

**INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS, CORPORATE  
STRATEGIES, AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF  
TRAVEL CONDITIONS FOR MIGRANTS  
BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE USA, 1890-1914**

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# **International Networks, Corporate Strategy, and the Improvement of Travel Conditions for Migrants Crossing the North Atlantic, 1890-1914**

**by Drew Keeling**

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## **A B S T R A C T**

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century migration between Europe and the USA was the most sizable and ethnically diverse mass transoceanic movement of people ever, and was accompanied by a gradual but steady improvement in the quality of accommodations provided on steamships crossing the North Atlantic. The origins of these travel improvements, generally ascribed mainly to humanitarian pressures, adverse publicity, and transport lines’ competition on quality, are shown to lie more in overlapping corporate and governmental strategies to reduce the risks posed by the business cycle and ongoing long distance movement of large crowds. The diminution of on-board discomforts, which occurred largely as a by-product of such strategies, lent only a fairly small impetus to the already growing trend of migrants making multiple crossings, but did facilitate and underscore the self-replicatory nature of this unprecedented human relocation during the culminating years of what is sometimes referred to as the “first era of globalization.”

# **International Networks, Corporate Strategy, and the Improvement of Travel Conditions for Migrants Crossing the North Atlantic, 1890-1914**

## **1. Transportation Development and Travel Improvements on the 19<sup>th</sup> century Atlantic**

Globalization in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is generally and understandably associated with technological and economic “revolutions” in communication and transportation. The development and worldwide proliferation of railroads, steamships, and telegraph lines, for instance, greatly lowered the costs of organizing and physically carrying out long-distance freight shipment, thus helping international trade expand at a noticeably faster pace than contemporaneous growth in global output of goods and services.<sup>1</sup>

International travel also increased markedly during the century of industrialization and economic growth between Waterloo and the First Battle of the Marne, in large part because such travel also became cheaper over the course of that century. Unlike flows of physical materials, or information, however, long distance transnational movements of people benefitted much more from reductions to ancillary expenses than from declines in the direct charges levied by the transport providers.

The largest form of long-distance cross-border travel during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was mass transoceanic migration. Most of this migration occurred across the North Atlantic from the 1840s onward as European labor supplies flowed westward to meet North American labor demand during an era of few regulatory impediments to cross-border relocation between Europe and the Western Hemisphere. Average annual migration of Europeans to the USA grew twenty-fold between 1830s and the 1900-1914 period, partly because such moves became more affordable over the period, but not due to any secular decline in the cross-Atlantic ticket price. Travel times fell rapidly when transatlantic migration flows shifted to railroads and steamships in the 1860s, ‘70s and ‘80s, but fares were not lower than those previously charged on inland waterways and Atlantic sailing ships.

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<sup>1</sup> Economic globalization is typically defined to include the integration and convergence between national markets that growing international trade tends to promote, at least in the long run. See, for instance, Findlay and O’Rourke, pp. 35-43.

Coal-powered transportation and electrical communication lowered the information costs, opportunity costs, and transaction costs of large-scale overseas migration, but not the transport fees levied for the transatlantic crossing.<sup>2</sup>

Oceanic ticket prices did become more affordable, over the course of the nineteenth century, as incomes rose on both sides of the Atlantic, and gradually easier for family networks of European emigrants to finance out of American savings, taken back to Europe sent there as remittances, or used for prepaid tickets. In contrast, the basic passage price itself changed little in nominal terms over the long term. Average steerage fares to America were generally in the \$25-\$30 range in the 1830s, and between \$25-\$35 during 1900-1914. The popular impression that giant steamship companies induced 19<sup>th</sup> century mass migration to America by slashing fares is a historical myth stemming in part from erroneous extrapolation of temporary price drops during periodic “fare wars.”<sup>3</sup>

Instead of highlighting cost reductions, a more solidly based historical consensus instead emphasizes the quality improvements to oceanic mass travel associated with the adoption and ongoing further technological development of oceanic steamships. New coal-fired, metal-hulled and propeller-driven vessels, and their widespread deployment on fixed routes and in dependable schedules of frequent and reliable departures and arrivals (by the early 1870s from Northern Europe, and the early 1880s from Southern Europe), cut oceanic travel times by two-thirds, and greatly lowered associated hazards, such as the risk of contracting communicable diseases enroute. A number of factors –technical, economic, business, and regulatory- had the combined effect of channeling most of the ongoing innovations in marine engine efficiency and vessel design after 1880 into the building of ever-larger ships with more space available per passenger. Migrant travellers also benefitted

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<sup>2</sup> The dominance of transatlantic migration in 19<sup>th</sup> century global transoceanic travel is indicated by the statistics compiled in Willcox and Ferenczi and tables in the U.S. Statistical Abstracts. Annual U.S. immigration flows are in *Historical Statistics of the United States*. General trends of North Atlantic migration costs are discussed in Keeling, “Costs,” section 4 and Appendix 9.

<sup>3</sup> Estimated average steerage fares to the USA of \$25 from the British Isles and \$30 from continental Northern Europe for the 1830s are based on Taylor, p. 94, Grabbe, p. 297, and Hansen, pp. 181, 194, 198. Average fares of \$25 from the UK and Scandinavia, and \$35 from Northern continental ports, are derived from Appendix 2 below. Examples of erroneous assumptions of long term declines in nominal fare levels can be found in Gaddis, p. 3 and Chernow, p. 105. Mistaken assumptions that temporary fare drops had significant lasting effects on migration volumes can be found in otherwise well-informed and insightful studies of migration by Puskas, p. 108 and Hvidt, p. 192. Other historians, such as Gould, pp. 612-613, have shared the views of some contemporary observers (e.g. Salz, II, p. 849) who were more rightfully skeptical of fares showing either any significant secular trend or any great effect of migration volumes. See also Keeling, “Capacity,” section 2, and Keeling, “Transportation Revolution,” pp. 41-43.

from gradually less crowded and less uncomfortable conditions, albeit less so than did first-class business and tourist passengers<sup>4</sup>.

Two prior papers have outlined the central role that improved travel conditions played in the transfer of migration traffic from sailing ships to steamships in the late 1850s and 1860s,<sup>5</sup> and how, after 1900, shipping companies improved accommodations for migrants in order to be able to use those same on-board quarters to house budget-class tourists as well, thereby raising rates of capacity utilization.<sup>6</sup> The focus on increasing capacity utilization was based in part on the fact that, for ships deployed on regular fixed schedules, nearly all the costs of supplying travel services were fixed, so that any incremental revenue from increased passenger bookings amounted to almost pure profit. This economic logic operated independently of public regulatory pressures, which were generally of secondary importance in fostering improvements to conditions for passengers. Previous scholarship has not, however, directly addressed the significance of travel improvements to overall mass migration and to the business of providing oceanic transportation for it. This paper investigates these issues in the context of the networks and strategies employed by North Atlantic shipping lines and their migrant customers, and the overlapping influences of governmental regulators.

## **2. Classes of Travel on North Atlantic steamships**

With rare exceptions,<sup>7</sup> North Atlantic passenger steamships in this period carried travellers in three classes. In descending order of price, and on-board comfort, these were the first class, second class, and third class. Older terminology inherited from the sailing ship era, also remained in common parlance: third class berths, typically in large bunkrooms on lower decks, was known as “steerage,” because of its original proximity to devices for steering

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<sup>4</sup> See Aldcroft, p. 355, Maxtone-Graham, pp. 23-30, Nadell, pp. 281-83, Keeling, “Transportation Revolution,” pp. 42,44-53, and Taylor, pp. 150-164. A useful overview of pertinent U.S. regulations is provided by Moltmann, 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Keeling, “Transportation Revolution.”

<sup>6</sup> Keeling, “Capacity.”

<sup>7</sup> A small minority of passenger vessels carrying a still smaller minority of migrants, offered travel in second and third class only. These services mostly operated to secondary US ports, rather than to the leading entry point, New York.

sailing ships. First and second class travellers were housed in smaller enclosed rooms, mostly on the upper decks, and collectively referred to as the “cabin class.”

Most migrants travelled in steerage, although a growing minority after 1890 traversed the ocean in the cabin class instead. In the early years of steamship travel, second class berths were basically a minor adjunct to the first class, offering less spaciousness and fewer amenities for a more affordable price.<sup>8</sup> By the 1880s, second class was increasingly being used by migrants able and willing to pay fifty percent or more above the steerage fares, in order to obtain more comfort, roominess and privacy. Passenger capacity and volumes grew faster in the second class than in the third. By 1914, nearly one-fifth of migrants were crossing the Atlantic in second class. Less than one percent of migrants had the wherewithal and inclination to travel in first class.<sup>9</sup> Most regular transatlantic steamship lines carried more passengers than freight, and steerage was rightly regarded as both the core of their revenues and profits and the greatest source of risks to profitability.<sup>10</sup>

Although steerage was their mainstay -and companies worked hard within the constraints of mostly fixed routes and schedules to maintain or increase their share of the traffic- they had very little effect on the total volume of migration. Notwithstanding periodic assertions to the contrary, neither shipping lines nor their inland agents had much influence, in this era at least, over the decisions of Europeans to relocate, or not relocate, to North America.<sup>11</sup> By the end of the period, however, the handful of companies which dominated the steerage business by then had gained a measure of control over the fares, through collusive mechanisms designed to keep ticket prices from being slashed to levels well below average cost.

### **3. Cyclical Patterns and Pricing Strategies**

Europeans moved to early 20th century America in search of more plentiful jobs at better wages than those obtainable at home. Typically, however, these immigrant workers

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<sup>8</sup> Cecil, p. 18, Bonsor, volume 5.

<sup>9</sup> Relative to the total passengers in each class, migrants between 1900 and 1914 were 99% of steerage or third class passengers, about two thirds of second class, and 5-10% of first class. Most passengers other than migrants were American tourists travelling in first class. Keeling, “Business,” p. 286.

<sup>10</sup> Murken, Ottmüller.

<sup>11</sup> By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, “the emigrant agents was more of a travel agent than an emigrant recruiter.” Brattne and Åkerman, pp. 202-03.

were over-represented in marginal positions and in cyclical industries, which made their employment prospects cyclical. Labor market based migration, which approximated the rate change in the pool of foreign workers, was more cyclical, and resulting variations in transport companies' operating profits were still further exacerbated by the high rate of fixed costs. In essence, therefore, migration closely tracked the cyclical ups and downs of the U.S. economy,<sup>12</sup> but in magnified amplitude, and these fluctuations in migration were the primary reason for passenger shipping in those years being an unusually variable and uncertain business.<sup>13</sup>

Rather than making futile efforts to vary their long-lived fixed cost assets to match these short term revenue variations, successful shipping companies instead built up both on- and off-balance sheet reserves during boom years in order to achieve both the appearance and the reality of being able to cover losses during bust years.<sup>14</sup> Though most companies thus survived cyclical contractions, mainly by being financially prepared to outlast them,<sup>15</sup> they could do little to predict general economic recessions, and nothing to prevent their occurrence. A related set of risks was more directly addressable, however.

Throughout the 19th century, depressions in shipping were associated with overcapacity and a tendency for firms to seek partial amelioration by cutting fares in order to attract larger slices of cyclically shrunken markets. These often desperate ploys very rarely worked, but firms on the brink of bankruptcy had little to lose, while other firms, in less dire straits, sometimes seized the opportunity - not to directly obtain an immediate and lasting increase in gain market share per se, but to knock out a weaker rival. Both motives were evident in the price wars accompanying cyclical slumps in the mid 1870s, mid 1880s and mid 1890s. However a fare war began, once it was well underway, all firms along the effected route felt compelled to participate, at least partially, to prevent their already cyclically-reduced flow of passengers from drifting away to take advantage of bargain ticket prices on other lines. Fare wars thus tended to exacerbate the cyclicity of overall passenger shipping industry earnings.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Jerome.

<sup>13</sup> Piore, p. 43, Thiess, p. 67, Hyde, p. 130, Stopford, p. 219, De Boer, Introduction, *The Chautauquan*, October 1900, pp. 5-6, *Harper's Weekly*, January 5, 1901, p. 20, HAPAG Annual Report, 1908, p. 3

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Boyce, pp. 225-26, re shipping lines' build up of both "open" and "secret" (hidden) balance sheet reserves.

<sup>15</sup> See Meade, pp.110-111.

<sup>16</sup> See Flayhart, pp. 165-66, Murken pp. 57-58, Hyde, pp. 95-96, 103

Agreements to limit price reductions were difficult to enforce during cyclical slumps, but in 1891, the Nordatlantischer Dampfschiff Linien Verband (NDLV) was established for this purpose.<sup>17</sup> The first long-lived multilateral passenger cartel (or “conference”), its success partly reflected its being based on passenger volume shares (semi-public and easily monitored), rather than on much more readily evadable deals explicitly setting minimum fares. Periodically, any NDLV company *exceeding* its agreed-upon quota of steerage passengers had to pay into a “pool” which was used to reimburse those participating firms with actual passenger levels correspondingly *below* the fixed percentage volumes specified by the conference agreement. The reimbursement rate, typically around \$20 per excess passenger, acted as a “floor price” because a cartel-abiding carrier luring customers in excess of its quota by cutting fares below that \$20 level, would lose money on every such passenger.<sup>18</sup> The pool arrangement of the NDLV was extended to, or replicated in, parallel agreements with other firms in 1898, 1903, 1908 and 1909. Although, over time, these cartel pools reinforced underlying tendencies towards competition through quality improvements,<sup>19</sup> the conference agreements continued to fulfill their fundamental purpose of inhibiting the outbreak of industry-wide price wars, especially for steerage traffic where the risks of cutthroat price competition were greatest due to the high cyclicity of migration. The cartels were not, however, able to raise general fares to monopolistic “revenue maximizing” levels, because of the general tendency of companies to compete by building new capacity (at very

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<sup>17</sup> NDLV’s founding members were the HAPAG and NDL lines (both of Germany), Holland America, and the Red Star Line operating out of Antwerp.

<sup>18</sup> More precisely, a hypothetical cartel-adhering but fare-cutting line would incur not only the \$20 due the pool, for each excess passenger, but also the marginal costs of transporting the passenger, which however, especially in slack periods was close to zero, thus effectively making the “floor price” of the cartel essentially equally to the compensation rate under the pool. Schachner, pp. 121-22. A detailed history of the NDLV can be found in Murken.

<sup>19</sup> The obvious loophole, booking would-be steerage passengers in second class, and *as second class passengers*, e. g. outside of steerage quotas, but *at steerage rates*, was expressly forbidden under NDLV and other cartel rules. Because there were no volume agreements and generally only loosely monitored minimum fares for second class, evasions of universal (but rather difficult to enforce) cartel provisions specifying a minimum excess of second class fares over steerage fares might have seriously eviscerated the efficacy of the steerage pools, *except* that plenty of migrants were willing to freely opt for travelling second class at normal *second class* fares. In other words, most of the time, shipping lines wanting to attract “up-scale” migrants (e.g. in order to book more migrants than allowed under the steerage pool but without thereby falling into an excess position vis-a-vis the pool) could do so without undercutting the agreed-upon differential of second class fares over steerage fares. In such instances, cartels inhibited competition by price, and companies competed on quality instead. (Second class loophole: see Murken, pp. 37,66, 637, 645, 663, 681, competing on quality: see Aldcroft, p. 355, Thiess, p. 77).



high fixed costs but with very low marginal costs of usage)<sup>20</sup> and because the cartels had only limited ability to block formation of new competing shipping lines.<sup>21</sup>

The dynamics of price competition in the cyclical and increasingly cartelized business of migrant transport encouraged companies to focus instead of quality improvements. Ongoing technological enhancements to energy efficiency, augmented by considerable economies of scale, were thus mostly “plowed back” in the form of better travel conditions for passengers, including migrants. There was considerable scope for such improvement, The Atlantic crossing on an 1890s steamship was greatly superior to the experience in a sailing ship a generation earlier, but even more greatly inferior to, for example, the minimal standards demanded by cruise customers today.

#### **4. The Growing Importance of Closed Berth Migrant Travel**

Executives taking the helm of transatlantic steamship enterprises at the end of the 19th century were too young to remember a time when migrants had not been travelling to America in large numbers and voicing periodic complaint about conditions encountered on the way there. Although they are sporadic and of varying reliability, available eyewitness accounts generally indicate that migrant passengers tended to feel cramped, wanted more space to sleep and breath, better food and a place to sit down to eat it, better ventilation, and more privacy. Essentially, they wanted, and in some cases were willing to pay a little extra in order to receive, more of what wealthier cabin passengers in the less rocky parts of the ship or in the decks above them had.<sup>22</sup>

The common prerequisite to meeting these various desires was more space. The rapid growth of ship size, made feasible by innovations in engine efficiency, hull design, and scale economies,<sup>23</sup> gave shipbuilders more space to work with. The “intermediate” or second class, widely available to migrants by the early 1890s, provided the means by which some of that

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<sup>20</sup> See Thiess, p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> The cartels’ essentially defensive purpose is also shown by their lacking mechanisms for coordinated fare increases (see Murken, pp. 636-89). Sustained fare-raising, in or out of cartels, was inhibited by the risk of provoking undercuts by new upstart lines, not under the cartels’ jurisdiction. See Gibson and Donovan, pp. 97-98, Industrial Commission, p. 109.

<sup>22</sup> Nadell, Steiner, Jones, *American Immigration*, p. 159, Jones, "Aspects", Murken, p. 91.

<sup>23</sup> See Keeling, “Capacity,” Table A.2.

steadily growing space could be remuneratively offered for use by migrants. Second class passengers got private sleeping quarters, dining rooms, separate entrances and even “smokerooms” and “saloons”.<sup>24</sup>

Widely popular with migrants, use of second class accommodation grew to 10% of all migrant passages on the main transatlantic routes to America by 1900 and nearly 20% by 1913.<sup>25</sup> By then the further practice of giving some steerage passengers enclosed cabins, better food and better service by the crew, had also become more widespread. Space and amenities “trickled down”, from first class, to second class, and then to steerage, as part of a general application of more space to everything on board. By the 1910s, the standard for first class had risen to that of a well-equipped hotel on land, second class passengers were journeying in the style enjoyed by the first class in the 1880s, and the growing minority of third class passengers travelling in closed berths were said to be on a par with second class customers of the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>26</sup>

In contrast to traditional “open berth” compartments, large dormitories accommodating anywhere from 20 to 200 passengers, “closed berth” steerage, like the second class, consisted of small enclosed rooms for 2-8 travellers. While the type and size of the beds (usually simple metal bunks) were generally the same as in open berth steerage, and the amount of space around bunks was only slightly less cramped, these closed berth quarters offered passengers greater privacy. On ships carrying both open and closed berths, the latter seems to have been usually more advantageously situated on the vessel (e.g. higher up and more towards the exterior, better ventilated sections) than was the former.<sup>27</sup>

The proportion of closed berths used by migrants, as a percentage of the sum of all second and steerage berths, is given in Appendix 3 below. Overall, that chart shows that closed berths made up 28% of the capacity available to migrants in the second and third class on ships voyaging between Europe and the four largest U.S. ports. This proportion rose over the period from 21% in 1900 to 34% in 1914.

Appendix 3 also shows that closed berths were most prevalent on ships servicing British ports and least common on ships connecting to Mediterranean ports. Ports in other

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<sup>24</sup> Keeling, “Transportation Revolution”, pp. 40-50.

<sup>25</sup> Based on Appendix 3 below.

<sup>26</sup> *Outlook* 74 (15 August, 1903), p. 919, Norddeutscher Lloyd Annual Report, 1908, p. 4, Murken p. 108. See also chapter 7, section c, above.

<sup>27</sup> These observations are based on examination of available deck plans, and on government reports such as Dillingham (1911) and “Report of Conditions” (1907).

regions -e.g. those in northern continental Europe, Scandinavia, and on the Baltic- were served by ships whose open berth to closed berth ratios were in between these two extremes. The proportion of closed berths (to all berths used by migrants) rose for all routes, however, not excepting those from Mediterranean ports.<sup>28</sup>

The northern routes with most closed berths also had more summer repeat migration<sup>29</sup> and a higher proportion of “dependant migrants<sup>30</sup> than routes elsewhere. Furthermore, dependant migrants were a prime target of closed berth steerage, the “private quarters for families” being often mentioned in steamship brochures, and vessels with closed berths (on all routes) carried proportionally more of the summer repeaters than did other vessels.<sup>31</sup>

These factors were inter-related, with causation between transport and migration running in both directions.<sup>32</sup> The provision of closed berths seems to have been mainly a response to desires for better travel conditions, but it is also likely that some migrants conducting repeat trips were attracted in part by the features of enclosed cabins on-board. Closed berths lowered hazards to hygiene, diminished the risks, for females especially, of inappropriate and unwanted attention by sailors and other passengers, enhanced privacy, lowered travel discomforts, and were widely welcomed as a humane improvement to conditions of migration.

## **5. Restriction, regulation, and the “New Steerage”**

The gradual improvement of travel conditions for transatlantic migrants across the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is sometimes thought to have been partly due to humanitarian

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<sup>28</sup> Ogliari and Radogna, pp. 868-69.

<sup>29</sup> Keeling, “Repeat Migration.”

<sup>30</sup> See Dillingham Report, vol. 3, p. 95. A dependant migrant is defined here as a migrant whose relocation costs were borne directly or indirectly by someone else (usually a relative). See Keeling, “Costs,” p. 171. Dependant migrants were also more likely to follow the seasonal patterns of summer repeat migrants (peaking westbound in the fall not spring) than of “independent” (non-dependant) migrants.

<sup>31</sup> On the Mediterranean routes it was the year end back forth repeat migration which was especially catered to by vessels with closed berths.

<sup>32</sup> A number of shipping and migration sources corroborate these associations. A similar set of correlations between the northern routes, derived migrants and closed berths (in second class) applies cyclically (Keeling, “Business,” pp. 329-330 and chapter 7). All these subgroups were less cyclical than overall flow of migrants.

pressures. An early example, can be found in the most brutal migration (and, before 1800, by far the largest across the Atlantic as a whole); the movement of African slaves to the Western Hemisphere. Although hardly the leading argument against this trade, the horrors of the “Middle Passage” certainly added to the growing sense of dismay and moral outrage helping bring about its abolition by the early 1800s. While considerably less horrific, revelations of the diseases, deaths, and deprivations suffered by transatlantic passengers during the “potato famine” years of the late 1840s and early 1850s, also helped provoke a set of limited but tangible requirements as part of the various passenger acts adopted by the leading migration source regions in the British Isles and the German states, and the leading destination ports on the eastern seaboard of the USA.

By the early 1890s, minimal yet appreciated stipulations –cooked meals, separation of the sexes on board, designated spaces for families, on-board doctors, disease inspections and quarantines, etc.- had become defacto practice as well as de jure theory. Passenger complaints hardly ceased, but were generally not among the most prominent considerations in ongoing revisions of public policies and private practices.

As migration boomed after 1900, for example, migrant “self-help” organizations became more active, and more extensive. They offered advice on routes and logistics, helped provide protection from abuses in embarkation and arrival ports, offered assistance and a sense of community to migrants adjusting to life in the New World, and pushed for government officials and politicians to maintain long-standing open border policies generally, and for more leniency in applying gradually tightening inspection requirements, in individual instances of detainment, at centers such as Ellis Island. These were goals and activities geared to the long range perspectives of immigrant families relocating in “chain migration” stages over many years. Inconvenience and even mistreatment during transatlantic transits of a few days or weeks were a decidedly peripheral concern.

After 1900, the only significant example of new governmental legislation containing improvement of conditions for migration as explicit goal per se, came in Italy, which constitutes something of an “exception that proves the rule.” Italy was not only the largest supplier of migrants to the USA after 1900, in absolute numbers and relative to source populations, it was also unique among European countries in two other respects. Firstly, it was the only country from which emigrants went overwhelmingly direct to America (not via third country embarkation ports) *and* from which its departing passengers were overwhelmingly nationals, not transit migrants from other countries. England and Russia

were good examples of the each separate feature. Only Italy had such a double concentration allowing passenger legislation to be promulgated locally and for the benefit of locals. Secondly, Italy also had one of the highest rates of both round-trip or “return” migration to and from the Western Hemisphere and of remittances sent back home from overseas. This meant that there was a strong domestic constituency with a stake in how those moving out of the country were treated.

A more paramount issue around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was whether and how to limit or restrict immigration during a time when it had been growing for so long and reached such a scale that perceptions of its negative side-effects were increasing. Such concerns were also being reinforced by new “Social Darwinist” forms of xenophobic sentiment, even as the perceived benefits of immigration in North America were attenuating due to the 19<sup>th</sup> century population explosion and the accumulated impact of past migrations rapidly peopling the vast and once only lightly inhabited territories of the New World.

Restrictionist impulses were also felt in Germany and England where industrialization was drawing labor into countries that had been dominant sources of European emigration less than a generation earlier. New laws and rules were adopted to help ensure that leading centers for transit migrants, particularly on Germany’s eastern border, and in London and Hull in England, remained conduits for through traffic moving onward to embarking steamers in Bremen, Hamburg and Liverpool and did not become ports of entry for mass immigration.<sup>33</sup> Inspired to a limited degree by such examples, and to a greater extent by home-grown social concerns and political considerations, agitation in favor of immigration restriction grew over time, albeit unevenly, in the United States as well.

Anti-immigration motives were connected in several not usually well-appreciated ways to public regulation improving travel conditions for migrants across the North Atlantic. To start with, a restrictionist or at least “selectionist” element tended to creep into the thinking behind the adoption of minimal standards for steerage class travel. It did not escape notice by lawmakers, for example, that laws requiring a minimal amount of space (measured on ships by “tons” or “tonnage”) per passenger would tend to raise the costs of transport per passenger, at least for vessels that were otherwise travelling with full loads and with tonnage levels below the prescribed legal minimums.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See Wertheimer, pp. 15-16, 50-51, Garrard, pp. 46-47, Baines, “Labor Markets, pp. 39-40, Bade,, pp. 366, 374.

<sup>34</sup> Zolberg.

Because such requirements did not generally keep pace with the increases in space per passenger that were occurring anyway due to technological innovations, scale economies, and the associated steady long term rise in average ship size, the effects on costs tended to be minimal and to impact the routing more than the volume of migration. Nonetheless, there remains the somewhat paradoxical effect that rules reducing the crowdedness, discomfort, and risks of the voyage for incoming migrants in America were motivated, to some extent, by desires for reduced numbers of certain kinds of immigrants, not just by desires for less overwrought and exhausted arrivals. An example of this occurred as part of the compromise package put together in 1907 for the last major revision of immigration laws in the USA prior to World War I.<sup>35</sup>

A second example of improved travel conditions for immigrants resulting from increased limitations on immigration, came about through the development and segmentation of the travel market by shipping lines. The adoption of formal governmental inspection regimes at entry ports, such as the Ellis Island station at New York, and at departure docks in Europe, starting in the early 1890s (and the associated exclusion of a never more than miniscule, but growing fraction, of would-be immigrants on grounds of health or fitness for work) essentially relied on an older rule-of-thumb equation of steerage passenger with migrant. A would-be immigrant could accordingly avoid most of the scrutiny, and thus most of the risk of debarment (albeit small anyway), by travelling in second class rather than in steerage. Assiduous efforts at closing this loophole, especially by Ellis Island officials came to nought before World War I, mainly because of the diplomatic and practical challenges of accurately and properly distinguishing the small number of foreign visitors who travelled in second class but who were not migrants, from the large majority of second class arrivals who were immigrants. A preponderance of evidence indicates that inspection avoidance was

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<sup>35</sup> U.S. government regulations adopted as part of the 1907 Immigration Act mandated an increase in ship space per passenger in steerage, but to a level below that generally in effect. Nonetheless, the companies got the indirect message and stepped up plans to add closed-berth capacity, and upgrade the quality of conditions in the open berths. In its 1908 annual report, for example, NDL announced the installation of “a special third class for better situated emigrants which approaches the appointments in second class.” It also mentioned plans for a “thorough improvement of its [open-berth] steerage accommodations,” which were to be implemented “as quickly as practicable”, and the introduction of special “inspectors” to monitor steerage areas of ships during voyages. ( NDL annual report, 1908 (issued March 1909), p. 4. See also 1911, p. 5 and 1913, p. 9. ..[der Dampfer ]...wird...eine besondere III. Klasse für besser situierte Auswanderer erhalten, die annähernd den Einrichtungen der zweiten Kajüte entspricht...Wir haben im Interesse unserer Zwischendeckpassagiere eine durchgreifende Verbesserung der Zwischendeckseinrichtungen beschlossen, welche auf unseren sämtlichen Dampfern dieser Linien mit möglicher Beschleunigung zur Einführung gelangen wird...durch Anstellung besonderer Reiseinspektoren [haben wir] eine spezielle Überwachung des Zwischendeckverkehrs während der Reise eingeführt...” ).

responsible for only a fairly small minority of migrants choosing to travel in second class, Here again, however, policies and practices basically aimed at immigration control (albeit the screening out of a small fraction of “bad apples” rather than large-scale curtailment) were indirectly contributing, at least to some small extent, to an improvement in the overall average conditions of migrants’ journeys to the USA.

It is important to bear in mind, however, that the restrictionist movement in the USA enjoyed broad and growing but mostly only tepid popular support in the decades prior to the First World War. A severe, though not total, exclusion of Chinese immigrants was adopted in the 1880s and maintained thereafter, but the restrictionists’ initial goal vis-à-vis Europe, a literacy test which they hoped would disproportionately bar “new Immigrants” from Southern and Eastern Europe, did not pass Congress with either a supportive president, or a veto-proof margin until 1917.

The actual US policy between 1890 and 1914 amounted essentially to a series of compromises heavily favoring a continued open border to Europe, but offering periodic sops to the restrictionists. The latter mostly took the form of qualitative controls that had minimal quantitative effects on migration, and which also served practical purposes of crowd control, risk management, and statistical measurement.<sup>36</sup> In that laissez-faire era of big business and small government, U.S. authorities, and to a lesser extent their European counterparts, generally adhered to a series of defacto quid pro quo arrangements whereby shipping companies managed many of new procedures for crowd management and scrutiny, while the politicians refrained from any serious curtailment of the overall mass migration volume and its associated revenues for transport providers.<sup>37</sup> Measures to limit crowding and delays, monitor and maintain hygienic standards, and enforce a consistent and transparent set of rules on “excluded classes” of would-be immigrants also helped make migration a more predictable and less onerous process for migrants themselves, however.

The actions of U.S. Immigration authorities were often constrained. On-board inspections of living quarters, dining rooms and wash rooms, on just-arrived vessels at New York, were carried out with varying regularity and severity starting in 1902, for instance, but other than writing up the findings, sometimes accompanied by scoldings of shipping line

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<sup>36</sup> Examples: passenger lists, etc. US Immigration Acts summarized in Dillingham Report, vol. 39.

<sup>37</sup> Other “carrots” provided by governments to shipping lines included the carriage of public mails, the maintenance of protectionist rules in home ports. Other “sticks,” in America at least were a series of punishments for companies failing to properly screen, process, and account for their arriving migrant passengers.

executives in private letters, there were limited mechanisms for enforcing standards of hygiene, separation of the sexes, etc., and no effective means for punishing violations. The most potent tool of public pressure was usually the publicity of journalists and Congressional investigations.

One such example occurred as part of the Dillingham Commission's work.<sup>38</sup> In 1908, following a practice used informally from time to time by reporters, the commission sent inspectors, disguised as immigrants, to travel on ships, observe conditions and report. That set of inspections was eventually summarized in volume 37 of the commission's report issued in 1911, but key findings were leaked to Congress already in 1909. The essential conclusion of the inspectors amounted a general damning of what they called the "Old Steerage" (open-berths) and consistent, though not fulsome, praise for the "New Steerage" (closed-berths). The general underlying trend towards more of the latter form of accommodation was thus given an additional fillip.

These various examples are not exhaustive, but they are illustrative, and taken in toto they do not confirm usual historical assumptions about why travel conditions improved, e.g. humanitarian pressures and competition between shipping firms on travel quality. That does not mean that these factors were irrelevant, but it does indicate that much, and probably most, of the improvement occurred as an indirect by-product of decisions reached and practices implemented mainly for other reasons. This finding that travel improvements for migrants

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<sup>38</sup> The "Immigration Commission" chaired by Senator William P. Dillingham, a Republican from Vermont mildly supportive of immigration restriction was established as part of the compromise package in the Immigration Act of 1907 (see three footnote prior to this one). The final report of the Dillingham Commission was published in final form in 1911 to mixed reviews. The restrictionist majority on the commission came to pre-conceived conclusions not well-supported by the voluminous but well-organized actual data that was gathered by their staff during three and half years of field work and analysis, however that information compilation was -with some exceptions- conducted objectively, competently, and thoroughly. In the progressive spirit of the times, the commissioners believed that a scientific study would buttress their arguments for immigration restriction and a literacy test. When the results came out otherwise, they fudged their arguments (as the cogent and oft-quoted 1912 review by Hourwich adeptly showed) but they did not tamper with the underlying reports and statistics themselves (Just, *Ost*, p. 258).

Despite its flaws, the Dillingham Report does not deserve the wholesale condemnation given it by some later histories of the period (e.g. Dawley, p. 112, where it is characterized as a "forty-one-volume manifesto for restricting the new immigration" (the 42nd volume -of indexes- apparently thus absolved from being part of the "manifesto").) Remove the thin layer of ill-fitting conclusions, the minuscule portion containing polemical comment and easily detachable pseudo-science about skull sizes and inherent racial traits, and toss out the larger quantity of essentially meaningless bean-counting, and what remains are thousands of pages of highly detailed, well-organized and very informative quantitative and qualitative data that supports and illuminates quite well the non-restrictionist policies actually in place during those years. It is among the most comprehensive studies of immigration ever made.



had mostly indirect causes, also suggests, and not erroneously, that the effects of those improvements were also more indirect than direct.

## **6. The significance of improvements to travel conditions on the North Atlantic after 1890**

There was no way for the 16 million Europeans who migrated to the USA between 1890 and 1914 to reach that largest of all immigration countries without crossing the Atlantic on a steamship. This means that, one way or another, all of them were customers of that steamship oligopoly, and that the Atlantic crossing was the one essential common denominator of this most ethnically diverse of all mass migrations. For almost every individual migrant, however, the oceanic traverse was essentially a means to end, not an end in itself. The crossing was not viewed as a pleasant holiday excursion, even by migrants accustomed to the more rugged travel standards of that era, and travelling on the most modern vessels at the end of the period.

Despite rising rates of repeat migration over time, a majority of migrants in this period still made only one single, westward crossing.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, it can be assumed that most migrants had some idea about the nature of the Atlantic crossing, relayed to them by their predecessors, and that this often included an awareness of basic differences between second class and third class, open berths and closed berths, etc. But, this knowledge does not seem to have made much impact on migration decisions. Second class was a better bargain for the fare than steerage, and a growing minority of migrants travelled in second, but there is no discernable effect of the growing availability of second class berths upon the pattern of when or by which route migrants travelled, for instance. The incidence of closed berths in third class differed by route and by vessel, but routes and vessels with high proportions of closed berths in steerage were basically the same routes vessels preferred by migrants anyway because they were safer, cheaper and faster.

The most basic of cross-border migration decisions, to go abroad or stay in the home country, has clear correlates in the modern period generally and across the turn-of-the-twentieth century North Atlantic in particular. Young, physically fit Europeans of modest

means but not destitute, with personal, familial, and economic circumstances facilitating or at least not inhibiting departure, and with already successfully-migrated kinsfolk in North America ahead of them were much more likely to relocate than the average European.

The availability of relatively less uncomfortable and more private closed berth quarters on a ship is not among these strongly correlating factors, however. Authoritative measurements or reasonable estimates of the breakdown between closed and open berths in third class, and annual passenger tallies (for first, second, and third class, east and west) were available and compiled for 1900-14, for 169 vessels which took one-third of second and third class passengers between Europe and the US during those years.<sup>40</sup> Ships with above average provisions of closed berths (25% of third class slots) also enjoyed above average rates of capacity utilization by passengers, but the difference is too small to be statistically significant. The all-time high point of North Atlantic crossings relative to population levels occurred on sailing ships in the late 1840s and early 1850s where travel conditions were much more arduous than on even the most rugged open-berth steerage quarters on pre 1890 steamships.<sup>41</sup>

A causal role for travel conditions is much more likely for repeat migration. Migrants making a second Atlantic traverse had, of course, direct experience with on-board conditions and –by virtue of a typically remunerative intervening period of work and life in America– tended to be financially better equipped than first-time migrants for the possible choice of a somewhat and comfortable and more convenient closed berth in second or third class on a reliable boat of a reputable line. It is therefore certainly a plausible hypothesis that some repeat crossings were motivated in part by the likelihood of a better experience on the open sea. The general upgrading of conditions over time would have added assurance of an improvement versus the earlier traverse.

Classically-defined “repeat migration” (non-first-time crossings from Europe to the USA) rose only slightly over the period 1900 to 1914, for which accurate figures are available, but an even more numerous form of repeat migration were eastward crossings to Europe from North America. Although the trend of this “return migration”, for example as shown in Appendix 1, is obscured by cyclical ups and downs, eastward moves grew considerably faster than westbound moves over this fifteen year span. One way to highlight

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<sup>39</sup> Keeling, “Repeat,” pp. 10-14.

<sup>40</sup> See Appendix 3 below.

<sup>41</sup> Based on European populations given in McEvedy and Jones.

this result is by omitting months when the US economy was in recession and eastbound returns to Europe were atypically high. Viewed in this manner, eastbound traverses relative to westbound grew over time as follows: 1901-03: 28%, 1905-07: 31%, 1909-10: 40%, 1912-13: 40%. This trend certainly appears to corroborate the claim, put forth starkly by Dudley Baines but widely echoed elsewhere, that “the main reason for the increase in the rate of return to all countries was the improvement in transport.”<sup>42</sup> That conclusion is reinforced by a similar though less precisely measurable trend from 1870-99<sup>43</sup> and by observing that, between 1900 and 1914, neither the ethnic mixture of migrants, nor their regional destinations within America, nor inflation-adjusted fares or other migration costs, nor transit times, nor legal barriers to migration changed much at all.

This finding remains only tentative, however. The possibility of other factors –general changes in personal or political circumstances, or in labor market conditions, favoring medium term over long term American sojourns, for instance- is not yet disposed of. The direction of causation is also an important issue. There is at least anecdotal evidence of improvements in on-board conditions being partly a response by shipping lines to the growth in numbers of relatively savvy repeat migrants.<sup>44</sup>

This last point, however, attenuates but does not negate the basic conclusion alluded to earlier, that the most important reason why North Atlantic passenger shipping lines increased their provision of closed berths and associated amenities with each new generation of steamers, was in order to seize the rapid growth in vessel size as an opportunity to build in more flexibility for tackling their most crucial business challenge: capacity management. Unlike open berths, closed berths (in second class or third) could be used interchangeably between (budget minded, second class) tourists and migrants –groups with directionally offsetting seasonal movement patterns.<sup>45</sup> Very high fixed costs, meant that any resulting increase in capacity utilization rates would be multiplied many-fold in terms of their positive impact upon the shipping companies’ bottom line profitability.

Although not exactly inadvertent, this largely indirect improvement of conditions undertaken on the part of steamship lines was reinforced by a somewhat similarly round-about push for improvements given by public authorities, particularly in the USA. The key

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<sup>42</sup> Baines, p. 39

<sup>43</sup> Keeling, “Repeat,” Table 1, p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Steiner, p. 335

<sup>45</sup> In essence, the westward peak of migrants occurred in the late spring, as the eastward flow of U.S. tourists was rising towards its early summer peak. See Keeling, “Transportation Revolution: and “Capacity.”

concern of most policy-makers was to reduce the risks of migration. These most especially included the practical risks to public safety posed by mass inflows of foreigners, and the associated dangers of imported disease, crime and “pauperism.” Bureaucrats and politicians in America were motivated partly by desires for “progressive” social “reform” and partly by desires to use qualitative controls as a means of heading off the threat of quantitative restriction that was anathema then to key corporate interests and second-generation immigrant constituencies, though not of any great concern to a broader public that tended to tilt just slightly to the restrictionist side of general indifference.

Acting out of what might be regarded as “enlightened self-interest,” international networks of political and public officials thus promoted more order and more transparency in, but little real interference with, the processes of mass migration. At least some of these actions also helped reduce uncertainties for migrants and shipping concerns, however. Shipping lines, put in charge of much of the day-to-day tasks to fulfill these crowd control, inspection, tallying, and public safety goals, also used international networks to curb price competition, thereby reinforcing trends emphasizing improved quality of travel services. The immigrants who benefitted from these public safety measures and travel improvements were also, in turn, a core source of shipping revenues, as well as important grist for the mill of economic growth in America that enhanced the popularity of politicians there. The improvement of travel conditions thus also formed part of a kind of “virtuous circle” akin to Adam Smith’s now almost proverbial “invisible hand.”

The improvement of travel conditions on the North Atlantic, over the quarter century that ended with outbreak of World War I, produced only rather small quantitative effects on migration flows and patterns powerfully underway for other reasons. They did however give important symbolic reinforcement to growing notions of mass migration as a routine and repeatable phenomenon, rather than as the erstwhile, and stereotypical if not mythical, set of once-and-for-all “leaps into the unknown” achieved by rare breeds of courageous pioneers. A few examples may serve to illustrate this attitude.

Speaking around 1888, an Italian migrant said of America: “You will find good wages there, and if you can’t find anything, you can always come back.”<sup>46</sup> The underlying inference of a problem-free and always available “two-way street” between labor markets on

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<sup>46</sup> Wyman, p. 27, quotes here a migrant talking about a sales pitch of an emigrant agent, but goes on to draw the undeniable and broader inference: “You could always come back -this must be added to the list of new encouragements to emigrate in the latter decades of the [19th] century.”

either side of the Atlantic basin could only be enhanced by the further improvements to the conditions of transit, over the decades that followed.

A further application of this principle was the possibility of trying more than once “to find good wages.” As a sharp but short cyclical economic recession bottomed out in late 1908, the *New York Times* wrote:

"Come back" is the message that steamship agents, who watch the labor market, and those organizations which encourage alien settlers in this country, are sending by cable across the Atlantic to the thousands who left this side during the labor depression of the last year.<sup>47</sup>

Another form of repeat migration was witnessed on the docks of Boston's harbor in 1901:

“Good bye, Maggie: don't let the b'ys in the Old Country make yer forget what yer promised me.”

“That I won't Dennis: and do you practice yer own preaching”

So were two loving hearts separated as the great Dominion liner Commonwealth backed out of her dock...Maggie was going back to visit the old folks at home, while Dennis stays here and lays up the dollars pending the time when he shall have a bit of land and a house - and Maggie.<sup>48</sup>

In vivid terms not lacking in colorful hyperbole, the *New York Herald*, in 1909, summed up the travel improvements helping to facilitate such repeatable traverses:

The third class passenger in his twentieth century surroundings, is an aristocrat compared to his cousin who crossed a decade or less ago. He travels in the privacy of two berth, four berth or six berth room, eats three excellent meals a day...[can take] shower baths...[and]...like every other globe trotter...has his own deck corridor for exercise open in fair weather and covered when the ocean rages.

Were it not for his eagerness to reach the streets of the promised land where he expects to pick up gold for the trouble of stooping, the dazed immigrant with his life savings in a belt around his waist might be tempted to turn around at the pier and go back to his native land that he might revel in these new found delights on the ocean wave as long as his money lasted.<sup>49</sup>

This growing sense after 1900 that physical migration had become a readily repeatable form of travel, also suggests a broader insight into the underlying processes of modern mass migration more generally. Due in large measure to its networked character, mass migration often exhibits a “snowballing” effect, or as Dudley Baines more succinctly

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<sup>47</sup> *New York Times*, November 10, 1908, p. 4.

<sup>48</sup> *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 3, 1901.

<sup>49</sup> *New York Herald*, September 12, 1909, p. 12.

put it, “emigration causes emigration.”<sup>50</sup> Increasingly smooth and gradually less uncomfortable migration journeys across the North Atlantic a century ago helped reinforce this sort of “self-replicating” process. Other forms of self-replication, and the catalyzing of it, can be detected in other times and places.<sup>51</sup>

It may be instructive to speculate briefly upon what might have happened to mass transatlantic migration had World War I not occurred. One school of thought regards international mass migration as a reflection of large international “divergences”, e.g. in wage levels. From this perspective, however, the migration fostered by such divergences tends to lead ultimately to a convergence thereby reducing the international gaps which started the process off. If allowed to proceed unrestrained, “self-replicating” migration, in this view of it, will eventually be checked by a kind of “self-retardation,” as if migration were carrying with it the “seeds” of its own eventual undoing. A logical implication might be that relocation from Europe to the United States was likely to have diminished across the 20<sup>th</sup> century, even without the First World War, the ensuing regime change against open borders, and the Great Depression and Second World War which later followed and heavily reinforced new and strict legal curbs on immigration.

There is indeed evidence of significant wage convergence between the US and some European countries, especially in Scandinavia, during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. An inverted “U-shaped” rise and fall of migration from Northwest Europe more generally can be observed during this time period, and, arguably, attributed to such convergence. The analysis here, however, suggests a different set of mechanisms wherein self-replicating migration can be promoted or slowed by external forces, such as rising or falling barriers to movement.

The analogy may be rather stretched, but two centuries of essentially open-borders, between states of the USA, coupled with ongoing development of transportation links, does not appear to have resulted in any tremendous or lasting persisting reduction in either regional divergences or internal migration. In any case, the scenario of no “wrong turn” in Sarajevo in June, 1914 (e.g. and no World War I for any other reason either), and no resulting

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<sup>50</sup> Baines, p. 39.

<sup>51</sup> One might argue, for instance, that illegal or “undocumented” migration between Mexico and the US in recent decades has fostered the development of two roughly opposing political constituencies, one which depends economically on such migration, and the other which thrives on being able to rail against it. The two opposing “camps” have tended to cancel each other out, and have acted, for different reasons, to block “compromise” reforms of the type recently and unsuccessfully attempted, and so the status quo of large clandestine inflows, with seemingly inevitably associated social and political problems, continues unabated, despite a general consensus that these arrangements constitute, collectively, a “broken immigration system.”

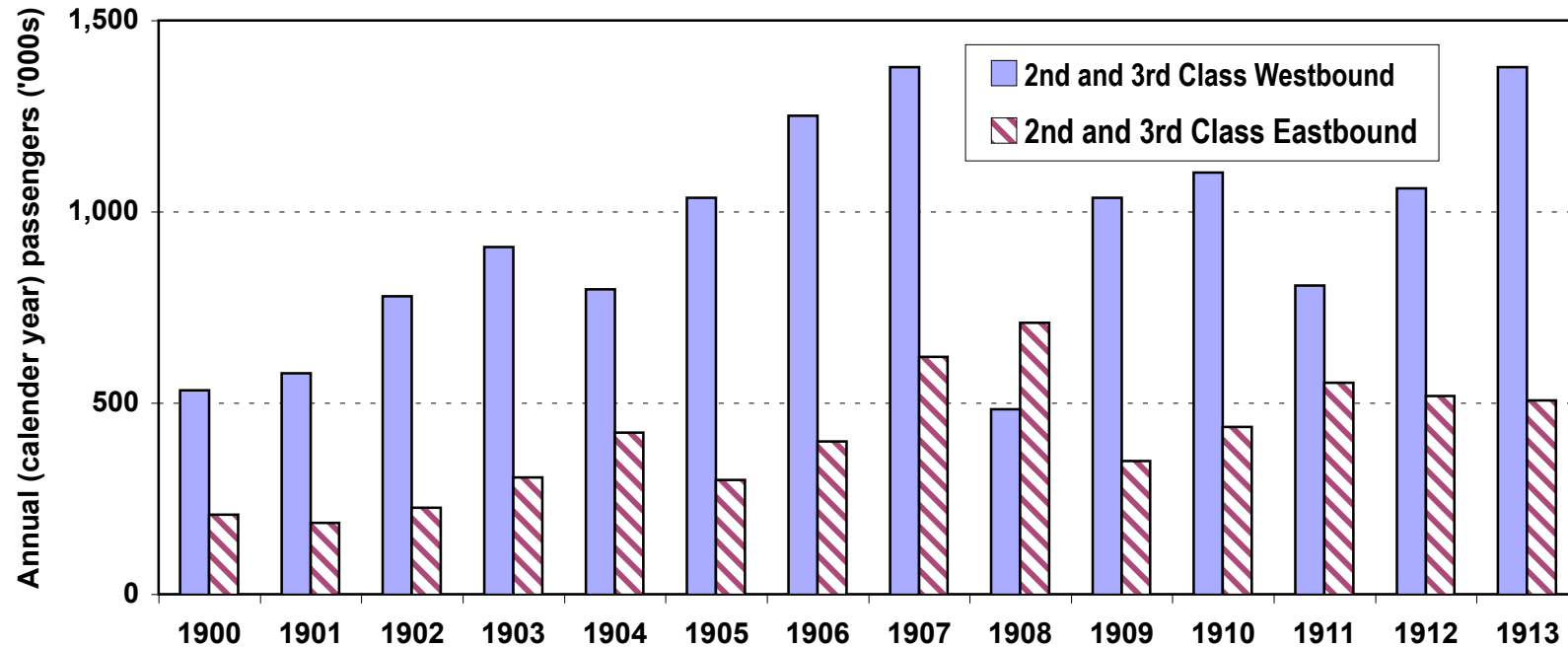
shutdown of open borders across the Atlantic, thereby permitting an essentially unchecked series of changes, new emerging and later diminishing divergences, and ongoing migration between Europe and North America on a sizable scale, cannot be ruled out as a realistic “counterfactual” possibility.

Certainly, the actual historical pattern of gradually decreasing discomforts, inconveniences, and physic costs of travelling between Europe and the United States a century ago stands in marked contrast to the blockades, submarine attacks, closed borders which came after 1914 and brought a never-since reversed end to the labor component of “the first era of globalization.” In August, 1914, the “lamps went out” for a generation. The barricades against what had been for many prior decades an almost completely “free” migration, however, went up then for good, it would seem. The ultimate historical significance of the improvements to travel conditions for North Atlantic migrants during 1890 to 1914 may lie in their role as hallmarks of a “bygone epoch” when transnational business networks, laissez-faire policies, ongoing technical advances and long-lived mass migration combined to reduce the barriers of distance into relative insignificance.

## APPENDIX 1

### Migrants between Europe and USA, 1900-1914

(measured by 2nd and 3rd Class passengers between all European ports and New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore)



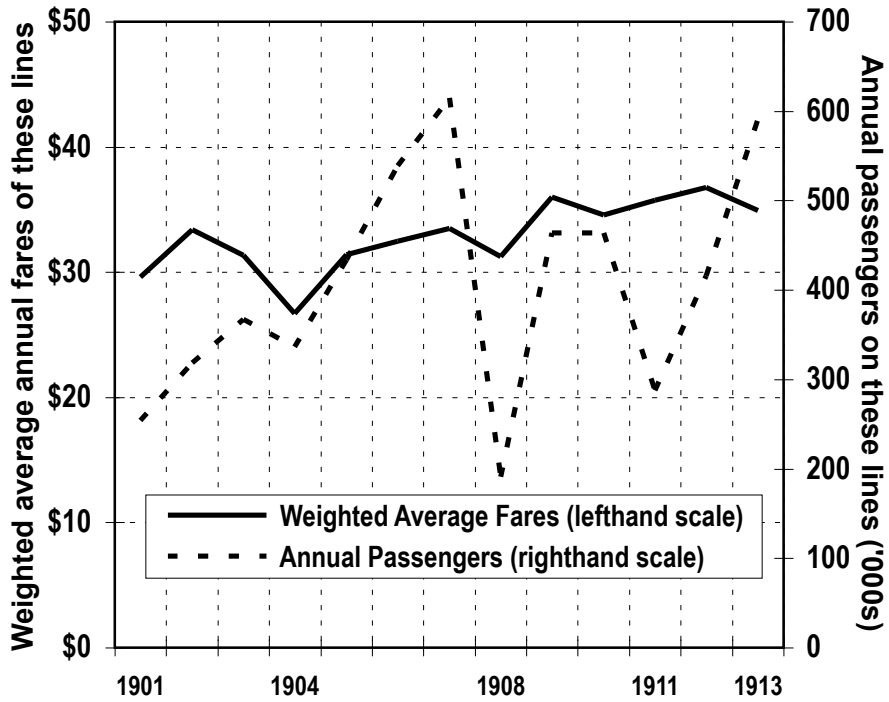
Source: Transatlantic Passenger Conferences Reports

Note: The data depicted here, second and third class passenger movements, overstate the number of migrant crossings on these routes by about four percent (mostly by including the minority of second class passengers who were actually tourists not migrants). This overcount is coincidentally almost exactly equal to the undercount resulting from not including here westbound migrants to the USA arriving at a port other than one of these four (see the first footnote in the text, and appendix 4 below). The more traditional U.S. Bureau of Immigration (BI) time series for "immigrants" undercounts migrants by over ten percent. . Roughly one fifth of the westbound crossings shown here were repeat traverses made by migrants who had already crossed westward earlier in this period. See Keeling, "Costs," Appendix 1.



## Appendix 2

### Westbound Steerage Passengers and Weighted Average Fares, 1901-13



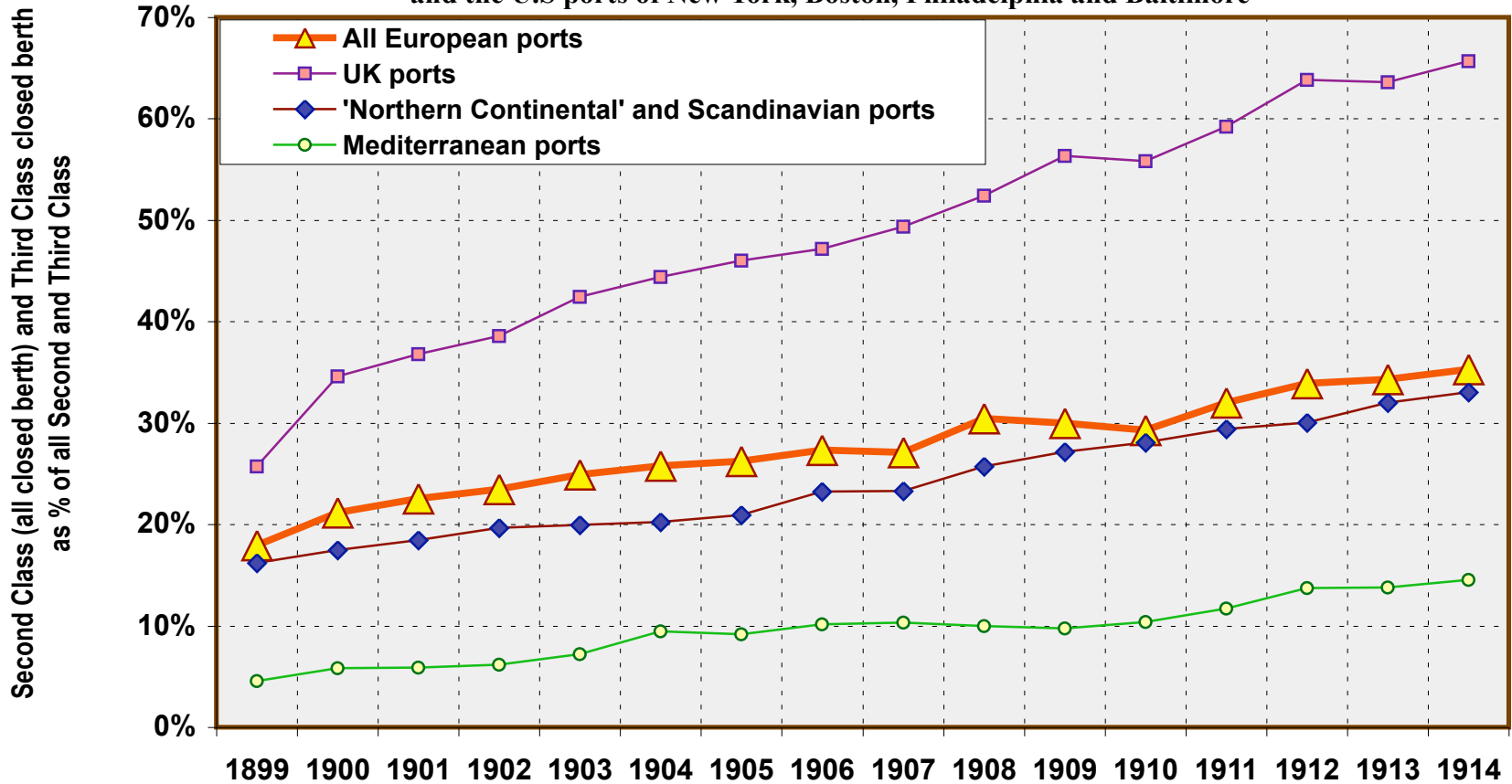
Data sources: See Keeling, "Costs," Appendix 5.

Note: 1904, 1908, and 1911 were recession years in the U.S.

(Jerome (1926), pp. 100-110)

### APPENDIX 3 Estimated %s of Closed Berths in Second and Third Class, 1899-1914

On voyages between three embarkation regions of Europe  
and the U.S ports of New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore



Source: Voyage Database used in Keeling, "Business."

Note: These estimates are derived from capacity figures for 169 vessels which carried one third of 2nd and 3rd class (migrant) passengers between Europe and America during these years. The overall percentage of closed berths on these vessels alone rose from 35% in 1900 to 54% in 1914, i.e. they were at a higher level than the overall averages estimated here, because modern express steamers with high rates of closed berths in third class and high proportions of second class berths are disproportionately represented in those 169 vessels.

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(list to be added)

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