of the language and in fact more resembling brutes than human beings so far as the advantages derived from civilisation are concerned.⁶⁷

He also stated that the passengers preparing to board the 'Medina' (also bound for Australia) at Birkenhead were of a more superior class and therefore it was necessary to board the 'Araminta' passengers first in case the 'Medina' passengers were infected with disease and vermin. Although already in a desperate situation the Moidart 'Araminta' passengers were further disadvantaged when the HIES agent employed at Birkenhead stole monies paid by the passengers to the Society. Without being able to replace the money stolen by the HIES agent (which should have been used to pay for the outfitting of the HIES funded passengers) the ship had no choice but to set

⁶⁶ *Inverness Advertiser*, Inverness 24 August 1852. Page unknown.

⁶⁷ See a letter published in W.B. Clarke, "*Araminta*" *Emigrant Ship 1852*, Self Published, Enclosure Number two. 1995. This letter contains a detailed description of the effects of measles and illness on board and of the perceived treatment the Doctor felt he had received from members of the Board after they had inspected the ship.

sail.⁶⁸ This meant that many of the people were not properly outfitted for the voyage and did not possess the required clothing and utensils for the journey.

The presence of so many people from Island Shona and Scardoise from the two estates of Kinlochmoidart and Lochshiel on board the 'Araminta', requires further investigation. Their inclusion may have been the result of greater distress and impact from the famine in their townships. As stated in chapter one on pages 80 and 81 a total of 4,000 were bordering on starvation in 1851 out of the population of the district of 11,000. The Lochshiel Estate had the largest number of destitute Households with 93 families or 464 individuals in dire circumstances in that year. Therefore it is logical that the Lochshiel emigrants should be amongst the first to leave and to receive assistance from the HIES. Their inclusion may have also been the result of the willingness of the two landlords to contribute towards the cost as part of the HIES emigration scheme or because of the ability of the Households to sell their crops to raise their financial contribution.

The disadvantages that accompanied the Moidart people to Birkenhead continued throughout the journey. Misery caused by disease and dysentery continued during the whole voyage with a total of 27 deaths recorded. The first recorded death occurred on July 10 and deaths continued to occur every three to four days. Only five of those deaths occurred amongst people aged over four years. Roderick McDonald⁶⁹ lost his wife Sarah as well as two young sons Donald aged three and Angus aged one. Others who died were John

⁶⁸ Letter written by Alfred Carr M. D. to Edward Grimes, Immigration Agent, Melbourne on 20 October 1852. VPRS 1189/PO, Unit 112, File 52/8389, PROV, North Melbourne. Page number not recorded.

MacPherson aged one, Flora MacNeill aged 15 months, Catherine McDonald aged 18 months and Misey McDonald, wife of James McDonald aged 28 years.⁷⁰ All deaths were due to an outbreak of measles contracted from bedding in the Emigration Depot and resulting in death from dehydration and dysentery.⁷¹

The passengers, used to the rigours and hardships associated with crofting life and lacking the necessary utensils, were totally unprepared for life on board ship. The surgeon's report mentioned that the decks were used as toilets and water tanks used to store drinking water were used to wash clothes and were soon contaminated. Following their arrival in Geelong the passengers quickly became involved in negotiating employment and this aspect will be examined in chapter three. The 'Araminta' passengers were to disperse and travel to different locations soon after their arrival. The nature and impact of this dispersal will be examined and analysed in the next chapter.

2.10 'Marco Polo'

The 'Marco Polo' was the second ship to depart with Moidart Households on board leaving Birkenhead on 4 July 1852 fourteen days after the 'Araminta' and arriving fourteen days ahead of the 'Araminta', after a record-breaking journey of 68 days. It was the largest passenger ship at this time to leave

⁶⁹ See family 22 in Appendix A.

⁷⁰ A list of deaths that occurred during the voyage was included in a letter written to John Macdonald of Scardoish and published in *The Inverness Courier* Inverness 21 April 1853.

⁷¹ For the reasons why measles took so many young lives and for the lack of immunity of Highlanders in particular, to measles and other infectious diseases see R. Haines, *Doctors at sea: emigrant voyages to colonial Australia*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, 2006. p. 34.

Birkenhead for Australia and had been especially converted by her owner James Baines to carry large numbers of passengers on what he hoped would be the lucrative route to the Australian goldfields.

Once again the eight Moidart Households on board originated from crofting townships on the Loch Shiel and Kinlochmoidart Estates further depleting the populations of both estates.

Table 2.3: Origins of Moidart Households on board the ‘Marco Polo’ by Highland Estate and Crofting township.

Household number In Appendix A	Name of Household	Estate owner and Estate	Crofting township
32	Ranald and Ann McInnes	Mr W Robertson of Kinlochmoidart Estate	Egnaig
37	John and Margaret McDonald	As above	Egnaig
38	John and Marcella Macdonald	Mr W. Robertson of Kinlochmoidart Estate	Kylesmor
39	Peter and Ann McNeil	Mr Alexander Macdonald of Loch Shiel Estate	Blain
40	Susan McPherson and family	Mr W. Robertson of Kinlochmoidart Estate	Island Shona
23	Flora McMaster and family	Mr Alexander Macdonald of the Loch Shiel Estate	Mingarry
33	Donald and Catherine McDonald	Mr Alexander Macdonald of the Loch Shiel Estate	Dalnabreak
35	John and Ann McDonald	Mr W Robertson of Kinlochmoidart Estate	Egnaig*

Source: Nominal passenger list of the ‘Marco Polo’ and Balfour, R. (2002).⁷²
*John and Ann McDonald were married in February 1852 prior to leaving in

⁷² ‘Marco Polo’, nominal passenger and disposal lists, VPRS 7666 Inward passenger lists- British ports, PROV, North Melbourne. Book 8, pp. 166-190, Balfour “The Highland and Island Emigration Society: 1852-1858.” pp. 557-558 and a letter from R. 147

June. John was from Eгнаig and Ann was from Scardoise according to the Moidart marriage register.

The 'Marco Polo' left Birkenhead with undue haste and without proper storage of luggage thereby creating hardship for those on board. Trunks belonging to the passengers were stored for some time between the decks before being finally moved to the hold. This again used valuable space and made conditions for the passengers uncomfortable and restrictive. As well, many of the stores loaded in Liverpool, were mislaid during the voyage perhaps resulting in the passengers receiving inadequate food supplies or valuable medical stores not being available to treat the various illnesses which broke out on board. The written report provided by the Immigration Board following their inspection of the ship on its arrival in Hobson's Bay on 20 September 1852 reveals a number of situations that placed the passengers at risk of death, injury and illness during the journey.⁷³

The 'Marco Polo' was legally permitted to carry 701 statute adults. Instead, the Emigration Officers at Birkenhead boarded 887 passengers (plus crew).⁷⁴ This overcrowding necessitated the conversion of part of the upper deck of the ship into accommodation for the extra passengers thus limiting access to the deck for exercise and entertainment for other passengers and restricting their movement during the voyage.

Balfour dated 11 July 2002 re. Moidart estates and including a draft map showing the approximate boundaries of the Estates of Kinlochmoidart, Loch Shiel, Lochans and Glenuig.

⁷³ Report of the Immigration Board of Melbourne of 2 October 1852 following its inspection of the ship 'Marco Polo', VPRS 1189/P0000, Harbour Master's Department, Unit 109, PROV, North Melbourne.

The course chosen by the Master of the 'Marco Polo' took the ship further south of the usual route after it rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Forbes was determined to break the sailing record for the number of days taken to reach Melbourne from Liverpool. To do this he had to steer the ship into the gale-force winds of the southern waters. This decision subjected the passengers to severe cold for which they were not prepared in terms of clothing and heating nor had they been warned of this prior to beginning the voyage. According to the report this course of action aggravated the illnesses on board and contributed to the high mortality rate in the latter part of the voyage:

The Master selected the great circle course between the longitude of the Cape and this port. The board doubt the propriety of this choice, unless the Immigrants are previously warned of the cold weather which they will experience, and proper precautions for their health are taken.⁷⁵

Although especially converted for carrying emigrants the 'Marco Polo' was in part, poorly constructed. The report refers to the ill fitting skylights and ventilation which no doubt allowed water to seep in during rough weather, contributing to the cold, miserable conditions and to the illness and deaths of passengers. These deaths included two married females, two male children aged ten and seven, 18 males and 16 females aged between one and six years of age and seven males and seven females aged less than one year. As the Birkenhead Emigration Depot was without a hospital in 1852, sick adults and

⁷⁴ The number of passengers recorded on the nominal passenger list totals 887 or 7391/2 statute adults. Information from other sources such as the Log of Logs claims there were approximately 930 passengers on board (see Log of Logs, volume 2, p. 318).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

children were accommodated in the regular quarters occupied by intending emigrants. The report states that a family with measles had slept in a bed the night before the passengers of the 'Marco Polo' were accommodated. This was the most likely cause of the outbreak of measles on board the 'Marco Polo' as well as the 'Araminta'.

The experience of the 'Marco Polo' demonstrates the degree to which intending passengers were subjected to health risks beyond their control both in the Depot as well as sailing in conditions which placed their lives in peril. In the case of Captain Forbes his decisions were the result of a personal desire to break the current record of the number of days spent at sea between Birkenhead and Melbourne. Given that he continued to pursue this goal on the return voyage to Liverpool and in successive voyages post-1852 breaking records became a personal obsession but one that may have contributed to the spread of disease and incidence of deaths.

Following the departure of the 'Marco Polo' the last remaining group of Moidart emigrants departed in September 1852 on the HIES chartered ship 'Allison'.

2.11 'Allison'

The 'Allison' was the third ship involved with this emigration and left Birkenhead for Melbourne on 13 September 1852. There were 184 adults and 105 children on board. Twenty Households from Inverness-shire and Argyllshire were assisted by the HIES. This included twelve Households from

Moidart and eight Households from estates owned by Sir James Riddell in Ardnamurchan, a district in Argyll separated from Moidart by Lochshiel. The Moidart Households included seven Households containing 53 individuals from the Kinlochmoidart Estate, one Household of nine people from Scardoise on the Lochshiel Estate and four Households of 24 people from Dr. Martin's Moidart Estate. The HIES records show that eleven of the twelve Moidart Households received assistance. The Household of John Macdonald from Glenmoidart (Household 10) was listed in the HIES records but was described as "unassisted". According to the 'Allison' Manifest Extract, John Macdonald "Received no aid. Mr Robertson guaranteed the third in this case".⁷⁶ Once again the majority of the emigrants on the 'Allison' lived on the two estates of Kinlochmoidart and Lochshiel with one Household from the Glenmoidart Estate and four from the Moidart Estate.

Table 2.4: Origins of Moidart Households on board the 'Allison' by Highland estate and crofting township.

Household number in Appendix A	Name of Household	Estate owner and Estate	Crofting township
10	John and Flora McDonald	Colonel Ross of Glenmoidart Estate	Glenmoidart
7	Alexander and Flora McDonald	Mr W. Robertson of Kinlochmoidart Estate	Kinloch Moidart
11	Mary McDonald and family	As above	Kinloch Moidart
5	Angus and Mary McDonald	As above	Kinloch Moidart
9	Alexander and Mary McDonald	As above	Kinloch Moidart

⁷⁶ List of Emigrants assisted by the Highland and Island Emigration Society, and who embarked on board the ship 'Allison' which sailed from Liverpool for Melbourne on 13 September 1852, Public Record Office, Inverness, 2002.

6	Donald and Ann McDonald	As above	Kinloch Moidart
8	Alexander and Mary McDonald	As above	Kylesmore
19	Ann McDonald and family	Alexander McDonald of Lochshiel Estate	Scardoish
2.	Norman and Jane McDonald	Dr. Martin of the Moidart Estate	Glenuig
4	John and Marjory McIver	As above	Glenuig
3	John and Mary Cameron	As above	Glenuig
1	John and Sarah McDonald	As above	Glenuig

Source: Nominal passenger and disposal lists of the 'Allison'.⁷⁷

All other passengers on board, with the exception of two, were also from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

The remarks entered by HIES authorities against the names of the Households record that in the majority of cases the members of the Households were healthy, well clothed and of respectable appearance.⁷⁸ The highest valued Promissory Note was for forty-four pounds, two shillings and seven pence Sterling and signed for the Household of Norman and Jane McDonald (Household 2). The smallest amount was for five pounds, fifteen shillings and eleven pence Sterling for the three members of the Household of John, Sarah and John (son) McDonald (Household 1). The presence of Households from two additional Moidart Estates indicates that destitution had become more widespread in Moidart. If the Households from Estates in the neighbouring district of Ardnamurchan are also added to this total it becomes clear that

⁷⁷ P. J. McDonald, Highland and Island Emigration Society, HIES 'The Allison', (unknown) <<http://sites.netscape.net/bryankeddy/HIES/all1.html>> accessed 28.02.2001.

⁷⁸ See comments entered next to Households in the List of Emigrants assisted by the Highland and Island Emigration Society, and embarked on board the ship Allison which sailed from Liverpool for Melbourne on the 13th September 1852 Public Record Office, Inverness. 2002.

poverty and destitution caused by the famine had moved well beyond the Isle of Skye.

It appears that there are no existing reports or records documenting the voyage of the 'Allison' to Hobson's Bay in Port Phillip. The 'Allison' was, however, turned back on arrival due to the presence of typhus on board and sent to the quarantine station at Point Nepean. Typhus resulted in seven deaths during the voyage (and a further six following their arrival at the Quarantine Station). The arrival and subsequent quarantine experiences of the passengers will be examined in chapter three.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has established firstly that ongoing difficulties continued to be encountered by the Moidart people especially during the voyage to Victoria and secondly, the HIES played a number of important roles in this emigration experience. The statement prepared by the General Acting Committee of the Skye Emigration Society (the forerunner of the HIES) in September 1851 strongly suggests that emigration was largely forced upon the people. Although the Society was keen to declare that it was not in favour of compulsory emigration it was determined that the people fully understood that the aid and relief given to them through parish and other charitable means was not going to continue. Neither should the people expect that this relief would be forthcoming in the future. It clearly placed the ultimate responsibility for the

choice to remain on Skye or to emigrate in the hands of the people themselves. As evident in the following statement the Society declined to take any further responsibility for those who refused to accept the inevitability of emigration and who chose to remain on Skye:

...you are to consider what you are to do hereafter without this assistance, for every one of you must know that such relief is not to be expected again...But, whether you desire it or not, it cannot be looked for. Destitution...will be regarded in a different light, and those who wilfully neglect any means of escape that are offered to them, and choose to remain in circumstances for which destitution is inseparable, will obtain very little sympathy or assistance.⁷⁹

These words clearly demonstrate their intention to apply pressure on the people to emigrate as the best solution to the problems faced by the people of the Highlands. The Committee challenged every person to consider it “his duty to endeavour to remove, to a country where his services would be valued and would readily procure for him, not only plenty of food and clothing, but the means of rising to a comfortable and respectable independence.”⁸⁰

Although these words were directed at the people of Skye it is not unreasonable to assume that the same sentiments were also later directed at the Moidart Households. Clearly the first Moidart emigrants had little choice but to emigrate for at the time of their departure in June they left behind bountiful

⁷⁹ Statement by the General Acting Committee of the Skye Emigration Society, 18 September 1851 and quoted in W. B. Clarke, *"Araminta" Emigrant Ship 1852*, p. 7.

crops ready for harvesting. If they had been given the opportunity to reconsider and change their minds and had remained in Moidart, the desperate times and shortages of food would have been overcome with the arrival of the harvest and improved economic conditions. Therefore the Moidart emigration can also be viewed as an example of the 'involuntary migration' theory as once the funds and structures were established the people were powerless to fight their emigration.

On a more positive note, however, the philosophy of the HIES enabled people to leave in Household groups and to emigrate with both very young children and elderly parents and siblings thus preserving the Household unit and providing family support groups and networks on arrival.

The HIES published a report titled *Report of the Highland Emigration Society, from its formation in April 1852 until April 1853* detailing its work in the first twelve months of its operation. Sections of this report were published in the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* in 1854. Clearly the Committee who wrote the report was of the opinion that the HIES played an integral role in colonising and settling people in Australia:

The 2605 souls whose emigration is therein recorded are all members of the 380 families who are represented in the column of Married Adults. This is believed to be the nearest approach to 'colonisation' which has yet been attempted; each of the ships may be said to form a colony in itself; all the warm affections and hallowed sympathies of

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 7.

home are there, and are borne by the emigrants to their new hearths in the land of their adoption.⁸¹

The Society's report included high praise of its own achievements by comparing the emigration of the Highlanders and Islanders to the Irish emigration to the United States thereby focusing on the positive outcomes of emigration for all:

...nearly one fifth of the Irish people went forth, from misery and idleness, to competence and work, at the same time reuniting families that had been divided, and contributing to elevate the character, and improve the condition of those who remained.⁸²

The publication of selected extracts of the Committee's report only served to politicise the work of the Society. These extracts conveyed an overall sense of great achievement for all involved in this undertaking. The omission of any references in the report to the tragic upheavals, distress, sickness and death experienced through the forcible removal of so many of the emigrants hid much of the truth regarding these emigrations. The report persisted in upholding and validating the way in which the HIES Committee undertook its work to the end:

⁸¹ Reporter unknown 'Report, Society for assisting emigration from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland' *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* 18 April 1854, page not recorded.

On the whole we may say that no more satisfactory report was ever printed; and that no benevolent association has, from equal funds, done more positive good...Such efforts carry their own reward, and, like mercy, are blessed alike to those that give and those that receive.⁸³

Although the views and attitudes of Trevelyan had no direct impact on the emigrants nevertheless the ideological environment in which the HIES operated was in some ways established by Trevelyan. Whilst his reasons for establishing the HIES might be questionable the outcomes for those emigrants who survived were clearly positive. The opportunity to leave behind the deplorable economic and social circumstances of their lives in Moidart may not have been given to them without this organisation.

Although new opportunities awaited them in Victoria, the recovery of the debt owed by these Households to the Society resulted in the pursuit of some assisted families by HIES Agents in Victoria. The recovery of this debt and the accompanying scorn and anger directed by other Highlanders in Geelong towards these debtors featured in meetings and newspaper reports. The lack of intent to pursue landowners in Scotland to recover the one-third debt promised to the Society as part of the funding arrangement also needs to be examined

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

and will be further investigated in the next chapter.

Although Haines claims that mortality rates on voyages of emigrant ships had fallen by the 1850s and were comparable to those experienced on land in Britain, the three shipboard accounts in this emigration reveal the ongoing presence of a range of perils associated with the journey by ship to Australia in the early 1850s. In addition, intending passengers were also at risk of becoming the victims of theft, bribery and disease in the Emigration Depot prior to departure. Their naivety, lack of education, and dislocation from the familiar placed them at risk in these circumstances with many losing all their money by the time they were required to board. Fulfilling the material needs of passengers embarking on a three-month voyage became a livelihood for both residents and merchants in Liverpool and Birkenhead. Those who took financial advantage of the emigrants included the HIES Agents themselves. The voyage was filled with positive as well as negative elements. Time on board resulted in the creation of friendships between passengers that continued long after their arrival and settlement in Australia. For those travelling on the 'Marco Polo' the presence of passengers from several countries exposed the Highlanders to other cultures and languages thereby preparing the emigrants for a future existence that would be spent amongst people from many different nationalities, languages, political beliefs, Christian denominations and class backgrounds in Australia.

The voyage constituted only a small part (in terms of time) of the emigration process for these Households. The process of arriving and obtaining

employment placed significant strain on the members of the Households and is the focus of chapter three. The Agents of the HIES continued to actively pursue those who had received assistance and their actions will also be analysed in the next chapter. They encountered prejudice, dislocation from other Households and a reorganisation of the membership of the Household as members separated to accept employment in their bid to resettle and adjust to the new physical, social, economic and religious environments in the Colony. This adjustment was to continue for many years ensuring that, in many cases, the new immigrant was involved in a continuing process of cultural accommodation and shifts involving language, mores and social rules of the new host society. These adjustments will form the central focus of chapters four and five.