

## **Emerald Isle**

Ship: 1736 tons: 215' x 42' x 21'

Built: 1853 by Trufant & Drummond at Bath, Maine

A famous clipper packet, the full-rigged *Emerald Isle* carried a total of 1280 Mormons in three voyages across the Atlantic Ocean.

The first passage began on 30 November 1855 at Liverpool with 350 Saints on board. Elder Philemon C. Merrill and his counselors, Elders Joseph France and Thomas B. H. Stenhouse, presided over the emigrant company. Captain George B. Cornish, a veteran mariner, commanded the vessel. In 1848 he was listed as master of the 895-ton ship *Sheridan*. The crossing was marked by some damage caused by high winds and heavy seas, the deaths of two children, and three marriages. After a relatively fast crossing of twenty-nine days the ship arrived on 29 December at New York harbor.

Almost four years later, on 20 August 1859, the *Emerald Isle* again skippered by Captain Cornish sailed out of Liverpool with fifty-four Saints aboard-fifty from Switzerland and Italy and four from England. Elder Henry Hug was in charge of the company. After a forty-two-day passage, of which there are no details, the vessel arrived on 1 October at New York.

This same ship began her third voyage with Mormon emigrants on 20 June 1868 at Liverpool. There were 876 Saints in the company, of which 627 were from Scandinavia and the rest from the British Isles. Elder Hans Jensen Hals presided over the company. His counselors were Elders James Smith and John Fagerberg. On this crossing the ship was commanded by a Captain Gillespie. After six days the square-rigger put into Queenstown harbor to take on fresh water, since the equipment to distill sea water for culinary use had broken down. On 29 June the voyage resumed, but life on shipboard became increasingly unpleasant. The officers and crew treated the Saints harshly, and Elder Hals protested to the captain and reminded him of the contractual and legal rights of the passengers. On one occasion a mate attacked a Sister Saunders, and a "Brother Jensen" pulled the mate away and chastised him. Soon a group of sailors threatened violence but were subdued after the master reprimanded the offender. According to the Church Emigration record, no other emigrating company was known to have received such bad treatment. "Fortunately this is the last company of Scandinavian Saints which crossed the Atlantic Ocean in a sailing vessel." However, it was not just the treatment from the ship's officers and crew that created unpleasantness, but the water became stagnant and unfit for use, causing much sickness among the emigrants. No less than thirty-seven deaths occurred. Although many children died of measles, it was felt that the drinking water contributed to the high death rate. During the three days of quarantine in the New York harbor thirty-eight sick emigrants were taken ashore. On 14 August-after a fifty-five-day passage-the Saints landed at Castle Garden.

Described by her owners-Tapscott's Line-as a half clipper in model and a packet clipper in rig, the *Emerald Isle* hailed out of New York and was the largest vessel built at Bath,

Maine, until the 1860s. She was somewhat full bodied, sharp, and heavily sparred. She was a three-decker but also had a forecandle deck with two large houses for a galley, storerooms, and crew's quarters and a small cabin abaft the main hatch. The first lower deck contained a steering cabin with a double tier of staterooms on each side running forward to the main hatch. Each of these staterooms had eight berths. This graceful ship had a figurehead of a dog in the act of leaping. Her stern was half round with a carved moulding which had the Harp of Erin in the center, an American Eagle on the right, and a dog on the left. Underneath were written the mottoes on the Irish and American coat of arms-Erin-go-Bragh and E Pluribus Unum. The *Emerald Isle* was among the first vessels to have standing rigging of wire. In 1885 she was sailing under the Dutch flag and renamed *Berendina Oriria* out of Batavia.

JORGENSEN, Hans <1828> Emerald Isle 1868  
 Age: 40 Origin: Espe, Denmark Occ: Farmer  
 Note: SMR, p. 33; Copenhagen Conference; Customs, p.7.  
 JORGENSEN, Maria Dorthea <1834> Emerald Isle 1868  
 Age: 34 Origin: Stege, Denmark  
 JORGENSEN, Lauritz <1861> Emerald Isle 1868  
 Age: 7 Origin: Stege, Denmark

#### Emerald Isle

Date of Departure: 20 Jun 1868 Port of Departure: Liverpool, England  
 LDS Immigrants: 876 Church Leader: Hans Jensen Hals  
 Date of Arrival: 14 Aug 1868 Port of Arrival: New York, New York  
 Source(s): BMR, Book #1048, pp. 322-332,370 (FHL #025,692); Customs  
 (FHL #175,654)

Notes: "DEPARTURES. -- The magnificent packet ship Emerald Isle sailed from this port for New York on the 20th June, with a company of Saints numbering in all 876 souls. Of these 627 were from Scandinavia, and the rest from the British Isles. The following named returning missionaries were in the company: -- Elders Hans Jensen Hals, John Fagerberg, and Peter Hansen, from the Scandinavian Mission; and James Smith and Henry Barlow, from the British Mission; also Samuel Southwick, James Stuart, Andrew Simmons, and Elisha Peck, native elders, who have been travelling in the ministry. Elder Hans Jensen Hals was appointed president of the company, and Elders James Smith and John Fagerberg his counsellors. Previous to sailing, a meeting was held on deck, when the Saints were addressed by Elder Carl Widerborg in Danish, and Elder Charles W. Penrose in English. Everyone was in good spirits, and was thankful to the God of Israel for deliverance from Babylon. . . ."  
 <MS, 30:27 (July 4, 1868), p.426>

"Sat. 20. [June 1868] -- The packet ship Emerald Isle sailed from Liverpool, England, with 876 Saints, under the direction of Hans Jensen Hals. It arrived at New York harbor, after an unpleasant voyage, Aug. 11th. The emigrants landed on the 14th and arrived at Benton, on the Union Pacific Railroad, about seven hundred miles west from Omaha,

Aug. 15th Thirty-seven deaths occurred on the ocean, and others died in the hospital in New York."  
<CC, p.78>

". . . About 630 emigrants left Copenhagen by the steamer 'Hansia,' June 13, 1868. On the departure the brethren had considerable trouble with the police authorities in Copenhagen. After a successful voyage across the North Sea, the company arrived in Hull, England, on Tuesday, June 16th, and in the evening of the same day they went by train to Liverpool. Here they found accommodations in seven different hotels, where they, with the exception of one place, received anything but decent treatment; and when they on the 19th went on board the ship 'Emerald Isle,' they were insulted in most every imaginable way. On the 20th the ship sailed from Liverpool, carrying a company of emigrants consisting of 877 souls, of whom 627 were Scandinavians, all in charge of Elders Hans Jensen (Hals) as president with James Smith and John Fagerberg as assistants. Elder Peter Hansen was appointed commissary for the Scandinavians, and Elder Mons Pedersen, who had labored faithfully for four years in the mission office in Copenhagen, was chosen as secretary. Eighteen other Scandinavian emigrants sailed this year by other ships, some of them from Hamburg and some from Norway. On June 26th the 'Emerald Isle' sailed into the harbor of Queenstown to take fresh water on board, as a certain machine on the vessel used to distill seawater for culinary purposes was out of commission and could not speedily be repaired. While the ship waited at Queenstown Elders Hans Jensen (Hals) and James Smith had an excellent opportunity to accompany the captain on a railway trip to Cork. On the 29th the ship left Queenstown, but the voyage after that was anything but pleasant. The emigrants received very rough and harsh treatment, both from officers and crew, and only by the strong protest of Elder Hans Jensen (Hals) in their behalf did they succeed in getting a part of their rights according to the contract made. On one occasion, when one of the ship's mates attacked a sister by the name of Sander, Brother Jensen took hold of the mate and pulled him away, while sharply reproofing him for his conduct. Soon a lot of sailors came up ready for a fight, but the incident ended when the offender got a severe reprimand from the captain, whom Brother Jensen reminded of the promises made. No other company of emigrating Saints from Scandinavia are known to have met with such bad treatment as this on board any ship in crossing the Atlantic Ocean. Fortunately it was the last company of Scandinavian Saints which crossed the Atlantic in a sailing vessel. From that time on only steamers were employed in the transportation of the Saints. It was not alone the rough treatment which the emigrants received from the ship's crew that made the voyage so unpleasant, but the water taken on board at Queenstown soon became stagnant and unfit for use, causing much sickness among the passengers, and no less than 37 deaths occurred on the voyage. Many of these, however, were caused by measles among the children, but the stagnant water, which all the passengers had to use, was undoubtedly the real cause of the heavy death rate. On August 11th the ship arrived at the entrance of New York harbor and 30 of the sick were taken ashore on Staten Island. The following day (August 12th) eight other sick people were landed, and finally, after being held in quarantine three days, the rest of the emigrants were landed at Castle Garden, August 14th. On the same day a steamer conveyed the emigrants a few miles up the Hudson River, where they found shelter in a warehouse for a couple of days, while their baggage

was being weighed. While staying there a boy belonging to the company died. On the 17th the journey was resumed by railway from New York and the emigrants traveled via Niagara, Detroit and Chicago to Council Bluffs, where they arrived on the 21st. The following day (August 22nd) they were taken across the Missouri River by a steamboat and thence they traveled by the Union Pacific Railroad to Benton, seven hundred miles west of Omaha, arriving there in the morning of August 25th. Here the Church teams met the emigrants and took them to their camp on the Platte River, about six miles from Benton, where they remained till August 31st, when the Scandinavian Saints took up the journey across the mountains by ox train led by Captain John G. Holman, while the English emigrants about the same time left by mule teams. Elder Hiram B. Clawson acted this year as emigration agent for the Church. The English Saints traveling with mule teams could ride, while the Scandinavians traveling with slow ox teams, walked most of the way to Salt Lake City. Sickness continuing to rage among the Scandinavian emigrants, about thirty died between New York and Salt Lake City, where the surviving part of this, the 28th, company of emigrating Saints from Scandinavia arrived on the 25th of September, 1868. . . ."

<HSM, pp.201-03>