

Emigrants from Ireland to America 1735-1743.
A transcription of the Report of the Irish House of Commons
into Enforced Emigration to America by Frances McDonnell
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Introduction



uring the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries over 60,000 men, women and children were involuntarily transported from the British Isles to the American colonies. The vast majority of these people were felons, but there were a number of political and religious dissidents such as the Cromwellian transportees of the 1650s. The English courts were far more likely to order the transportation of prisoners than were the Scottish or Irish courts, banishing about 50,000 prisoners to the colonies to work as indentured servants. The Scottish authorities ordered fewer than 3,000 prisoners to be transported and the Irish courts approximately 4,000.

In 1719 an Act was introduced into the Irish House of Commons for "the better and more effectual apprehending and transporting of felons and others," and given Royal assent on 8 March 1725.

The kidnapping and shipment of children to America and their sale as indentured servants began to cause concern, and in January 1743 the Irish Government established a committee to examine the whole system of transportation in detail.

Information presented to the committee contains valuable data pertaining to 2,000 Irish men and women transported to the American colonies during the mid-eighteenth century. As a result of this committee's investigations, further legislation was introduced in the Irish House of Commons in January 1752 tightening up the rules governing the transportation of prisoners.

The following is a transcript of the Report of the committee, as contained in the *Journal of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland*, Vol. 7 (1796).

Frances McDonnell
September 1991

There were two McClure ancestors who are around in or near this time period. James Andrew McClure (1650-1732) and son Robert McClure (1675-1739). Both of these men subsequently died "in the Atlantic Ocean, New Jersey". I looked over this report which was from the Journal of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland, Volume 7, 1796. I did not find any McClure's listed. But it is interesting.