

**SCOTCH IRISH FAMILIES OFTEN CAME TO AMERICA ON A LINEN TRADE
VESSEL**

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Migration to America became a more and more attractive option to many Ulster Scots. Since it was a part of the British Empire, there were no emigration restrictions and no language barrier. **A linen trade route existed between Ulster and Philadelphia and ships went back and forth across the Atlantic all the time. The American colonies had a labor shortage. Emigrants could expect to be paid well for their work. There was cheap land in America and lots of it**

The migration really took off in the period following 1717. Some Catholics and Anglicans came across, but the vast majority of people leaving Ulster were Presbyterian Scots.

The average emigrant would find passage aboard a linen trade vessel. The ships would bring flax seed from Pennsylvania to Ulster, and the captains were happy to have a return cargo that could pay cash. Some Ulstermen paid their own way, while many had arranged to become indentured servants, selling their labor for a period of seven years. Many had no way to pay. These souls, upon arrival in Philadelphia, would have to remain on board the ship until the captain was able to sell their labor and collect payment.

Philadelphia was by far the most popular port for Scots-Irish emigrants. This was due to the pre-established trade routes, **the religious tolerance of the Pennsylvania colony,** and the good, available farm land. And there was a great labor shortage in Pennsylvania.

Most of the Scots-Irish became farmers in Pennsylvania, as they had been in Ulster. Beginning around 1730, the population of the colony really exploded and by 1740 good farm land was becoming scarce. The mark of the Scots-Irish can be seen best in their churches. **By the 1730s the Scottish ministers could no longer fill the demand for pastors and Presbyterian ministers began to be trained and educated at American schools.**

Migration was starting to be a hallmark of Scots-Irish culture. There was a lot of traffic on the Great Wagon Road, and settlers here saw men moving north and south all the time. In time, the Presbyterian missionaries moved south. Then the cattle drivers began to move south. The settlers soon followed. **Many of the Scots-Irish who had bought the cheap land in Virginia, and had turned it into a nice farmstead, now sold that developed land to new Scots-Irish migrants at a profit and used the money to buy even more land, at even cheaper prices in the Carolinas.**

SOURCE: The migration of the Scots-Irish to Southwestern North Carolina by Matthew A.C. Newsome.