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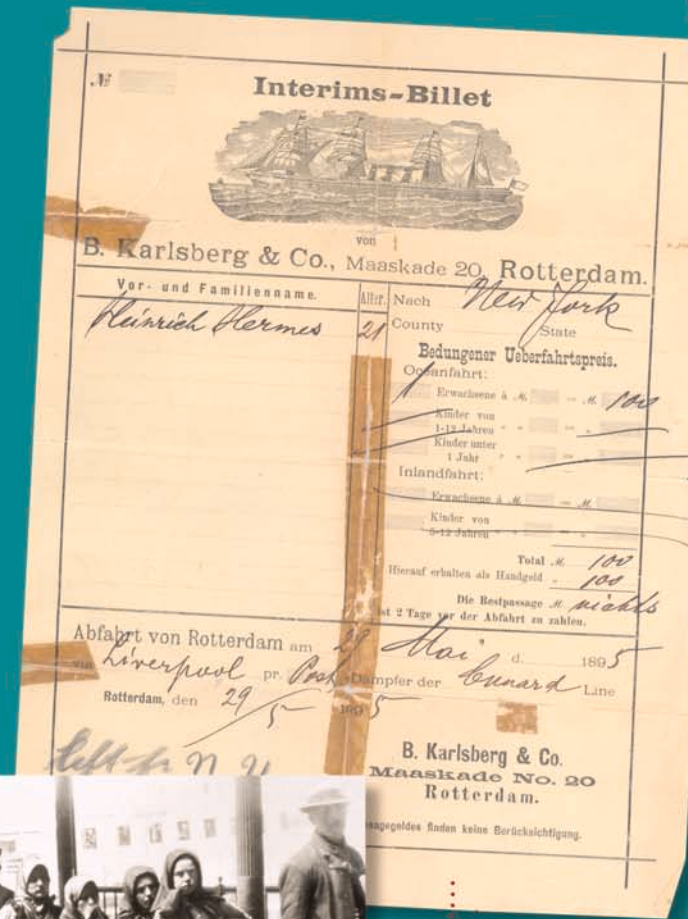
Migrating to America

Imagine living in an overcrowded country. There are few jobs and many people are poor and without hope. Some are even **harassed** (huh-RASD) because of their beliefs. Hunger and desperation are everywhere. Wars abound. This was the case during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. So, millions of people **migrated** to the United States. They came from around the world. At no other time in history have so many people flocked to one nation.

America was seen as the land of opportunity. Europe was overcrowded. The people in Europe heard there were jobs and lots of land for farms across the ocean. People left behind everything to come to the United States. Often they sold all they owned to buy tickets. This made their choice **irrevocable** (ir-REH-vuh-kuh-buhl).

Huge crowds of people entered the United States daily. They hoped to get jobs and own homes. They wanted to worship in their own ways and live happy lives. Many had their hopes fulfilled. Others were not so lucky.

Immigrants arriving in the United States wait in line at Ellis Island.



This is a ship ticket that was used to bring someone to the United States.



The Invitation

In 1883, Emma Lazarus wrote a poem that is now displayed on the Statue of Liberty's base. It reflects what was happening at that time:

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse (REF-yoos) of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, **tempest-tost** to me; I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Population Explosion

Prior to 1820, no one kept immigration records. In the 1840s about 100,000 people came to the United States each year. By 1854, that figure had quadrupled. By 1860, four million immigrants had already entered the nation. And this was before the Great Migration years of 1900–1930.