

**AN AUTUMN TOUR IN
THE UNITED STATES
AND CANADA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649506354

An Autumn Tour in the United States and Canada by Andrew Iredale

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ANDREW IREDALE

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BY
ANDREW IREDALE.

TORQUAY:
GEORGE H. IREDALE
1901.

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INTRODUCTION.

At intervals during recent years the members of my family have often, in a vague and light-hearted way, talked of a possible prospective trip to the United States and Canada.

The idea was always regarded as visionary; but there was a fascination about it that induced us to return to it again and again.

In the evening of a pleasant day in July of last year the conversation in the family circle was directed to a forthcoming holiday, and almost unconsciously we reverted to the old topic. In less time than it has taken to write these few lines a tour to the United States in the ensuing Autumn had been resolved upon.

The unexpected had happened.

Without delay I booked passages on the Cunard steamship "Umbria" for myself, for my daughter, and for my younger son.

We sailed from Liverpool for New York on the 15th of September ; and the rough notes I made during our travels have furnished the basis of a memoir which many friends have thought might interest others besides our own inner circle.

I—not without misgiving—trust it may.

A. I.

Edgerton, Torquay,
July, 1901.

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CHAPTER I.

NEW YORK—ITS HOTELS—CENTRAL PARK—ELECTRIC TRAMS.

Leaving Liverpool at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th of September, 1900, the *Umbria* reached Sandy Hook on the morning of Sunday, the 23rd, at two o'clock. The Cunarder cast anchor to await daylight and the medical officer, who has to satisfy himself that a ship has a clean bill of health before she is allowed to enter New York harbour. At six o'clock the great liner was again under weigh for two hours' sail to the Cunard Wharf, which we reached shortly after eight o'clock.

It was an interesting sight to watch the transfer of the mails to the U.S. mailboat, which met us in the Sound. One can form no conception of the volume of correspondence passing from this country to Canada and America, and to the islands in the Pacific, from the figures issued by the Post Office.

All the mail bags were drawn from the hold and stacked on the lower deck early in the morning in readiness for transfer. I was curious to gauge their bulk, so I took the dimensions, which were 90 feet long by 6 feet high, by 6 feet broad, giving a cubical measurement of 3,240 feet ; and even this did not include the registered mail matter.

At 10.30 our luggage had been examined by a customs' official—in our case a mere matter of form—and our family party of three were free to set out on our adventures in the United States. The first feature of New York to attract the eye of a stranger is the enormous height of many of its buildings—the sky-scrapers, on which an interesting illustrated article appeared recently in the *Strand* magazine. The rapid elevator makes one storey almost as accessible as another. There is little or no difference in time and none in exertion, whether you visit the third storey or the twentieth. During our stay at the Manhattan Hotel we were on the twelfth floor, the charge for rooms there being exactly the same as on the fourth.

The streets are generally wide and exceedingly long. I do not exaggerate when I say that many are miles in length, and that the house numbers run up to over 3,000. In many of the leading thoroughfares the roads are fairly good, in some few very good, with asphalt surfaces, but in the majority of cases they are bad, and unworthy of the great city of New York. The same remarks apply to the foot pavements. It

requires constant watchfulness to avoid inequalities of surface, raised gratings, and other obstacles inimical to the safety of pedestrians. The authorities are decidedly backward in these matters, and have work before them which will cost millions of dollars, and occupy years, before they reach the English standard of well-kept streets.

In New York, as in almost all the large cities of our own country, the necessity for walking no longer exists. People do not walk, and there is danger of walking becoming "a lost art." The very heart of the city is penetrated by tram lines. Broadway is the main artery of New York, and from Broadway the topographically well-informed traveller can by the electric cars reach every, even the most distant, part of the city, for the sum of five cents. There is only one fare for long or short distances. Whether it be 100 yards or seven miles out, the fare is five cents. There is great convenience in the transfer system, which enables one to change to cross-town or other cars off the main line, and thus reach places to the right or the left, as may be required, without paying an additional fare. The service is good, and the cars are comfortable and commodious, some closed after the fashion of a railway carriage, others open with seats crosswise facing the direction of travel. No matter in what direction a passenger wishes to travel, he never need wait more than a minute or two; the close succession of cars is wonderful.