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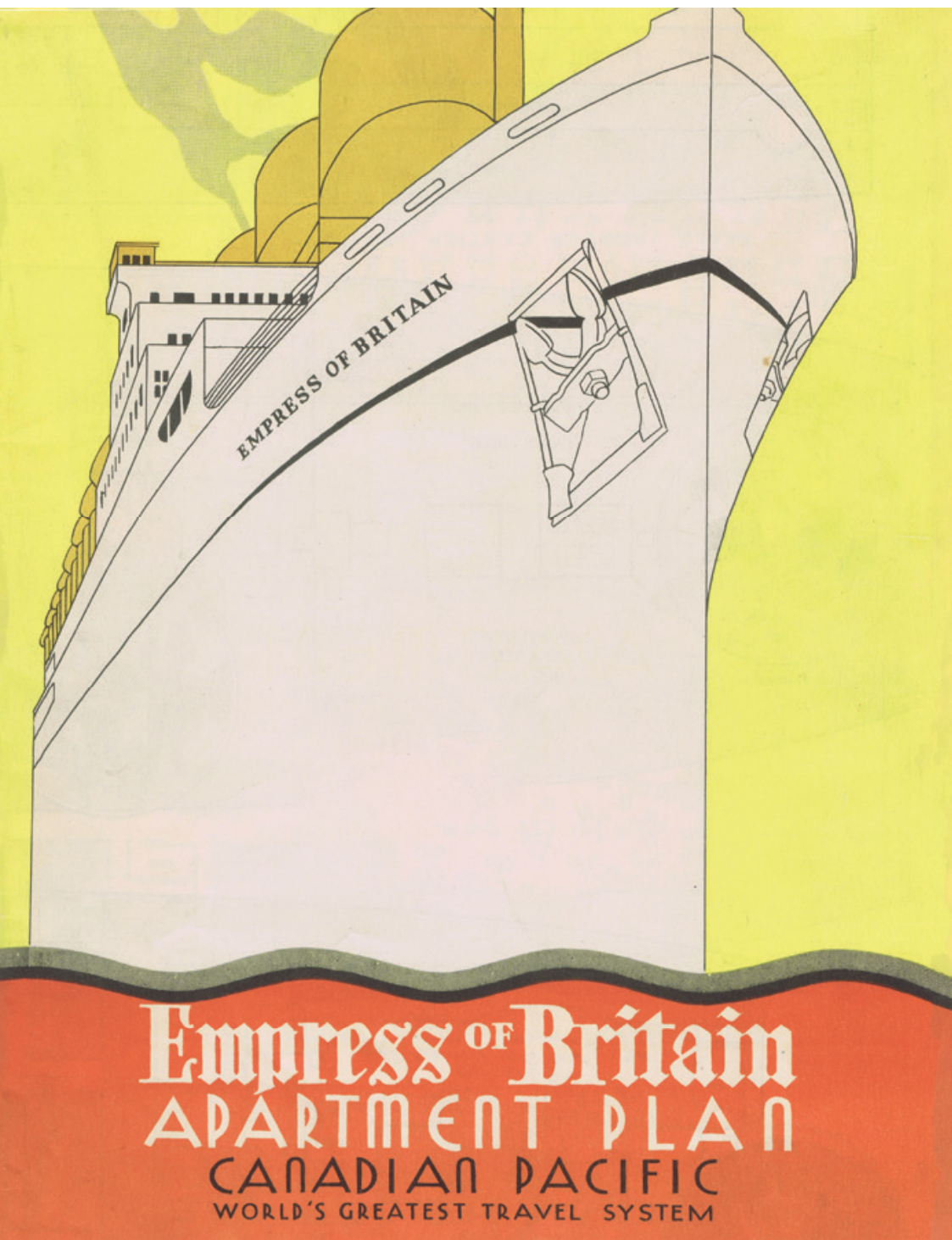
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PREFACE

In the very early 1950s my parents took me to England, their country of birth, to visit relatives they hadn't seen since before the Second World War. In an era when commercial transatlantic flights were in their relative infancy, we went by ship – Cunard's tired old RMS *Franconia* eastbound, and the same company's superliner, RMS *Queen Elizabeth*, westward.

Some fifteen years later, when I saw a grouping of five souvenir ocean liner lapel pins at a Sunday morning antiques fair in Woodstock, near Oxford, I knew that I had to collect them. Then I found enamelled souvenir spoons, napkin rings, tea strainers and other such mementoes. As the collecting bug took hold, my focus turned to other North Atlantic ocean liner material, and eventually to other routes.

Ephemera, the bits and pieces of everyday life on board, help to reconstruct the diverse pleasures of a voyage. The berthing card that you received upon boarding, for example, gave you your first task – booking a table for dinner. At about the same time



This is an excellent picture of our ship. We have 650 passengers on board, 350 in the crew. It is like a small town sailing the Blue Mediterranean. We are both making fine sailors and enjoying every minute of the journey. I cannot settle down to write letters. I am just sending cards. Hope you are all as well as we are. W.H. & Auntie Murch.

The Murches are shown as being from St Thomas, Ontario – they were among the few non-Americans on the ship.

Other ships competed in the cruise market in Europe. Summer cruises to Norway's North Cape were popular offerings. The 1930s saw some beautiful art deco images on the covers of cruise booklets produced by British tour providers such as the Orient Line, the Blue Star Line and the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, to Norway (FIG. 5) and other Scandinavian destinations.

Creative minds in shipping-line promotional departments sought reasons for special cruises. An intriguing example is a cruise to Gallipoli and Salonika, site of heavy fighting and grievous loss of life during the First World War, on the twentieth anniversary of the campaign in 1936 (FIG. 6). Described in the booklet as a 'wonderful opportunity for re-union', the trip included shore excursions to these places, as well as to Malta and Istanbul. One wonders how the men who fought in that disastrous campaign would have felt about returning to the killing fields that they had survived.

SHIPPING CHOICES

Considerations by prospective travellers included the country of ownership of the shipping line; the size of the ship; the general style of the ship and its reputation; and the scheduled sailing dates. Choices were constrained to a degree by where

5 This striking art deco image promotes a 1930s' cruise to Norway on an Orient Line ship.

6 (overleaf) A brochure for a 1936 tour of Gallipoli and Salonika on Cunard's *Lancastria*.



Empress of Britain

ROUND THE WORLD CRUISE ITINERARY

Ports	Miles	Arrive	Leave
New York.....			Jan. 9
Madeira.....	2774	Jan. 15	Jan. 16
Gibraltar.....	616	Jan. 18	Jan. 18
Algiers.....	419	Jan. 19	Jan. 20
Monaco.....	461	Jan. 21	Jan. 23
Naples.....	366	Jan. 24	Jan. 25
Athens.....	677	Jan. 27	Jan. 27
Haifa.....	673	Jan. 29	Jan. 29
Port Said.....	174	Jan. 25
Suez.....	90	Feb. 5
Bombay.....	2963	Feb. 12	Feb. 19
Colombo.....	890	Feb. 22	Feb. 26
Penang.....	1287	Mar. 1	Mar. 1
Singapore.....	394	Mar. 2	Mar. 3
Bangkok.....	803	Mar. 6	Mar. 6
Batavia.....	1273	Mar. 9	Mar. 11
Semarang.....	236	Mar. 12	Mar. 12
Bali.....	419	Mar. 14	Mar. 15
Manila.....	1640	Mar. 19	Mar. 20
Hong Kong.....	633	Mar. 21	Mar. 25
Shanghai.....	850	Mar. 28	Mar. 29
Chinwangtao.....	660	Mar. 31	Apr. 4
Beppu.....	834	Apr. 7	Apr. 8
Kobe.....	216	Apr. 8	Apr. 12
Yokohama.....	356	Apr. 13	Apr. 16
Honolulu.....	3405	Apr. 23	Apr. 24
San Francisco.....	2100	Apr. 29	Apr. 30
Los Angeles.....	395	May 1	May 2
Balboa.....	2937	May 8	May 9
Cristobal.....	38	May 9	May 9
New York.....	1972	May 14
	30,551		

19./21 By 1937 Canadian Pacific was using its flagship *Empress of Britain* for an annual world cruise, covering some 30,551 miles. In a recession-ravaged economy, the number of affluent prospective travellers was limited, and there was a challenge to visit new ports each year.

Wealth was a vital ingredient. With some cabins costing as much as \$12,300 per person for the suite, including shore excursions, a couple could spend almost \$25,000 for the trip, at a time when a teacher earned less than a thousand dollars a year. For the budget traveller, rooms were available for as little as \$2,150 per person, and there were also single cabins S1 to S12, for servants' quarters, at \$1,750 per person.

There was good reason for the cost – the cruise covered 30,551 miles, visited many ports (as shown in FIG. 19) and carried a large staff to cater to the passengers. Thirteen cruise directors and a social directress came at a price! Note that there was even a press representative and two chaplains. For many years Canadian Pacific even carried two on-board artists, the DeMuths, a married couple who drew images of places visited and sights seen, to sell to passengers on board as postcards. How many designs are there? An American collector of the genre has some 200 different postcards, but there could be more. As well as postcard-sized images, some were available in sets in a larger format suitable for framing: a set from a 1928 cruise is known.

HAMBURG-AMERICAN LINE

German shipping, recovering quickly from the First World War and the depredation of war reparations, soon returned to the world cruise fray. The delightful cover on an SS *Resolute* world cruise brochure of 1928 features drawings of bejewelled elephants and decorated howdahs, oxen pulling elaborate ceremonial carts, and other stereotypical images of exotic foreign lands beckoning to the traveller. The prospect of 140 days on board might have deterred some, but it certainly made the experience more suitable for bragging about.

RESEARCHING AND BOOKING THE TRIP

By the time that a prospective traveller had decided where and when they wanted to go, the next stage was to book the trip with a shipping agent. This could be a ponderous and inefficient process, involving communication between the shipping line and a local travel agent, but it added to the sense of ceremony that attended ocean liner travel.

The agent would produce a deck plan, enabling passengers to select their cabin. Most desirable were the cabins amidships – in a head sea, the impact of the pitching would be felt least in the middle of the ship. For the passenger who did not appreciate late-night revellers, distance from staircases and elevator traffic was a consideration.

Booking the ocean travel was only part of the trip. First, one had to get to the port of departure. For a woman from Newcastle sailing on a cruise out of London in 1936, there was first the challenge of getting to the Boat Train's point of departure. There was a distinction and a thrill in being on a 'Boat Train'. You had a special baggage tag. You and your companions were all destined for the ship, so you got a preview of faces that you would next see on board. The woman from Newcastle, who was going on a Canadian Pacific Mediterranean cruise, describes the experience:

We arrived at St Pancras in good time for the Boat Train and after collecting the luggage we joined the already huge crowd waiting for the train. It was more like a football match and by the time we got into a carriage we were breathless. We left London in a thunderstorm, and finally arrived at Tilbury after 14 stops on the way.

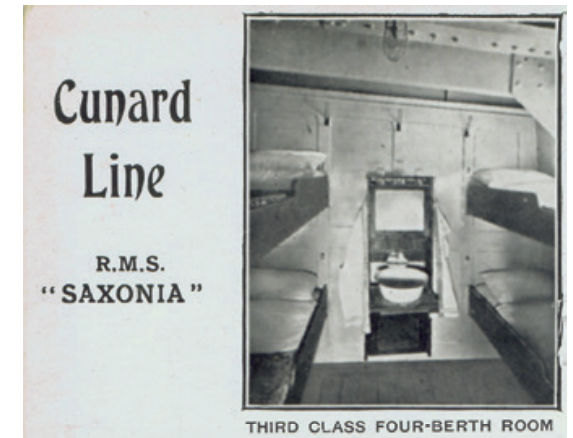
The more expensive the cabin, the more space the traveller enjoyed. A four-berth (two upper and two lower) cabin in

Tourist Third was cheap but not always cheerful, unless you had the luck of three women travelling together and wondering who the 'fourth' would be. Presumably the 'fourth' was not only crowding but also uncongenial. The woman from Newcastle wrote in her diary:

I may say here that we were lucky in that the fourth cabin mate after two days changed her cabin for one on A Deck; and thus we were left with more space, otherwise I think we'd have been hanging an assortment of dresses, etc. outside the porthole.

Illustrations of a four-berth Tourist Third cabin are hard to find, presumably because for the shipping companies it was akin to showing sardines jammed into a can. In a Cunard brochure of the 1920s, it is called a 'Room' rather than a 'Cabin' (FIG. 13). What you saw in the picture was what you got: a double bunk on each side, and a centre aisle which leads from the entry door and ends at a single washstand. This wasn't steerage, but it was close to it.

A world cruise added new dimensions to the extent of planning. Could you plan and finalize your wardrobe for the coming three months, for a variety of settings in a wide range of climates? In the absence of credit cards, could you anticipate the cash and travellers' cheques that you would have to carry with you? These and other issues are part of the next chapter.



13 A four-berth cabin provided little other than sleeping, but the price was relatively affordable.

to escape from cabins on the upper decks than from cabins lower down, from where it was necessary to climb up flights of internal stairs to reach the lifeboats. However, below decks and amidships had the benefit of less exposure to sea motion.

Even among equal cabins, some were more desirable than others. Do you want to be situated near stairs or a bank of elevators so that you can hear the carousers returning from their evening's partying at two in the morning? However, if you were in that community, it wouldn't make any difference, and proximity might even facilitate intoxicated navigation from the elevator to your cabin door.

Proximity to bathrooms and toilets was another consideration. Such facilities en suite were rare, so one had to book a bath in a Bath Room, and travel down the hall at the appointed time, past any fellow travellers who might be in the hallway.

Toilets? Not in your cabin. In the middle of the night – or any other time – an urgent need would require use of a chamber pot or a sprint down the hallway. The Cunard–White Star Line had chamber pots custom-made by Minton.

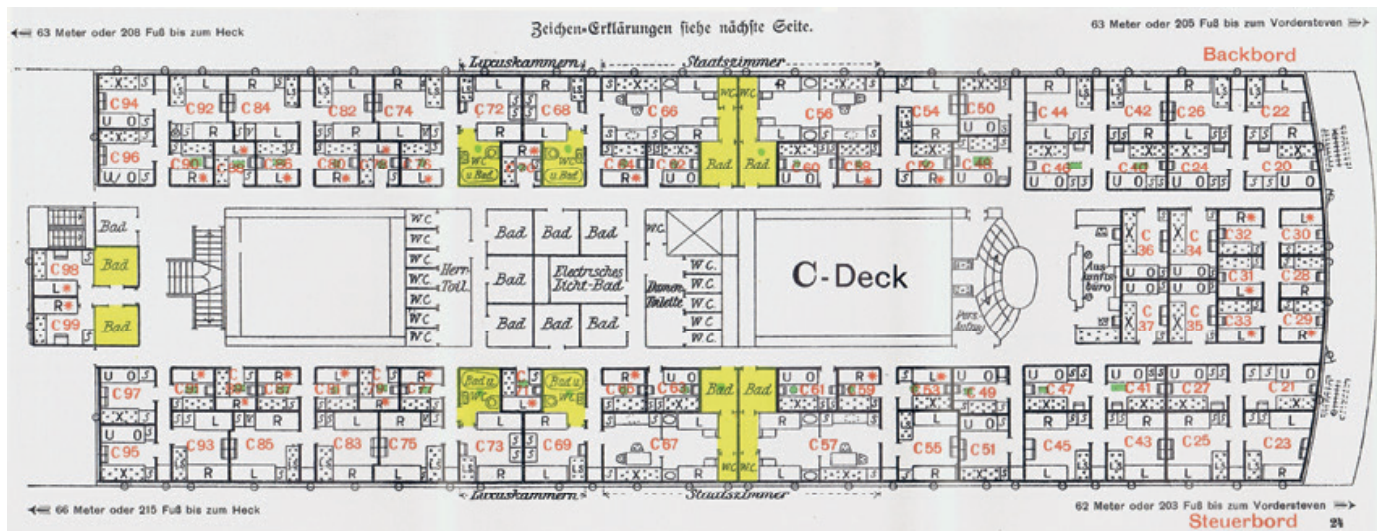
If this sounds primitive, it is only so compared to today's expectations. At the time, those arrangements were normal on ships and in hotels, and in selecting their cabin the prudent traveller kept these factors in mind. As a prelude to middle-of-the-night sprints down the hall, in a multi-bed cabin one had to select between an upper and a lower bunk. If you were late booking, you might not have a choice, but if both were available one had to weigh up the pluses and the minuses.

Let's look at a concrete example: the *Imperator*, pride of the Hamburg–American Line in 1913. There were two distinctly different categories of passenger on C-Deck (FIG. 34). A few of

the cabins had their own toilets and baths, accentuated on the plan in bright yellow. If you had the money, you sought a cabin with those wonderful amenities. If you didn't have one of those expensive select cabins, you measured the distance between, for example, C30, back at the stern of the ship, and the *Damen and Herren* WCs and baths (*Bad*) amidships. On further consideration, perhaps you would seek a cabin closer to the facilities.

The smallest cabins had no outside view. Those relatively tiny inside spaces could quickly cause

34 A plan of C-Deck on the magnificent *Imperator* of 1913. Only the most expensive accommodation had en suite toilets.



SECOND CABIN.

RATES OF PASSAGE

SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME FOR ANY CAUSE.

NEW YORK TO GLASGOW OR LONDONDERRY

OUTWARD FROM NEW YORK. RETURN FROM GLASGOW OR LONDONDERRY TO NEW YORK.

CITY OF ROME, \$35.00 \$35.00

FURNESSIA, 30.00 32.50

ANCHORIA, 30.00 30.00

ETHIOPIA,

RETURN TICKETS 10% per cent reduction on combined outward and prepaid rates.

TWO BIRTH ROOMS, \$5.00 additional each passenger.

CHILDREN over one and under twelve, half fare; infants free.

NEW YORK TO GOTHENBURG AND RETURN

VIA GRANTON.

Including Board, Lighting and Transfer of Baggage.

CITY OF ROME, - - \$83.50

FURNESSIA, - - 78.75

OTHER STEAMERS, - - 74.00

RATES TO AND FROM GLASGOW

IN ADDITION TO OCEAN FARE

(THIRD-CLASS RAIL.)

LIVERPOOL, - - - - - \$3.65	GLoucester, - - - - - \$6.70
CARLIFY, - - - - - 6.95	LEEDS, - - - - - 4.20
LONDON, - - - - - 8.00	LEICESTER, - - - - - 6.00
BIRMINGHAM, - - - - - 5.90	MANCHESTER, - - - - - 4.40
BLACKBURN, - - - - - 3.50	NEWCASTLE, - - - - - 3.15
BRADFORD, - - - - - 4.20	NETTINGHAM, - - - - - 5.80
BRIStOL, - - - - - 7.45	OLdHAM, - - - - - 5.90
SURHAM, - - - - - 3.40	SHEFFIELD, - - - - - 5.00
YORK, - - - - - 4.25	

THIRD-CLASS THROUGH TICKETS, GLASGOW TO LONDON AND RETURN, WITH STOP-OVER PRIVILEGES, \$12.50

SECOND CABIN

Passengers are berthed in Staterooms, on the forward Main Deck of all steamers, except "City of Rome," on which they are situated in after part of Upper and Lower Decks. The rooms accommodate from two to six passengers each. Berths are allotted in rotation of port and starboard, and quarters are clean. Passengers are provided with all necessaries for the voyage, including a liberal supply of well cooked provisions served on per bill of fare. In Special Dining Room, but do not have access to Main Salon, and are restricted in their use of the Promenade Deck.

STEERAGES

are large and exceedingly well lighted and ventilated, and fitted up in rooms, each passenger having a separate sleeping berth, marked couples, single, women and children being berthed in different compartments, and every comfort and attention is furnished that is possible on an ocean steamer. Steerage passengers are now provided free of charge with a mattress, bedding, most fine toilet, soap, hair, fork, spoon and water can. Tables are set for meals and passengers are waited upon by stewards who take care of eating vessels. A liberal supply of provisions, properly cooked, will be served on the steamers three times a day by the steamer's stewards; breakfast at 8, dinner at 1, supper at 6 o'clock.

BAGGAGE.

Second Cabin 20 cubic feet, and Steerage 10 cubic feet free; any excess will be charged for at rate of One shilling sterling per cubic foot. All baggage to be forwarded to Anchor Line Pier should be labeled with name of steamer and steamer on which passage has been engaged. No baggage will be put on board the steamers until it has been claimed by passengers and marked "Wanted by Owners." "Not Wanted," on the voyage, may be destroyed by owners. Passengers should be on board with their baggage one hour prior to the time of sailing, or heavy and confusion are thereby avoided, and baggage loss liable to be lost. Special Anchor Line labels can be obtained on application at the principal offices and agencies of the line.

BICYCLES \$2.00 TO GLASGOW OR LONDONDERRY.

REVENUE TAX ADDITIONAL.

STEERAGE RATES.

INCLUDING BEDDING AND EATING UTENSILS.

OUTWARD FROM NEW YORK. RETURN TO NEW YORK.

City of	Tonnage, Steamer.	Steerage	By City of Rome	Steerage
\$25.50	\$24.50	\$23.50	\$25.25	\$24.00
25.50	24.50	23.50	26.50	25.25
27.30	26.30	25.30	27.10	25.95
25.50	24.50	23.50		
26.50	25.50	24.50		
27.00	27.00	27.00		
27.00	27.00	27.00		
27.00	27.00	27.00		
31.00	31.00	31.00		
31.15	31.15	31.15		

From Rotterdam or Antwerp only.

30.50	29.50	28.50	26.00	26.00
33.50	32.50	31.50	29.00	29.00
33.50	32.50	31.50	29.00	29.00
Free	1st class per year, British ports.	\$3.00	3.00	3.00
\$3.00	Scandinavian ports.	3.00	3.00	3.00
2.00	Continental ports.	2.00	2.00	2.00

NOTICE. Passengers wishing to travel in the old country can be furnished with berths and all passage on condition as on the name of passage, name and address of the parties for whom passage is desired. By special arrangement with landward and Steamship Companies, Passengers can be landed wherever at lowest rates of any harbor or National Station in America.

DRAFTS can be purchased from the office. The rate of lowest current rates, and will be found the safest and most economical way of transmitting money to friends in Great Britain and Ireland.

even seen – a white tablecloth? Had any of them ever used the services of a trained doctor? The Anchor Line of seven years earlier was probably closer to the experiences – but perhaps not the aspirations – of the average steerage passenger. A panel from the 1899 Anchor Line brochure gives an insight into the pricing (FIG. 44).

And a photograph taken on board White Star Line's SS *Ionic* gives another clue to the type of passenger who frequented the steerage quarters (FIG. 45). The image is on a photographic postcard with a divided back, marking this as being from the second *Ionic*, which went into service in 1902, rather than from the earlier ship of the same name, which dated to 1883. So, how do we know they weren't crew? First, the gentleman in the centre looks too old to be a crew member – more likely the patriarch of a group of male immigrants, sailing for prosperity in the distant reaches of the Empire. Second, the crew would have been required to wear White Star Line tops to distinguish

44 Steerage passage rates on the Anchor Line in 1899 varied by ship, and could be prepaid by friends on the other side of the Atlantic.

45 Steerage passengers and a pet dog on-board White Star Line's SS *Ionic* were heading west to seek a better life.

them from the passengers. In the absence of other clues, here is a cluster of steerage passengers.

Steerage was a cheap passage, so in providing incremental benefits the shipping line management would have had to weigh those additional costs against the meagre individual revenues from each steerage passenger. It would have been challenging, because improving the quality of steerage might make it more attractive to frugal travellers who would otherwise have sailed in more profitable higher classes. On some ships with very basic steerage, the dormitories were used for general cargo eastbound. Bigger ships meant better economies of scale and a more reliable clientele, of tourists booking passages in both directions. Today there would be a computer-based model that considered costs, incremental costs and the prospective customer base, then determined a value for customer preferences based on surveys and a host of other factors. In 1906, even without such technology, the shipping companies' managers and accountants were already smart and sophisticated in business matters: they knew there was a large base of potentially profitable customers, and they were competing for them.

