



STORY PLACES

An interdisciplinary
research project to
explore the poetics of
location-based storytelling

The Emigrants' Home

Southampton is the location of StoryPlaces' first story project – a collaboration with local students and writers to unlock the stories of transmigration hidden within the Old Town.



In 1894 the 'Emigrants' Home' opened in Albert Road, Southampton. The idea of John Doling, proprietor of the nearby Temperance Hotel, and builder William Cremer, it was conceived in response to the increased business brought to Southampton by the docks including the mail service to and from America. Many of those leaving Southampton with the mail were transmigrants, so-called **Destitute Aliens**, often Jews fleeing from persecution in eastern Europe.

The history of the building is the history of a forgotten Southampton, one which is full of **stories drawn from far-away places**, of lives less celebrated than those of the rich and famous who would pass through the passenger terminals. They are stories which have **never been told** and can never be known, but they are stories of Southampton, a place of arrival and departure, the familiar and the unfamiliar.



Destined for Steerage

'Accommodation was very poor, they used to sleep on concrete floors with just the coats they came in. They always looked grubby and poor and normally the men had huge beards, I think there was a very big proportion of Jews among them because they were mostly the people that were exported from Europe, even in those days. And I used to go down below ... they were sleeping in the basement usually and I used to go down below with the Doling brothers and stand looking at them and... of course... as a boy I didn't know what to think about it.'

Albert Gibbs (City Heritage Oral History) cited in Donald Hyslop, Alastair Forsyth and Sheila Jemima, *Titanic Voices* (Southampton: Oral History, City Heritage Southampton, 1994), p. 90.



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