**Migration 1500-1900**

**1500-1700**

**The Huguenots**

The Huguenots were French Protestants who fled to England to escape persecution in France:

* There were two main waves of immigration – in the years after 1572, and after 1685.
* Perhaps 50,000 Huguenots came to England, about 1 per cent of the population, but the Huguenot community grew quickly.
* Many were skilled craftsmen and businessmen, and they grew prosperous. In particular, a vast number of them worked as silk weavers and many settled in the East End of London, just outside the old city walls.

At first they were welcomed because they were refugees, but when they began to prosper, English people started to complain about the 'swarme' of 'snail-eating foreigners' who 'smelled of garlic'.

The Huguenots took an active role in English society and the economy:

* The Huguenots brought new methods of wool-dyeing, cloth-printing, nail-making and paper-making. They set up silk and lace factories. Some historians believe that they 'kick-started' the [**Industrial Revolution**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/zvmv4wx/revision) in England.
* In 1694, Huguenot traders helped to set up the Bank of England, and its first governor was a Huguenot.
* The Huguenots brought French fashions to England – as well as new foods like oxtail soup and chips.
* Some estimates say that today three-quarters of English people have some Huguenot ancestry.

# Black Britons

In Tudor and Stuart times, a number of black people came to live in England as sailors or slaves. Some of them settled in London. They were generally treated fairly well. Whilst many people were fascinated by them because they had never seen people of that skin colour before, they also enjoyed buying foods and spices from them which they had never tasted before. Medieval and Tudor evidence shows black people working alongside white people with little evidence of discrimination.

In the 18th century, as England became more active in the slave trade, some black people were brought to Britain as slaves. By 1800, there were about 10,000 black Britons in a population of 8 million. This works out as 0.1 per cent of the population.

They were often victims of racial discrimination. Most remained slaves with no rights. When they became too old to work, some were 'set free', but the law forbade them to get a job, so they just starved to death.

Black Britons made an important contribution to the life of Britain in the years up to 1900, including:

* A group of black Britons led by Olaudah Equiano called the 'Sons of Africa' who campaigned against the [**slave trade**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/zy7fr82/revision).
* William Cuffay who became a leading [**Chartist**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/zhdhvcw/revision).
* Mary Seacole who went as a nurse to the Crimea.
* Walter Tull who became the first black officer in the British army to command white soldiers.

# The 19th century

## Irish immigrants

Irish immigrants came to England fleeing poverty and the Great Famine in Ireland. By 1861, 600,000 people, or 3 per cent of the English population, had been born in Ireland.

Three-quarters of Irish immigrants were unskilled labourers or farm workers. Many ended up living in Irish areas of towns, especially Liverpool and Glasgow, in indescribable filth. They were victims of racial and religious discrimination (most were Roman Catholic) – in 1846 and for many years after there were anti-Irish riots.

Irish immigrants made a key contribution to the life of Britain in the years up to 1900:

* Many Irish were navvies and helped to build canals or railways.
* In 1830, the British army was 40 per cent Irish.
* [**The Chartists**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/zhdhvcw/revision) Feargus O'Connor and William Sharman Crawford, were Irish immigrants.
* Most Irish immigrants married local men and women. Today an estimated 42 per cent of English people have Irish ancestry.

## Jewish immigrants

The Jewish community had been slowly growing since Oliver Cromwell started allowing Jewish people to settle in England in 1656:

* By 1850 there were 50,000 Jewish people in a population of 18 million - 0.3 per cent of the population.
* This Jewish community integrated into the population. They were often wealthy and many had professional careers such as doctors and lawyers.

Between 1880 and 1914, a further 150,000 Jewish people came to England, fleeing persecution in eastern Europe:

* They were generally very poor and many could not read and write.
* Most went to live in the slums of the East End of London and did 'sweated labour' - poorly paid home-working - in the 'rag trade' making and mending clothes.

Although the first Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe were welcomed and given charity, as their numbers grew, they suffered discrimination and hatred. Even some members of the established Jewish community openly said that they ought to go home.

Jewish immigrants made a great contribution to the life of Britain in the years up to 1900:

* Benjamin Disraeli, who became Prime Minister in 1868, was the son of a Jewish immigrant.
* Marks and Spencer was founded in 1884 by Michael Marks, a Jewish immigrant.

# Emigration

After 1826, large numbers of people began to go abroad:

* By 1885, there were 5 million British people living outside the UK.
* Most went to America and Canada, seeking cheap farmland, or their fortune - especially in the 'gold rushes'.
* Many colonists went to South Africa and New Zealand to work as farmers.
* Criminals, Chartists and rebels were transported to Australia which was a penal colony, meaning that it was used as a large prison. The prisoners sent there were used to work on the land and made it fit to farm and live on.
* 2,300 Welsh people emigrated to Argentina.
* Large numbers of people went abroad, especially to India, to rule the Empire – rich people as administrators, poor people as soldiers.
* Missionaries went to live all over the world, especially to Africa. They wanted to spread British religion, customs and ways of life.