



American Immigrants

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1st stop

The passage

Most of the immigrants who came to America were from Eastern and Southern Europe. They walked or went on horseback. They went on a steamship. The people were divided. First and second class people had rooms, while third class people had to go in steerage, a place on the bottom of the boat. The trip was usually one to two weeks long.



2nd stop

The arrival

The trip to America was hard for a lot of immigrants. The ship was dirty and crowded. The immigrants were happy when they saw the Statue of Liberty. Everybody would cheer when they saw it. Some people would even weep with joy! It was a good part of the trip for the immigrants. People thought the Statue of Liberty meant they were in America. They still had to pass multiple tests before they could come into America.



3rd stop

The baggage room

Officers greeted the passengers when they arrived on Ellis Island. The immigrants got numbered tags. They went inside the building to go to the baggage room. They had to leave their precious belongings before they could go to the register room. They even had a concession stand there that sold sandwiches and hot dogs!



4th stop

The stairs to the registry room

The immigrants went up the stairs to the registry room. They held their bundles tightly. They had a lot of people in front of them. If you were an immigrant going up there, you would have to wait in line for a long time. There would usually be about a thousand people in front of you.



5th stop

The Registry Room

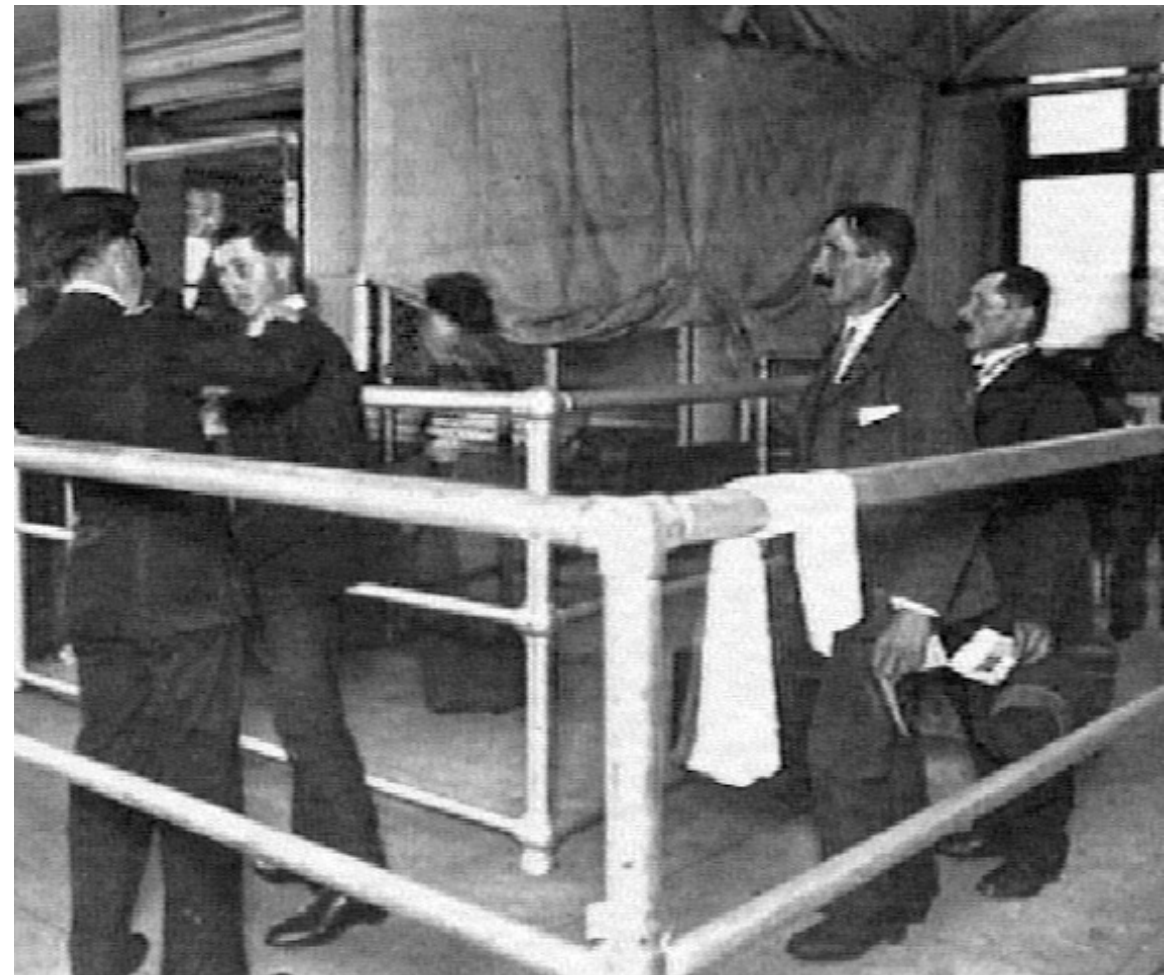
Immigrants finally got into the registry room. It was nicknamed the Great Hall because it was very big. The room had railings and benches for people to sit on. People decided if the immigrants could go right to America or if they needed to be checked again.



6th stop

The Medical Exam

The officers decided if the people who required further examination were okay to come into America. They took little notes, like if the person looked like they had trouble breathing. They marked the immigrants. A certain symbol would say what was wrong with the person. The person would either be denied access or be able to come to America.



7th stop

The Legal Admission

People had their name on a list. The officers had the list of people. They gave the lists to other people, who read them and did the next course of action. They had inspectors, who helped the immigrants communicate with each other. The inspector had to be able to speak a lot of languages. The inspectors asked twenty nine questions. If they did not answer right, they would be detained.



8th stop Detainees

People who were detained had to stay on the third floor of Ellis Island. They would wait for up to a month there. They would be able to plead their case. People who were detained for medical reasons were kept in quarantine or in the hospital. They would be able to stay or they would have to go back home.



9th stop

The Stairs of Separation

These stairs were where the immigrants separated from each other. People going west or south went to the right side. People going to New York or North went to the left side of the stairs. At the end of the stairs there was a post office. There was also a place where people exchanged their money at home for US dollars.



10th stop The Kissing Post

This was the place immigrants were reunited with their family. This place was on the first floor of Ellis Island. It was called the Kissing Post because it was where the families all kissed and hugged each other. The immigrants were relieved. They finally were in America.



Summary About the Immigrants



The immigrants had to wait a long time before they got into America. They had to get checked. They also had to answer 29 questions with no mistakes. They had to wait in line. The immigrants had to go down the stairs of separation. It was all worth it for them. All of them were reunited. Best of all, they finally got into America to start their new life!