

Prepaid tickets to ride to the New World: the New York Continental Conference and transatlantic steerage fares 1885-1895

The introduction of steamships on the transatlantic route had a major impact on the traffic of goods and people in the Atlantic world. Organizational and technological improvements in shipping sharply decreased freight rates (North, 1958; Harley, 1988). This decline was the main factor for the convergence of the commodity market before 1914 (Williamson and Hatton, 1998). On the contrary to freight rates, we have little information on 19th century transatlantic passenger fares¹. About 60 million Europeans moved overseas between 1815 and 1930 of which more than half settled in the United States. This movement turned migrant transport into a lucrative business, especially on the North-Atlantic route where the control over human freight allowed ship-owners to direct other trades to their home ports². Yet despite the relevance of migrant trade we know very little about the activities of shipping companies and shipping agents to organize and regulate the business (Baines, 1991, 7-8 and 48). The market was divided into at one hand the ‘pre-paid tickets’ sold in the U.S. for the crossing of a relative or acquaintance to join previously settled migrants and on the other hand of ‘European cash rates’ put up for sale on the old continent. With the transition from sail to steam the business specialized and concentrated in the hands of a limited number of joint-stock companies. The keen competition for the trade drove the companies to collusion giving rise to shipping conferences on both sides of the Atlantic regulating the prepaid and the cash market. As the migrant fever spread across Europe the market was further sub-divided in three regions; the British-Scandinavian, the Continental and Mediterranean market (Murken, 1922).

The current research analyzes the activities of the New York Continental Conference regulating the prepaid business from 1885 to 1895 using the Conference Minutes and the correspondence between the head-agent in New York and the board of directors of the Holland

¹ Keeling is the only one to have reconstructed yearly averages for the Cunard Line, sailing from Europe to North American Atlantic ports for the period 1880 up to 1914. Average prices on the North Atlantic route fluctuated from three to six pounds, or eighteen to thirty six dollars (Keeling, 1999).

² See Engelsing for the impact of the migrant trade on the tobacco trade through Bremen and the subsequent revival of the commerce through the Hanseatic city under the Bremen flag. Bastin and Hyde described the importance of human freight for Liverpool while Greenhalgh Albion did the same for New York.

America Line, one of the four members of the conference. The minutes allow to reconstruct a price series of westbound prepaid tickets and eastbound return tickets of four continental steam shipping companies running lines to New York between 1885 and 1895; the Red Star Line (R.S.L.) from Antwerp, the Hamburg America Line (H.A.P.A.G.), North German Lloyd (N.G.L.) from Bremen and the Holland America Line (H.A.L.) from Rotterdam. The minutes give further detail on ways through which the conference tried to neutralize internal and external competition. Yet much more revealing is the correspondence between the head-agent and the board of directors which gives an inside look on the organization of passenger business. Greenhill pointed to the difficulties of disperse location of the different ports to analyze the conference dynamics. The meetings left very little written sources to analyze the strategies behind the agreements which explains why literature on shipping conferences is rather sparse (Greenhill, 1999). Conversely to Europe where the competition for the trade resulted in the development of various important emigration ports such as Liverpool, Genoa, Le Havre, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Bremen and Hamburg, on the other side of the Atlantic New York practically succeeded in monopolizing the trade. Hence all passenger lines involved in the migrant business had a head office in this city most even in the same street, on Broadway. Because of the concentration the port served as ‘the’ source of information on rival companies. Not having the problem of disperse location conference meetings could easily be held whenever need be. Since most of the decisions of the New York Continental Conference were pending of approval from the directors and depended on regulations of the European cash business, it generated a huge correspondence. Only that of the Holland America Line seems to have been preserved³. The private letters deal with all business facets of major passenger liners. In this article the focus will go to the organization of the American market of prepaid and return tickets. Just as the work of Genesove and Mullin on the Sugar cartel, the correspondence gives insights on the reasoning behind firm’s actions and what mattered during the negotiations to reach an agreement (Genesove and Mullin, 2001, 379-398). First the evolution of prepaid and return tickets from their origins up to 1885 will be sketched. The importance of chain-migration patterns has been stressed yet to what extent did the foreland shape migrant routes? Second the success of the New York Continental Conference in regulating competition will be analyzed. The attention will be divided between external and internal

³ Comparative archive research in Bremen, Hamburg, Antwerp, Le Havre and Liverpool proved the uniqueness of the correspondence averaging three letters a week kept by the Rotterdam Community Archives.

pressures on the conference. What factors influenced the price fixing on the North Atlantic Route? What did the competition center upon? How successful was the conference in fixing the price? By answering these questions the article hopes to stimulate further research about the impact of steam-shipping companies on migrant flows.

1) The impact of the foreland on migrant routes: the development of chain-migration patterns

The importance of personal networks in shaping chain migration patterns has been largely acknowledged as a crucial element for the cause and path-dependency of migration. Yet what migration historians have failed to observe is that these patterns were stimulated by the shipping industry that saw a good business opportunity in the developing market of remittances sent home by pioneers for others to join them.

Transatlantic migrants have strongly relied on trade routes to make their move to the New World. The paths they used were imbedded in pre-existing commercial networks which as restrictions to migrate decreased, embraced this new trade. Shippers quickly observed the profitability of human cargo as the first non-colonial mass migration movement of Germans to the United States took place in the 18th Century. Some shippers, the so-called migrant brokers specialized in the business. They chartered and fitted the between deck area from ship owners and tapped migrants from the hinterland through a network of migrant agents in bigger cities and sub-agents in rural areas. Migrant broker were responsible to coordinate their influx at the port of embarkation according to the arrival of the ship to limit the transit costs. As the movement persisted the influence of the Pennsylvanian foreland on the main route from the German hinterland through the Rhine to Rotterdam calling at London before heading to Philadelphia increased. The tightened transatlantic relations allowed the Redemptioner-system to develop through which migrants lacking means were given credit by brokers for the crossing. This was paid for by a new world employer upon arrival in exchange for an agreement of servitude. (Wokeck, 1999 and Bickelmann, 1982). This system through which a majority of 18th century German migrants traveled would quickly be replaced by superior methods of financing the move after the Napoleonic Wars. With the increasing flow chain-migration patterns strengthened allowing the poorest to rely on remittances instead of servitude contracts. Research indicated that

the system of remittances financed one third of the Irish and German migration by 1834. This system could only be sustained as the flow grew allowing regular banking and merchant connections to be established. Only then could the reputation for honesty that repeat business created give enough guarantees to immigrants trusting their money with bankers or shippers. The increased shipping traffic and banking connections also decreased the transaction costs of remittances. Finally the expansion of industrial employment made loans on future wages possible to finance the crossing of friends or relatives and provided jobs for the newly arrived to help paying off the debt (Grubb, 1994, 816-818). The transition from redemptionist- to remittance-system explains the increase of migrant-brokers in the United States. Merchants in New York, the financial capital of the country, quickly noted the potential of expanding the market selling ocean passage across the Atlantic. The connections between Liverpool and New York merchant houses Grimshaw and Thompson had led to the establishment of the first Emigration Office in New York. Other businessmen followed such as W. Tapscott, Douglas Robinson & Co, Rawson & Mc Murray and Bros & Co. Human freight was assured through contacts with migrant brokers in European ports and recruiting agents traveling to the old continent. They also offered the possibility to immigrants settled in the U.S. to pay for a berth for the ocean passage (Greenhalgh-Albion, 1961, 339-341). This developed in the market of pre-paid tickets on which at least thirty percent of the migrants made the crossing during the steamship era. The remittance-system seemed to have encouraged migrant brokers and migrant agents to combine banking and passage business especially in the United States. The banking world profited from the booming money exchanges and money transfers generated by mass-migration. As the competition for the business in the U.S. increased networks of migrant-agents spread to the interior to popular in-migration regions. This further stimulated the sale of tickets for inland transport in the United States together with ocean transport. This eventually led to the creation of an integrated Atlantic transport network providing door to door service. The improved organization fueled developing chain-migration patterns.

During the first half of the 19th Century migrant transport business boomed on the North Atlantic. Prior to the outflow many ships on this route left Europe in ballast. Ships carrying migrants could offer lower freight rates for the eastbound leg and increase their control on the freight traffic as well (Engelsing, 1963). This explains the keen competition that the business created among merchants to attract the trade to their home port on both sides of the Atlantic. This

battle for the migrants made the move easier, safer and more affordable (Bade, 2000 and Feys 2005). The competition spurred the introduction of technological innovation on the route such as liner shipping, the introduction of steam etc. The latter had important consequences for the organization of the business. Concurrently with the shift from sail to steam the fragmented business concentrated in the hands of a limited number of joint-stock companies (Cohn, 2005). This concentration on a very competitive market allowed collusive agreements of being formed (Hyde, 1975). Whereas prior to the Civil War two thirds of the migrants arrived with American ships, afterwards the American flag practically disappeared from the North Atlantic⁴. Yet this did not diminish the influence of the foreland. American capitalist and merchants remained very much involved in the business further facilitating the development of chain migration patterns. Railroads and steam-shipping greatly reduced traveling time and made transatlantic moves less definite. According to estimates a third of the migrants returned to Europe by the turn of the century. Both return migration and the system of prepaid tickets strengthened chain migration patterns reducing the risks attached to such move (Keeling, 2007; Gould, 1979; Jones, 1992; Hvidt, 1978; Wyman, 1993; Kamphoefner, 1991 and Morawska, 1991; Steidl, 2007; Wegge, 1998; Murayama, 1991). The works of Wokeck and Engelsing described how the migrant transport business evolved during the 18th Century and first half of the 19th Century respectively yet a study for the subsequent period is lacking. The analysis of how shipping companies tried to organize the market of prepaid tickets sheds more light on this.

2) The formation of shipping cartels on the North Atlantic: New York Conference and the American market

Shipping conferences or rings are collusive agreements to mitigate competition and iron out the effects of trade fluctuations, primarily to regulate prices and market shares (Ville, 1990). The origins are generally ascribed to the need of shipping companies to ease the pressures of destructive competition cutting in prices and profits caused by overcapacity on a certain route (Greenhill, 1998). The first shipping conference has generally been agreed to be the UK-Calcutta Conference regulating the tea trade established in 1875 (Deakin and Seward, 1973; Ville, 1990). Yet there are some serious indications that similar agreements were concluded well before on the

⁴ For the disappearance of the American flag on the North Atlantic see (Safford, 1985 and Hutchins, 1939).

North Atlantic⁵. The practice quickly spread and is still in use today, more than 150 conferences were operative in 2001 (Sjostrom, 2004). Research on conference-systems has concentrated on freight transport, neglecting the impact it had on passenger transport⁶. In fact the only substantial research on shipping rings regulating passenger traffic from Erik Murken dates back to 1922. Murken analyzed the in 1892 established 'Nord-Atlantischer Dampfer-Linien Verband' between R.S.L., H.A.L., N.G.L. and H.A.P.A.G. The N.D.L.V. subsequently made arrangements with other conferences which by 1914 grew out to twelve separate agreements between 30 lines carrying passengers on the North Atlantic (Murken, 1922). Boyce underlined the co-operative dimension of conferences, its importance to shape relations between shippers and shipowners and amongst shipowners, criticizing economists for focusing on market power and cost/service driven necessity of conference regulation (Boyce 1995). The big difference between the shipment of cargo and migrants is that the former is supplied by shippers in the port while the latter is provided by a wide network of migrant brokers, agents and subagents which spread on both sides of the Atlantic. Models explaining the viability of conferences are based upon a common interest between shippers and ship owners (Pirong, 1992 and Sjostrom 2004). Yet this common interest between ship-owners and migrant brokers with their agent-network was nearly inexistent. These go-betweens worked on commission base for different lines. This commission increased when the competition among shipowners intensified hence agents had no reason to favor a stable market. Using the case-study of the Holland-America Line and its position in the New York continental conference it will be shown that the strongest incentive for passenger liners to organize themselves in conferences was to control the broad agent-network.

The Dutch company originated during the steamship boom early 1870's when the transition from sail to steam completed. At the time it was still customary to appoint migrant brokers who managed the passage business for the company on both sides of the Atlantic, Van

⁵ Sloan uncovered the secret agreements between Cunard and Collins fixing minimum rates and pooling revenues for both passengers and cargo during the 1850's. Hyde found indirect evidence that by 1868 a conference agreement, fixing freight rates and minimum passenger fares was concluded between the Glasgow and Liverpool steamshipping companies. Hvidt found evidence that as early as 1871 migrant brokers in Copenhagen organized themselves in a sub-conference regulating the local business and reporting to the main body in Liverpool.

⁶ One notable exception is the attempt made by Deltas, Sicotte and Tomczak in a working paper "Passenger Shipping cartels and their effect on transatlantic migration" (Deltas, Sicotte and Tomczak, 2001). They concluded that for the period 1899-1914 shipping conferences reduced the migrant flow by at least a fifth which clearly contradicts the above mentioned conception as would shipping companies and the price for the crossing only have a minor impact on the migrant flows. The present article stops in 1895 but this argument will be developed once further study in this ongoing research will have processed the data for the period up to 1914.

Es, Wambersie & Ruys in Rotterdam and Morris & Co in New York. Yet the Holland America Line quickly changed policy⁷. It first took the passenger business in Europe into own hands becoming responsible of a vast agent-network which rapidly numbered more than two thousand members (Van der Valk, 1976). New York followed later. Morris & Co supervised a nation-wide network of agents and sub-agents which in 1884 totaled one thousand four hundred members⁸. Most agents did this as a side earning and could vary from being innkeepers, priests, hotel-owners, notaries, insurers, bankers, mine-owners, railroad employees, newspaper-editors, storekeepers, etc. Some specialized and made a living off it, but for most it was a means to earn an easy commission and to get in touch with potential laborers or clients for other business. Bankers were predominant. The origins of the agent usually depended on the dominant migrant community in the area. Mastering foreign languages was an absolute necessity to be a migrant agent. They were provided with rate and time table sheets, advertising materials and ticket books of steamship companies. When a prepaid ticket was purchased the passenger was given one year to prepare for his trip. He could rely on agents in his home region and in major transit points to forward him to the port of departure. Through this network, companies could arrange for this to be done according to the sailing dates minimizing the time spent at the port and cutting down the extra costs for the passenger. Generally prepaid ocean passage was sold together with railroad tickets to the port of embarkation and from the port of arrival to the final destination on which migrant agents earned an extra commission. Nearly all migrant agents booked for various companies. The steamship line paying the highest commission was likely to get the gross of the business of that agent. When selling a ticket the sub-agent contacted the migrant broker with the information of the passenger and ticket number. The migrant broker then arranged for the transport with the steamship company. In 1885 the Dutch company ended the association with Morris & Sons. It allowed the company to cut down on the commission paid to Morris amounting to 6,25 percent per ticket⁹. More importantly the New York head agent of the H.A.L., W.H. Van den Toorn hoped to increase the control over the migrant agents and hence on the

⁷ This system was common at the time. Other big New York outside firms were for example Oelrichs & Co did so for the N.G.L., Richard & Co for the H.A.P.A.G. and Vernon Brown for the Cunard Line.

⁸ Ten year later this number increased to 2000. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, 25-11-1893.

⁹ Morris' son showed little interest in continuing the business. He collaborated with the Dutch company to arrange a smooth transition and seemed to have stepped out of business shortly after.

American market where prices had sunk to all time lows. To control the agents he partly relied on the New York Continental Conference¹⁰.

Keeling pointed that the incentives for cartelization in migrant transport proved to be stronger than freight transport because the underlying demand was both more sensitive to economic swings and less dependent on transport prices. Economic downturns had bigger impacts on the migrant flows than on freight movements (Keeling, 1999). The first conference regulating part of the American market of prepaid and return tickets goes back to 1872 with the establishment of the New York North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference. The agreement between British Lines controlling the traffic from the British Isles and Scandinavia concerned the organization of the agent network and transport prices. During the following decade the German companies Hamburg America Line and North German Lloyd had pierced through the British dominance of transatlantic steam-shipping. All other lines of various nationalities which were subsequently established never made up the backlog on the biggest German and British firms. The competition for the trade organized itself around this rivalry. To strengthen its competitive position the German companies tried to unite lines transporting migrants directly from the European mainland to the U.S in similar conference agreements as their British rivals. This first lasting Continental Conference was established in 1885. The conference in New York was the result of a parallel agreement signed by the directors of the companies to regulate the business on the old continent. The New York sub-conference was thus dependent of the agreements on the old continent. The H.A.P.A.G., N.G.L., R.S.L. and H.A.L. had already tried to join forces in 1883, but direct outside competition of the Carr Line in Hamburg and the White Cross Line in Antwerp made it fall apart after a few months¹¹. Under the pressure of subsequent dropping migration rates the British North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference dissolved as well (Hyde,

¹⁰ The Conference regulated migrant business only. Agreements on freight and cabin transport followed after the formation of the N.G.L.V.

¹¹ Unfortunately the minutes of the first conference have not been preserved. A letter of Van den Toorn to the board of directors on the 23rd of November 1883 referred that the agreement was not beneficial for the members and on the verge of being dissolved. Carr Line and White Cross Line were quoting lower rates and paying higher commissions luring away the passengers from the members. Van den Toorn mentioned that H.A.P.A.G. respected the agreements but that Red Star Line cheated to protect its share. The Le Havre based Compagnie Generale Transatlantique did not join the first agreement. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.02, 112, 21-11-1883. Ottmüller-Wetzel mentions another attempt in 1884 including the Carr line without the C.G.T. and H.A.P.A.G. but because of the inland tariffs of the H.A.L. the agreement could not be carried out (Ottmüller-Wetzel, 1986).

1975; Aldcroft, 1974)¹². A general rate war broke out making prepaid prices fall to anywhere between six to twelve dollars¹³.

After long negotiations the Continental Conference reorganized in May 1885 and contained the following¹⁴: Minimum rates were fixed based on the quality of the service that the lines offered (see graph 1). The Holland America Line having the oldest and slowest steamers on the New York route obtained differentials to their advantage. The R.S.L. service to Philadelphia and the N.G.L. service to Baltimore were taken up in the agreement¹⁵. Rates were lower on these less popular routes. The fares could only be changed if the differentials were maintained. The prices quoted were gross ocean fares, including the commissions. Charges for inland travel could not be included and rate sheets of continental inland fares had to be sent to the secretary. Meetings were held monthly, except if a special one was called in between. Decision had to be made unanimously. The agent commission was set at 3\$ covering all expenses except advertising in newspapers. A General Passage Agent for the Pacific coast, Western States and Southern states was appointed who had to defend the interests with the agents of the area. They could only represent one company but in exchange received one dollar commission on each ticket sold by a sub-agent in their area. The cancellation fee for a ticket was set a five percent. Circulars to agents could not contain comparisons with other members nor could a newspaper that attacked a line be supported by a member. Every breach was reported to the Secretary who if necessary passed the complaint on to the Arbitrator William Booker, British consul in New York. He enjoyed the same powers which were entrusted to him as such by the North Atlantic Steam Traffic

¹²The Conference was dissolved in March 1884 and reorganized under the North Atlantic Passenger Conference in Januari1886 with a provisional agreement. A previous agreement on outward rates was reached in July 1885.

¹³ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.02, 112, Letter of Van den Toorn to directors 16-1-1886 mentions prices of twelve dollars for the H.A.L. and ten dollars for the German Lines whereas Huldermann even mentions rates as low as six dollars. However he does not specify whether these were net or gross rates (Huldermann, 1922).

¹⁴ Already in December 1884 a draft was drawn up for the reorganization of the conference. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, Continental Conference minutes, 29-3-1886, Minute 200. In the meantime H.A.P.A.G. started negotiations to takeover the Carr Line. After it merged with the Union Line a pooling agreement was concluded with the H.A.P.A.G. With the agreement H.A.P.A.G saw Albert Ballin making his entry in the company. Ballin became the driving power behind the expansion of the conference system. On the other hand the White Cross Line in Antwerp was deteriorating. The outside competition which made the Conference fall was now gone (Ottmüller-Wetzel, 1986; Broeze, 1991; Lamar, 1967).

¹⁵ All lines were allowed to book passengers at agreed ocean rates to and from Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. This means that the Holland America Line was allowed to give free railroad transport from and to New York to Boston, Baltimore and Philadelphia which cut the edge of the competition between those ports. This obviously cut in the profits of the shipping company to the advantage of the migrants.

Conference. Booker was empowered to look into the books of the companies. The costs for investigating complaints were covered by a special fund raised by the members. His decision was final and 1000\$ had to be deposited as a bond. The agreement was valid for six months, and withdrawal was possible with one month notice¹⁶. Finally the secretary had to notify the former members of the North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference of the reorganization of the Continental Conference. If they advanced steerage rates on the basis of 25\$ rate and fix the commission on 2\$ for their British, Scandinavian and Continental business alike, reduce the children age allowing half rates from twelve to eight and charge infants two instead one dollar, they would do the same¹⁷.

A circular followed to the agents notifying them of new regulations which predominantly tried to make agents adhere to the Conference rules. No returns or divisions of the commission could be given nor could improper inducements be held out to purchasers of tickets. Agents were prohibited from engaging sub- agents dividing the commission with them. The actual amount received for passage money had to be entered on the ticket and no credit could be given to the purchaser. Shipping companies only paid commission on the actual issue of the ticket and the direct receipt by the agents of the passage money. Agents were not allowed to issue certificates, orders or tickets for prepaid passage drawn on or advised to any person or company other than the Lines actually employing such agent. The selling of tickets was restricted to a certain area preventing agents from invading each others territory and prohibiting them to send his tickets to New York or any other place for sale. Violations of other agents had to be reported with proofs to the secretary. The punishment depending on the infraction could vary from a minimum fine equal to the amount of the ticket to the disqualification of the agents. Agents at default would be disqualified and Lines agreed not to engage any dismissed or disqualified agents.

3) The working of the Continental Conference up to the formation of the N.D.L.V.

¹⁶ This was brought to two months meeting 14-4-1887 and changed on 25-5-1890 to sliding periods of fifteen days if only one, ten days when two and a week if three companies or more gave notice of withdrawal. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meetings 14-4-1887 and 25-5-1890.

¹⁷ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, 15-5-1885 "Articles of an agreement entered into by and between the managers of the Continental Lines for the purpose of regulating rates of passage and the business connected therewith." and Minutes 1-27 of the Continental Conference.

The evolution of the ocean fare serves as a good indicator for the success of the conference. To what extent were they able to augment prices? To do so, applying Osborne's model to this case the cartel had to overcome both external as internal pressures. The external problem boils down to what extent were they able to predict and limit the market share of outsiders to keep the agreements viable? Internal problems were first to found a workable and profitable contract surface; second make sure that the agreement approximates expected shares for each member, third the ability to detect cheating and fourth means to deter cheating. For both Osborne and Stigler the detection of cheating played a crucial role for collusion. Secret violations of the agreement, especially in the form of price cuts gave shipping lines the possibility to increase their market share. According to Stigler if means of detection are weak then prices will not be able go much above the competitive level reducing inducements of price cutting to minimum. The basic method of detection is to note when price cutters are obtaining business which a line otherwise did not obtain (Osborne, 1976, 835-844 and Stigler, 1964, 44-61). Information on market share of each line was readily available as American ports registered all third class passengers coming in. The fluctuation in sales of migrant agents in certain regions also served as a serious indicator. Yet the biggest problem was to obtain proof that the increased share was obtained by cheating. What will follow is an analysis of the external and internal pressures during the first seven years of the cartel which aimed at fixing prices and controlling the agent-network up to the formation of the 'Nord-Atlantischer Dampfer-Linien Verband' when the continental traffic was divided in quotas.

3.1) Harmonizing the external pressures

The connections between British-Scandinavian, Continental and Mediterranean markets

The external pressures on the conference were considerable. The European migrant market was divided in three sub-markets; the British-Scandinavian, the Continental and the Mediterranean (See appendix 1). The British-Scandinavian market was predominantly in the hands of the British lines. They managed to prevent foreign lines from taking significant numbers of British and Irish migrants from their home ports (Murken,1922)¹⁸. This internal

¹⁸ Murken states that the British Board of trade imposed foreign ships transporting migrants from the British Isles to be built according to the standards of the Passenger Act. They had to possess a Board Trade Certificate and go

market covered the major part of the revenues of the British Lines. They had a strong foothold in the Scandinavian market through long established feeder services, such as the Hull based Wilson Line (Evans, 2007; Hyde, 1975; Bastin, 1971)¹⁹. Despite the geographical advantages and efforts of the German Lines and the Copenhagen based Thingvalia Line to increase their market share, the majority of Scandinavians preferred traveling with British ships. The big advantage of the British lines on the Continental lines the protection of their own market while having a foothold on the Continental market.

The strong trade relations between Hamburg and England during the early years of mass migration transformed Hamburg into the most important hub for indirect transatlantic migration through English ports from the continent (Engelsing, 1961; Gelberg, 1973)²⁰. The ties between migrant brokers and agents in Liverpool and Hamburg were well established and institutionalized by British and Hamburg Senate laws²¹. These ties constituted the Achilles heel of the Continental Conference. Although the continental traffic only represented a small percentage of the total business of British Lines, it them to constantly pressure the continental

through extensive time consuming controls before every sailing. These inspections blocked out the foreign lines. Murken however fails to explain why the American Line was exempted from that rule. Also the N.G.L. used Southampton as port of call and even obtained British mail subsidies in 1874. Furthermore Aldcroft suggests that a special agreement was concluded in 1886 allowing the H.A.P.A.G. to take passengers from British ports (Aldcroft, 1967). The archives of the Holland America Line do however point out that it resulted very difficult for Continental Lines to attract British passengers. The archive research indicates that during rate wars efforts to attack the British Lines on their home market centered on the Eastbound return route. Only during the 1894-1895 rate war did the H.A.P.A.G. mention controls impeding the Continental Lines from boarding British steerage passengers on the Westbound Route. The Scandinavian market was a much easier target for the German Lines to attack the British Lines. Further research is needed however to shed light on the reasons why on the Westbound route the British internal market seemed impenetrable for Continental Lines.

¹⁹ The Wilson Line would later also provide a feeder service from Libau from where many continental passengers, mainly Russian Jews, migrated indirectly through England to the U.S.

²⁰ Unlike Bremen the Hamburg authorities initially opposed the migrant trade. Only during the 1840's did the Hamburg merchants realize the importance of the trade. The lag of interest for the direct transatlantic transport from Hamburg and the long established trade relations between British ports and the Hanse town favored indirect migration. The indirect migration through Rotterdam quickly decreased once the Holland America Line was established (Van der Valk, 1976). The Inman had to stop its feeder service from Antwerp immediately after the opening of the Red Star Line (Flyhart, 2000). However, the H.A.P.A.G. which grew out to be the biggest shipping company worldwide was never able to make an end to the indirect migration through its homeport (Broeze, 1992).

²¹ Passage brokers and emigration agents in Liverpool needed to get a certificate from the authorities agreeing to abide the English laws. For those who worked with brokers in Hamburg, a copy had to be deposited with the Hamburg consul agreeing to abide both Hamburg Senate and English laws from 1855 onwards. Contracts were made between Michols & Co from Liverpool with Morris & Co in Hamburg, Sable & Searle with L. Scharlach & Co, S. Stern with Falck & Co, W. Inman with J. Kirsten, Hartmann with O. Moeller, D. Mac Iver with G. Hirschmann, Magnus Ballin with Morris & Co, Hamburg Staatsarchiv, Consulaat Liverpool: Auswanderungsangelegenheiten 1851-68 nr 8.

lines which were to a large extent dependent of the goodwill of the British lines to raise their prices or lower commissions for the continental traffic²². The Mediterranean market coincided at the time with the Italian market which was starting to pick up. Some lines such as Fabre Line and Italian Line opened a direct service to New York. Other British and Continental lines also tried to lure those Italians to their ports. Especially the C.G.T. that drew migrants mainly from South-West Germany and Switzerland with special railroad services saw the Italian market as the most natural territory to expand (de Vannoise-Pochulu, 1993). The company increasingly centered its efforts on the Mediterranean and Oriental market which boomed during the 1890's up to 1914 attracting English and German lines to open direct services from there²³. At one of the first meetings of the continental conference it was decided that direct and indirect lines should try to unite in a Mediterranean conference to fix through rates to these points²⁴. The Mediterranean conference was formed in November 1885²⁵. The reason for the continental lines to organize the Mediterranean market was its dependence of the stability of other markets to be able to raise continental fares. If rates for Italian destinations differed too much from the continent than Swiss and Austrians may choose that route instead of going through continental ports. If Scandinavian rates were lower than continental rates than Germans and Poles would be booked at the lowest price. If the rate difference between the continent and British Isles was too big, continentals traveled to Liverpool which had frequent services to many continental destinations. In short the different conferences were dependent on each other to increase rates.

Outside rivals on the Continent: Thingvalia and French Line

The Continental market ranged from Spain to Russia and was in full expansion to the east at the time. The Continental Conference had been drawn up to include both Thingvalia Line and C.G.T. The Danish Line focused on the Scandinavian market but the geographic position of

²² In 1894 the British Market-share of steerage passengers consisted of 70% English and Irish, 22% Scandinavian and 8% Continental passengers. 1894 was a year with low migration and a rate war was going on between the Continental lines and the British lines hence the efforts to attract continental passengers were considerable during that year. G.A.R., HAL, 318.04, 223, 9-5-1894.

²³ Most Italians initially came from the North and reached huge numbers once the movement spread to the South. Greeks and Syrians soon followed.

²⁴ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.02, 112, Letter of Van den Toorn to directors 16-1-1886 and G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, Meeting 25-5-1885, Minute 41.

²⁵ It consisted of the Italian Line, Fabre Line, Red Star Line and the Holland America Line.

Copenhagen allowed them to easily target the continental market. However, the Danes could not be convinced to join the conference. The non inclusion of the French Line had greater repercussions on the working of the conference. Having to a great extent the same hinterland as the members of the conference, they could not permit to fix rates and commission that differed much of the C.G.T. without risk of losing a share of the traffic²⁶. After months of futile negotiations the lines decided not to wait any longer and increased the net ocean rates by 2,5\$. Instead of using fighting ships or cutting on the ocean rate, affecting all continental business, the lines cut on the through rates to popular destinations of the French Line's traveling public. Most prepaid and eastbound tickets were sold in connection with railroad tickets. These railroad tickets were sold at cost or with loss to fight the French Line. They raised the outward commission at the same level of the French line at four dollars. Sub-agents were notified that unless they relinquished the agency of the French Line, ticket books of the Conference Lines would be withdrawn from them²⁷. The French Line then had to rely on a parallel network of non-conference agents for selling their tickets²⁸. Six months later the British lines finally reorganized. They quoted continental rates at a base of 22\$ for express service, 5\$ lower than the Continental Lines. Only if the C.G.T. joined the Conference the British lines would raise their rates. The British Lines helped pressuring the French to enter the conference through the agent network²⁹. Negotiations with C.G.T. resumed. The French Line tried to obtain the right to quote equal railroad rates as the R.S.L. and H.A.L. to what it called its special territory, Switzerland, France and Northern Italy. The latter refused to give up their geographical advantage to these points. They agreed to cancel special rates using the actual inland tariff instead. Commissions were lowered and the rates set at a base of 27\$ for express service. This cleared the path to enter further negotiations with the British lines.

²⁶ The French would only join if 25\$ for the express service was used as a base to fix the rates. However, the prepaid rate for N.G.L. express was set at 22\$, but it was prospectively to reach 30\$. When it did it was agreed that the H.A.L. would be allowed to increase its differential. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, Meeting 15-7-1885, Minute 63 and 67.

²⁷ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563; Meeting 31-5-1885, Minutes 39; Meeting 15-7-1885, Minute 63 and Meeting 20-8-1885 minutes 74 and 85.

²⁸ In a letter of Van den Toorn to the Board of directors on joining the Continental Conference he reassured the directors that they may lose some agents, but not many because as a conference line they were assured to have the best and most respectable agents. In case they stepped out of the conference there existed a wide network of maybe less solid but very active non-conference agents to fall back on. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.14, 18/3, 21-11-1884.

²⁹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.02, 112, Letter of Van den Toorn to directors 16-1-1886.

The network of migrant brokers and agents: the concentration in New York

One of the priorities of the New York Continental Conference was to impose 'city rules' in New York. In Europe migrant brokers and agents were tied to a set of laws and had to apply for a concession obtained after depositing a bond. These regulations assisted the shipping companies on the old continent to gain control over the migrant agents. In the U.S. such system was inexistent leaving agents and brokers to the sole supervision of the shipping companies. Especially in New York where the sale of passage tickets for the American market concentrated, chaos reigned because of the proliferation of agents and runners. Besides through migrant agents, tickets were sold over the counter by innkeepers, boardinghouses, peddlers etc. With 'city rules' the lines wanted to do away with the middleman and restrict the sale of ocean tickets in New York to the company's office. This would greatly increase the control over the business and do away with commission costs. To do so without important losses of market share all the lines had to adhere. Once the British reached their provisional agreement the members of the Continental Conference limited the number of sub-agents in the city to twelve, two in Williamsburg and one each in Hoboken, New Jersey and Brooklyn. The commission over the counter would still be paid as long as the British Lines did and the French Line did not join the conference³⁰.

Besides stopping the proliferation of agents and runners the lines wanted to counter the developing order-system with the 'city rules'. Prices for prepaid tickets were higher than cash rates in Europe where the agent's commission was higher making the net ocean fare on the old continent significantly lower³¹. Some American agents started offering orders for steerage passage from Hamburg to New York four dollars below the British Continental prepaid rate. Such orders were then exchanged for tickets purchased at cash rate from the brokers of the British lines in Hamburg³². The German Line informed the conference members that unless the

³⁰ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 25-5-1885, minute 38 and meeting 25-1-1886, minutes 164-166.

³¹ The difference continuously varied. In January 1890 the difference on net ocean rates was 4,7\$ with prepaid tickets at 19\$ while Hamburg cash rates were at 60 Mark. In July 1892 the difference was reduced to 1,6\$. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, 20-1-1890 and G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, 15-7-1892. Ottmüller-Wetzel misread Murken as would he have stated that prepaid prices tended to be 20 to 40 Marks lower than cash rates in Europe. This price difference applied to return rates being lower than the westbound rates. Murken put forward the overcapacity and lack of agreement on the eastbound movement with the British Lines until 1908 as reasons for this difference.

British lines raised the European cash rates, they would see themselves forced to lower the prepaid rate to meet said competition³³. The H.A.P.A.G. opened a New York-Baltic service, to and from Copenhagen, Göteborg and Stettin at 19\$ to pressure the British lines³⁴. This resulted in an agreement between the H.A.P.A.G. and the British Lines. The H.A.P.A.G. withdrew its direct Scandinavian line while the British lines agreed to limit their share of the traffic going through Hamburg to 35 percent. Price difference between indirect and direct routes could not exceed five Marks to the advantage of the British Lines. This was controlled by a Clearing House in Hamburg (Otmüller-Wezel, 1986). Yet all the efforts to get the lines on the same wavelength fell to pieces when the Red Star Line dropped out of the New York Continental Conference triggering a rate war which would last eight months.

The dependence of stability of other conferences

The Continental Conference was renewed in accord with the Mediterranean and the North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference for whose members the agents were allowed to book. Yet the Harmony between British and Continental Lines was still far from being reached. City rules stayed out and the commission over the counter persisted³⁵. The British kept paying extra commissions, quoting low rates to the continent and waited for the N.G.L. to raise their Scandinavian rates. The N.G.L. for their part waited for the British Lines to raise the continental rates before changing theirs. The H.A.L. and H.A.P.A.G. urged to lower the rates to meet the British competition. The deadlock could only be broken after several notices of withdrawal and a two week period where regulations were lifted. In the end it took another six months before the British Lines finally raised their continental rates³⁶. All preparations were made to enforce city rules in New York. Only the consent of the Mediterranean Conference was needed to apply

³² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 29-3-1886, minute 197. H.A.P.A.G. quoted 25\$ for prepaid tickets at the time which gave the English Lines a differential of 7\$ using this system.

³³ The H.A.P.A.G. reached an agreement with the migrant houses in Hamburg operating for British Lines in December 1886. The H.A.P.A.G. agreed to stop its direct Scandinavian service while the British Lines committed to limit their outtake of the traffic going through Hamburg to 35 percent. A clearing house was established to supervise the divide the traffic accordingly (Otmüller-Wezel, 1986).

³⁴ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 26-6-1886, minute 250.

³⁵ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, circular 14-4-1887.

³⁶ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563; Meeting 31-5-1887 minute 31, meeting 26-6-1887 minute 50, meeting 15-8-1887 minute 61, meeting 6-9-1887 minute 64 and meeting 20-9-1887 minute 69 and 70.

them, yet the conference fell apart due to internal tensions³⁷. The improved collaboration with the British Lines allowed lowering the commission to two dollars for continental business and price changes were mutually discussed. Yet the increasing tension among the British lines, especially between the White Star and Inman Line led to a rate war on the Scandinavian market. Net Ocean Rates to and from Scandinavian points fell as low as 12\$ and commissions of 6\$ were paid out. The German lines gave guarantees that these would not be misused for continentals to prevent the war from spreading³⁸. The situation on the Mediterranean market also remained fairly unstable and treats were made to let it spread to the continental business to pressure some members sitting in both to concessions. Yet this did not happen and when the Italian government imposed its citizens to migrate directly from national ports the situation changed completely³⁹.

The external problems seriously hampered the working of the Continental Conference. Price agreements and measures to control the agent network could only be implemented by forcing the outside continental lines to join, as was the case with the French Line. Moreover, the foothold of the British Lines in Hamburg on the continent made the conference dependent of the goodwill of these to raise prices and implement measures to control the agents. Also continental market was sensitive to unrests in other sub-markets of the North Atlantic traffic. Rate wars easily spread or at least forced the lines to lower their rates avoiding continental passengers from taking alternative routes. Finally the lack of control over migrant brokers and agents on both sides of the Atlantic posed another threat, especially when Hamburg migrant brokers started

³⁷ Fabre Line and Florio Rubathino Line refused to reorganize after the Red Star Line's condemnation by the Arbitrator for faltering with the agreements. It put an end to the idea of pooling the Mediterranean market. This was to the great regret of Van den Toorn who saw a unique opportunity to get rid off the Italian agents who, to his opinion were even less trustworthy than other agents. Van den Toorn had hoped to open Joint Offices where all lines were represented by an independent agent and whose books had to be accessible to all lines at all times. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563; meeting 25-10-1887 minute 77, meeting 31-1-1888 minute 165. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 Letters of Van den Toorn 3-1-1888 and 20-1-1888.

³⁸ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563; meeting 16-7-1889 Minute 165 meeting 2-10-1890 minute 370, meeting 2-12-1890 minutes 375-379 and meeting 23-12-1890 minute 382. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 and 222; Letters of van den Toorn, 11-10-1889, 15-10 1889, 21-1-1890 and 10-12 1891.

³⁹ Both the R.S.L. and C.G.T. threatened to step out of the continental conference if they did not get their way on the Mediterranean market but were eventually not executed. Once the law prevented them from booking passengers the companies used their agent-network to circumvent the laws and continued transporting Italians via Marseille G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563; meeting 2-10-1891, Minute 370. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 Letters of Van den Toorn 10-9-1890, 3-10-1890, 17-10-1890 and 19-11-1890.

opening branch offices in New York selling orders at cheaper European cash rates corrupting the American prepaid market. The impotence of shipping companies to impose themselves on the agents also undermined internal cohesion.

3.2.) The internal pressures

Internal mistrust, duration of agreements and constant renegotiations

The mistrust between the members who for a long time considered each other as their number one rivals constantly weighed on the Continental Conference. The underlying suspicions are reflected by the period for which the agreements were concluded. During the first five years the agreements were never renewed for longer than seven months⁴⁰. Sometimes the negotiations to renew, during which the old agreements usually still stood took longer than the agreement itself. The differentials between the lines were always open to renegotiations. Especially since fixed prices moved the competition to improve the quality of service. During the first five years the Dutch Line in particular greatly improved their fleet⁴¹. The Red Star Line continuously pushed that initial differentials, which were set on speed and quality of service, be adapted accordingly⁴². These tensions quickly led the conference into its first crisis. Hardly a year after its founding the conference fell apart. The Red Star Line accused the members of perusing an aggressive policy against them in Europe, alienating the agents from them⁴³. The prepaid rates plummeted with 10\$. The Holland America Line notified its agents that any new reduction made by other lines, would be as far as possible followed by further reduction of their prices, maintaining the differential rate as long as possible. Agents were at liberty to dispose of their commission as deemed proper. Conference agents had to discontinue selling tickets of the Red

⁴⁰ Only at the end of 1889 the agreements were renewed for a year to 31-12-1890. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 Letter of Van den Toorn, 11-12-1889.

⁴¹ Between 1886 and 1889 the H.A.L. bought no less than seven second hand ships, totaling 27.000 tons, among them the Arabic, Baltic and the Republic of the White Star Line which enjoyed a good reputation with the traveling public.

⁴² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563; meeting 11-12, 1888 minute 214, meeting 13-6-1889 minute 273. Eventually the HAL gave in to increase their rates and thus decrease their differential by 50 cents. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 Letters of Van den Toorn Letter 11-10-1889.

⁴³ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, Meeting 26-7-1886 minute 258.

Star, White Cross and Thingvalia Line or send back the ticket books of the Conference Lines⁴⁴. The limit of agents in New York was lifted⁴⁵. This rate war to force R.S.L. back in, lasted eight months during which agents were allowed to disregard many regulations. If they did violate the ones still standing fines were less severe. Agents caught selling tickets for the R.S.L. first received a warning before being disqualified, to prevent as many agents as possible from giving up the conference agency. With the new agreement a circular was sent to remind the agents of the regulations adding some new ones. Among these was increased cancellation fees to ten percent and fixed commission were replaced by ten percent on the ticket. The latter could have moved the agents and ship-owners towards a common interest in raising prices. Yet the smaller lines feared that the percentage base would stimulate the sale of the more expensive services of the bigger lines. Their protests eventually lead to the reintroduction of fixed commission. This was only one disadvantage of the lack of homogeneity of product.

The lack of homogeneity of product: various services, destinations at different rates

The working was further complicated because some lines offered slow and fast services and also to different ports of arrival such as, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York at different rates. Negotiations whether to include new services of members in the conference added to the internal tensions. For example the Holland America Line opened a Baltimore service to fight the increasing competition for freight between Rotterdam and the U.S., for cheaper passenger and freight railroad rates to and from the West from that port and for the more lenient application of laws regarding the landing of migrants⁴⁶. Yet the Dutch Line was also the only company with just one destination and no variety in standard of service. It was a well known practice that companies sometimes booked passengers at regular service to be transported on express steamers, or passengers were booked at lower Philadelphia and Baltimore rates but landed in New York. Although this was against the conference rules it resulted very difficult to prove these abuses. Companies gave these facilities to their most reliable and important agents who to avoid

⁴⁴ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 767, Circular H.A.L. to sub-agents 3-8-86.

⁴⁵ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 2-8-1886, minutes 265-269.

⁴⁶ In 1890 for instance rates from Baltimore to the West differed on average 1,94\$ and from Philadelphia 1,24\$. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 Letter of Van den Toorn, 20-12-1890.

lines and possible disqualification used the greatest secrecy. The lines hired private detective companies when suspecting lines from evading the regulations on large scale. Passengers could hardly ever be convinced to give affidavits about frauds. Private detectives represented themselves as clients yet all kinds of tricks were used to prevent the detectives from getting their hands on evidence⁴⁷. To prove the faltering with upgraded services the detectives had to actually travel on these tickets. It seemed to have been the Dutch Line's policy where the violations of the agreement were too difficult to prove, to make sure to be able to tamper with them as well. The N.G.L. that managed a service on Baltimore since 1867 had recently seen the H.A.P.A.G opening a line to the port and was determined to block out new competition. The exclusion of the Baltimore service out of the conference meant that conference agents were not allowed to book for that service⁴⁸. The N.G.L. visited many agencies stressing that if they booked for the Dutch Baltimore service they would be disqualified. Yet by paying extra commission the line found many agents willing to take the risk. The non-inclusion permitted the H.A.L. to quote low rates and pay higher commissions attracting a fair share of passengers⁴⁹.

Agreements on ocean rates further moved the competition on railroad rates

All negotiations on ocean rates were closely related with inland fares on both sides of the Atlantic. The hardly negotiated differentials on ocean rates could easily be cancelled out by railroad fares. The conference rule established that the actual inland fares had to be charged to prevent that cuts on ocean fares would be replaced by cuts on railroad fares. Both migrant agents as shipping companies constantly negotiated with inland transport companies to obtain special rates. Initially on the American soil a fierce competition between the railroad lines was prevalent. All kinds of reductions could be obtained. The rate wars also pushed the railroads to collide

⁴⁷ At some stage the H.A.L. had to hire an extra bookkeeper to cover up the violations of the agreements. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letter of Van den Toorn 21-8-1891.

⁴⁸ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 17-3-1891, 12-6-1891, 22-7-1891 and 25-9-1891.

⁴⁹ Many new services were opened were eventually included in the conference such as the H.A.P.A.G, Union service specializing in migrant and freight transport, H.A.P.A.G express service, the Stettin Line and Baltimore Line which were all accepted. Their Hansa Line to Montreal however was blocked out. The introduction Lloyd ships built as the Union steamers, for migrant and freight transport only also led to intense discussions on what rates it would include. In the end this service both to Baltimore and New York would be taken up in the conference under the Roland Line.

establishing the Immigrant Clearing House coordinating the migrant business in 1887⁵⁰. It allowed them to increase the rates and cut on the commissions granted to steamship companies and migration agents for the sale of railroad tickets in connection with ocean passage. Plans of steamship lines for the opening of Joint Railroad Offices to regain control over the railroad business never materialized. Secret reductions and special commissions still existed, but these were far less significant than during rate wars⁵¹ (Feys, 2007).

The European inland tariff caused greater instability. Particularly the low inland tariff of the Dutch Line had a demoralizing effect. The Dutch railway and the Rhine steamboat companies recalculated the fares in 1887 giving the H.A.L. an important differential on inland transport. The other members questioned the validity of the rates and brought the case to the arbitrator. The Red Star Line claimed to be loosing important amounts of business and started quoting the same inland tariff as the Dutch Line adding 80 cents representing the cost from Rotterdam to Antwerp⁵². It ignored the rule imposing lines to quote the actual tariff obtained. The H.A.P.A.G. soon followed⁵³. The R.S.L. threatened to leave the conference and brought the case to the arbitrator. Tensions increased when the arbitrator ruled in favor of the H.A.L.⁵⁴. The R.S.L. kept on using the same tariff as the H.A.L. who denounced the abuse⁵⁵. The Dutch Line attributed the low rates due to the geographical advantage of Rotterdam which it was not prepared to give up. It believed the matter to be important enough to risk war⁵⁶. The R.S.L. demanded the permission to quote equal inland fare as the H.A.L. or a decrease of the differential of the ocean rate to extend the agreements. In the end the Antwerp based company

⁵⁰ The Immigrant clearing House regulated the traffic between New York and Chicago. Railroads in the West organized later on.

⁵¹ But that the problems still persisted is illustrated through the establishment of a committee appointed to put an end to rate cuts on railroad tickets sold in connection with eastbound ocean passage Minute 384, 22-12-1890 and Minute 390 30-12-1890.

⁵² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 31-5-1887 minute 32, meeting 17-11-1887 minute 87 and meeting 27-12-1887 minute 104.

⁵³ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 24-4-1888 minute 143.

⁵⁴ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 31-1-1888 minute 109

⁵⁵ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 2-7-1888 minute 174-176.

⁵⁶ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221 Letter of Van den Toorn, 16-6-1888 and 22-6-1888.

obtained the right to lower its ocean rates by fifty cents⁵⁷. However, the French Line claimed that the situation was no longer sustainable and demanded adaptations of differentials. It had calculated that the average differential, railroad and ocean rate included to thirty five common points in Europe amounted to 9,25\$ in favor of R.S.L. and 11,35\$ in favor of H.A.L.⁵⁸. A special sub-committee was formed to tackle the problems on European inland fares by establishing a list of maximum 300 points where passengers could be booked through at well established rates. Yet the formation of the list was delayed by Austrian and German Railroads which were about to issue new reductions⁵⁹. The French Line lost its patience and dropped out of the conference. The H.A.L. convinced the French to rejoin by reducing differentials to French, Swiss and Northern Italian points for through rates to two dollars and allowed R.S.L. to use their rates to these points⁶⁰.

The take-over of the pre-paid market by migrant brokers

The most important internal pressure was created by the Hamburg migrant brokers who by drawing orders at cash rates completely demoralized the prepaid market. The pool agreement of the traffic through Hamburg between H.A.P.A.G and the British Lines did not make an end to the practice. Repeatedly the New York head-agents of the shipping companies urged their directors to raise the cash rate or allow them to lower the prepaid rate to fight these abuses⁶¹. As long as migrant agents could offer cheaper prices for the crossing than the lines themselves it would be impossible to introduce 'city rules'⁶². Migrant broker, C. B. Richard, acting as head-agent for the H.A.P.A.G. said that only an advance in cash rates could prevent their withdrawal⁶³. Despite raising European cash rates with ten German Marks the French Line

⁵⁷ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 22-1-1889 minute 224.

⁵⁸ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 27-6-1889 minute 272-276.

⁵⁹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 27-2-1890 minute 329 and meeting 30-12 -1890 minute 390.

⁶⁰ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 21-5-1891 minute 432 and meeting 1-7-1891 minute 449.

⁶¹ Unfortunately no price series of European cash rates are at hand but additional commission and the price difference must have balanced around four to five dollars, based on the repeated calls of the agents to raise the cash rate by ten to fifteen Marks or cut on the Prepaid by two to three dollars. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221-223, Letters of Van den Toorn.

⁶² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 25-10-1887, minute 72 and meeting 16-6-1888, minute 165.

insisted to decrease the prepaid ticket with an additional 3,5\$. Their sale of prepaid tickets had practically come to a standstill and threatened to leave the conference. Their orientation towards the Swiss, Austrian and Italian market led to a neglect of the migrant flow from the east. While the British and the other continental lines developed relations with the Hamburg migrant brokers enabling them to get their hands on the order business, the French Line did not⁶⁴.

The Hamburg migrant brokers were predominantly Jews who in the meantime had opened branch offices in New York, where they concentrated in Canal Street. The order-system allowed them to undercut the American prepaid price by three to four dollars driving the other migrant agents out of business. Occasionally such agents were caught violating the conference rules. First time offenders were fined and threatened with disqualification. However they defended themselves claiming that as long as tickets could be sold over the counter by outsiders without liability and responsibility to the Conference for violation of the rules, they had no choice but to follow suit with abuses to stay in business⁶⁵. The eight month negotiations to prolong the agreements in 1889 allowed the Hamburg brokers to increase their grip on the market. The practice of drawing orders spread to the bigger American cities including Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago, Saint Louis and Milwaukee. As observed by Van den Toorn the competition between the lines contributed to the demoralization. Instead of standing up for themselves the lines let the control over the business slip away into the hands of Jewish brokers⁶⁶. The Hamburg brokers started opening offices in Bremen and would later do the same in Rotterdam and Antwerp. The spreading out of the system indirectly resulted from the Hamburg pool dividing the traffic between H.A.P.A.G. and British lines. To increase their business the Hamburg brokers started to forward migrants through Bremen, Rotterdam and Antwerp which did not fall under the agreement. Also the control of the cash-order system in the U.S. allowed them to establish contacts with new shipping companies.

⁶³ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 28-2-1888 minute 127.

⁶⁴ Decision on lowering the prepaid rates was continuously deferred during the next four months after which the French Line withdrew its claim. It is unclear if the French obtained concessions on the Swiss and Italian territory or elsewhere from the other Continental Lines that were against lowering the rates. However, they did not get their hands on order business G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letter of Van den Toorn 19-11-1889.

⁶⁵ The bigger agents claimed that small agents tried to increase their sales through low rates by cutting the commission to 25 cents. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 29-8-1889, minutes 284 and 285.

⁶⁶ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letter of Van den Toorn 19-11-1889.

Albert Ballin's plan to control the indirect traffic through Hamburg backfired against him and led to new routes of indirect migration via Hamburg. The H.A.P.A.G.-manager threatened to let part of his fleet call at Rotterdam⁶⁷. H.A.P.A.G. demanded that the H.A.L. and R.S.L. closed their Hamburg agency under L. Scharlach and S. Jarmulowski respectively⁶⁸. Both companies were prepared to withdraw the authority of the brokers to draw orders for them out of Hamburg on the condition that H.A.P.A.G. stopped giving same facilities to brokers not belonging to the Hamburg Pool and that N.G.L. prevented F. Missler from doing the same via Bremen⁶⁹. With these facilities all possible conference regulations were violated, ranging from faltering with upgraded service, to not charging cancellation fees, paying extra commission, allowing changing names on the ticket, hiring subagents, dividing the commission or offering part of it as a reduction to the buyer. To avoid being caught Scharlach used the H.A.L. prepaid tickets however the purchaser never received these in own hands. Instead of receiving the receipt attached to the ticket an outsider issued a proof of payment. The originals were sent to the houses in Bremen or Hamburg to prevent conference members from getting their hands on legal proofs. The practice was so embedded that New York head agents of the shipping lines cabled the home offices asking the prepaid prices to be lowered at the same level as cash rates⁷⁰. The N.G.L. opposed the decrease whereupon all other members gave notice of withdrawal. A reduction of two dollars followed to bring prepaid rates closer to cash rates⁷¹. The difference remained 2,5\$ which was still enough margin for the abuses to continue⁷². The H.A.P.A.G. defended their abuses with the excuse that they had to follow the prices quoted by the British lines in Hamburg. As a result Scharlach and Jarmulowski were reinstated by the R.S.L. and H.A.L.⁷³. Much to his

⁶⁷ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letter of Van den Toorn 31-1-1890

⁶⁸ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letter of Van den Toorn Letter 2-10-1889 and G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 17-9-1889, minute 291.

⁶⁹ The outside pool agents mentioned were C. Seligman, M. Fleteau, C. Stockel, K. Weinberegger and Landav, G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 8-10-1889, minute 298.

⁷⁰ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 23-1-1890, minute 317 and meeting 27-2-1890, minute 328.

⁷¹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meetings 10-3-1890, 10-4-1890, 2-5-1890 and 10-5-1890.

⁷² The European cash rate stayed at 60 Mark, which at the contemporary exchange rate used by the companies of 4,2 Mark to the dollar brings it at 14,1\$ while the prepaid net rate was 17\$ or 72,1 Mark. According to Murken lines started making profit on migrants when selling above 40 to 45 Marks (Murken, 1922).

⁷³ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letter of Van den Toorn 30-7-1890, 19-8-1890 and 10-9-1890.

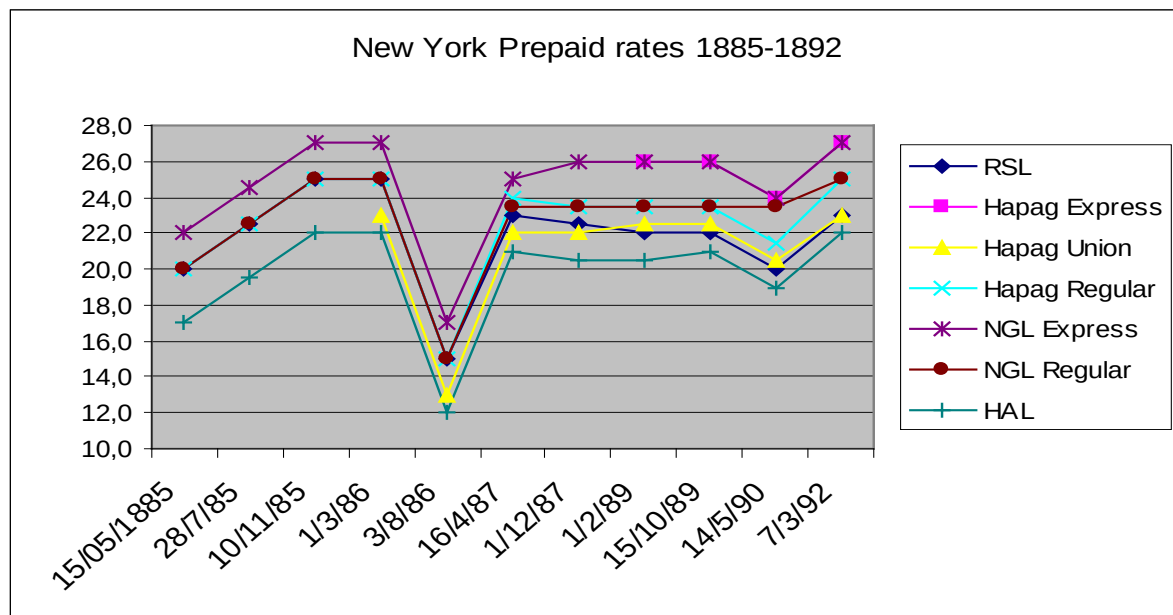
dislike, Ballin was forced to allow both lines in the Hamburg pool⁷⁴. The tensions between the lines greatly increased while the prices for the transport remained low. It was sensed that a rate was unavoidable unless the members came to an agreement to pool the continental traffic.

3.3) An evaluation of the first seven years of the Continental Conference

If the success of a conference has to be judged on the ability to detect and discourage cheating than the Continental Conference greatly failed. Instead of becoming more transparent the transactions became even more corrupted. As the policy of the Dutch illustrates where the violations of the agreement were too difficult to prove, they made sure to be able to tamper with them as well. Even the hiring of private detectives was not enough to efficiently verify cheating. Relying on agents denouncing colleagues also proved to be ineffective. Most of the proofs for cheating were collected by companies' personnel and detectives, only sporadically by migrant agents. Cheating seems to have been so widespread that most agents were not irreproachable taking away the incentive to denounce. Shipping companies were not able to implement the rules which had to eliminate differential treatment of customers by the migrant agents. Neither could they prevent themselves from giving some brokers facilities and others not. When violations were recorded the conference failed to use retaliation deterring reoccurrence. Fines were not high enough while the threat of disqualification was hollowed by the fear that agents could do more damage by working for non-members. As would be the case of Scharlach suffering two disqualifications yet both times he fought his way back in. As observed by van den Toorn when lines were caught cheating apart from slightly affecting the negotiation position when agreements had to be renewed and having to pay a moderate fine companies easily got of the hook. Under these circumstances it is no surprise that the companies failed to raise gross prices which included the commission as shown in the graph 1. As argued above the prices only reflect

⁷⁴ H.A.P.A.G. tried to intimidate the Dutch Line by threatening again to use Rotterdam as a port of call. As a countermeasure the H.A.L. made preparations to include Hamburg in its sailings. R.S.L. and H.A.L. the former eternal rivals joined forces to strengthen their negotiating position against the German Line. By the admission in the pool lines had to stop giving extra commission to their Hamburg agency but were assured a fixed number of passengers or compensation if the number was not attained. The number of passengers would decrease but they would be booked at a better price. Because of the renegotiations the H.A.P.A.G saw its share of the traffic through Hamburg decrease from 65 to 57,8 percent. As observed by van den Toorn: "*the Hamburg pool is an excellent means of putting Ballin under pressure.*" G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letters of Van den Toorn 8-6-1891, 14-7-1891 and 12-9-1891.

part of the reality which worse for the profits of the companies than the graph suggests. Secret commissions and reductions on railroad rates cut deep into the companies' profits while investments in the fleet increased. This occurred to the advantage of the agents and especially the migrants who benefited of improved services at low prices. Yet the conference also produced positive results. After the rate war during the second half of 1886 the conference managed to prevent open rate wars from reoccurring on the continental market. It also brought the four core members H.A.L., R.S.L., H.A.P.A.G. and N.G.L. closer together, proved that the French could be forced in and strengthened their negotiation position with the British Lines. These elements were essential for the successful formation of the subsequent pool-agreements.



4) Pooling the traffic, the tonnage clause and the impact on the Conference Agreements

Fixing market shares is the most efficient of all methods of combating secret price cutting (Stigler 1961). The continental shipping companies saw it as the only way to cut the edge of the competition -- to control both agent-networks as transport fares. Ballin whose home port suffered most of the cheating became the driving force behind the expansion of agreements. Internally core members divided the market into shares and used schemes of compensation to balance

shortages or excesses. To reduce external price cuttings agreements were made with other lines to geographically divide the North-Atlantic market. Although the American anti-trust legislation was starting to develop, shipping lines felt protected by the knowledge that American jurisdiction did not extend over international waters. This belief vanished shortly after but did not affect conference negotiations during the period analyzed here.

4.1) The formation of the Nord-Atlantischer Dampfer-Linien Verband

The negotiations for a westbound pool started at a secret meeting between the R.S.L., H.A.L., N.G.L. and H.A.P.A.G. early 1890. The French made it clear not to be interested in joining. This was met by considering France, Switzerland and Italy as special territory organized on the basis of a money-pool⁷⁵. The situation in Hamburg made the inclusion of the British lines highly desirable if not indispensable. Based on the continental steerage passengers transported during the last ten years the H.A.L. obtained 8% of the traffic from ports north of Cadiz to the U.S and Canada; R.S.L. 13,5%, N.G.L. 39,7% and H.A.P.A.G., 24,8%. The British Lines with whom a separate contract was negotiated received 14%. The percentage participation could be altered depending on the changes in tonnage of vessels employed for transport of steerage passengers of each company by either more frequent use or introduction of new vessels. Companies that exceeded their percentage needed to compensate the lines which were short at a rate of 60 Marks per passenger. Gross rates and commissions with a minimum of 6 marks and maximum of 20 marks were fixed. The gross rates in America had to, as much as practicable be equal to the ones in Europe. Commissions to agents in the U.S. could not exceed two dollars, and to head-agent 5 dollars. All agents receiving more than two had to be reported to the secretary. No commission was allowed on the inland European transport and tariffs to a maximum of 300 points were fixed. All members deposited high bonds as detriment for lines to drop out of the agreement. Disputes would be brought forward to an Arbitrator. The contract was valid for four years, yet alterations could be proposed. If alterations proposed by two members or more were objected to, then these companies had the right to withdraw from the agreement⁷⁶.

⁷⁵ R.S.L., H.A.L. and H.A.P.A.G. organized the territory through a money-pool where all lines chipped in a fixed amount per passenger transported from these territories which was then divided in shares at the end of the year. The N.G.L. decided to stay out of this agreement. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letters of Van den Toorn 29-1-1892.

⁷⁶ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 580, 'Nord-Atlantische Dampfer-Linien Verband' Copy of the contract made in Hamburg 19-1-1892.

Negotiations among the four continental lines went smooth yet there was a great anticipation about the outcome of it. As observed by Van den Toorn: *“No one knows what the pool will bring and why H.A.P.A.G. was so compliant with the N.G.L. Possibly it is a conspiracy to destroy us and the R.S.L., however I’d rather believe that both urgently need money and want to clear out the steorage business from innumerable abuses, being weighed down by the restless actions of agents, or should we say parasites”*⁷⁷. The agreement showed that the continental lines wanted to make an end to the weaknesses of the previous agreements. The quotas warranted that rates would no longer be cut to obtain a larger market share. Linking prepaid with cash rates had to make an end to the order-system. Work was put into fixing rates for inland travel. Furthermore the Baltimore line of the H.A.L. was admitted. While passengers which R.S.L. and H.A.L. drew from Hamburg were no longer a loss to H.A.P.A.G. since they were calculated in the pool. The duration of four years without notice had to make an end to continuous renegotiations and constant threats of withdrawal⁷⁸. Outside competition from French and British Lines was neutralized⁷⁹. Despite keeping out of the pool, the French Line remained in the New York Conference abiding to the rules and adapting the rates in accordance with the members’ interest⁸⁰.

4.2) The British-Jewish Hamburg Connection: the conference’s Achilles Heel

Yet internal division among the members of the British Conference, which by then numbered thirteen members, delayed the signing of the contract. The Continental Lines had an important ally among the British with the American Line. Together with the Red Star Line, which sailed under the Belgian flag, the American Line formed part of the International Navigation Company founded by the managers of Pennsylvania Railroad Company⁸¹. The

⁷⁷ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 20-12-1891.

⁷⁸ The initial plan was to conclude an agreement of 10 years with three years notice. It was than suggested for five years without notice.

⁷⁹ Despite the passing of the Anti-Trust Act, 2-7-1890 the lines were not expecting any difficulties from the American government. The anti-immigration feelings were rising in the U.S. while the many European governments were looking for ways to restrict the exodus. An agreement which would increase the price for the passage, so was believed would be welcomed on both sides of the Atlantic. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn Letter 12-9-1891.

⁸⁰ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 1-4-1892, minute 537.

American concern having interests in both the pool and the British Conference served as platform for the negotiations. Although according to van den Toorn the cooperation of the British lines was bought dearly, the distrust mainly of the Cunard Line towards the German Lines delayed the signing of the agreements. The verbal agreement which had to be enforced on February the first 1892 remained pending. Two months later a three month trail period was adopted without the National and Cunard Line⁸². Rates were jointly increased to unprecedented levels. Yet the vulnerability of the H.A.P.A.G. became once again painfully clear when the Cunard and National lines quoted respectfully 19\$ and 15\$ through Hamburg, while the German Line's lowest rate came to 25\$. The Hamburg Line secretly paid 3,5\$ extra commission to the agents in the U.S. to reach their pool share⁸³. Whatever scheme Ballin put together to increase the profits for his shipping company it ended up in every pocket but his. He concluded special agreements to shut out the Hamburg brokers with agents on the Prussian-Russian boarder and with the Jewish Committee of Berlin through which the majority of the Jewish passengers passed on their way to the New World. The Hamburg brokers even feared that he was pressuring the German government to pass legislations putting an end to their business⁸⁴. A new three year pool agreement with Hamburg Agents Association was concluded which set minimum rates for all lines served by these agents. Fixed commissions on cash passengers were pooled by the agent association. A clearing house controlled all prepaid tickets on their authenticity and validity preventing evasion from the pool through order-tickets. H.A.P.A.G could also book passengers through a limited amount of Hamburg migrant brokers who remained outside of the association

⁸¹ In the 1870's the Pennsylvania Railroad Company tried to divert part of the traffic of freight and passengers from New York to Philadelphia and supported the opening of two steamship lines which it considered as natural extensions of its business. The high costs which entailed sailing under the American flag and the eagerness of the Belgian government to offer advantageous to steam shipping companies willing to open a company under the Belgian flag is responsible for peculiar construction of the concern (Flayhart, 1998 and 2000; Feys, 2007; Safford, 1985). In this text when mentioning the British lines, it refers to the lines managing a service from the British continent and thus includes the American Line from 1885 onwards. With the takeover of the Inman Line in 1886 the line greatly improved its reputation on English soil.

⁸² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 1-4-1892, minute 541. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 11-5-1892.

⁸³ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 27-5-1892.

⁸⁴ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221, Letters of Van den Toorn 1-7-1891 en 15-7-1891. After the cholera outbreak the German government built control stations at the boarders and gave the management of these to the German Lines. This proved a useful means of directing migrants to the German ports (Wüstenbecker, 2003).

but same prices and commissions had to be offered to both at all times⁸⁵. Van den Toorn reported that apart for secret extra commissions which corrupted the business in the U.S., especially because of the lack of an eastbound-agreement, the pool was working very well⁸⁶. When everything seemed to be falling into its place cholera broke out in Hamburg disrupting the traffic for six months.

As a consequence the traffic through Hamburg came to a standstill any many Hamburg brokers moved to Rotterdam and Antwerp⁸⁷. Yet due to the American quarantine measures all lines agreed to suspend the traffic until March 1893. When business took up again the pool in both directions was prolonged until the end of 1893. Despite the troubles H.A.P.A.G. experienced with these brokers the H.A.L. rather saw them settle in Rotterdam than in Antwerp⁸⁸. Also in case the pool fell apart the brokers were an asset in assuring part of the migrant flow to Rotterdam. This illustrates the power that migrant brokers had in directing the migrants via certain routes even if it meant extra travel or extra costs. As Murken put it some migrant brokers were more powerful than ship owners and the competitions between shipping companies was strongly intensified by the agent-network (Murken, 1922). The pool did not make an end to this. Before long the agents corrupted the traffic in Rotterdam. H.A.L. gave Scharlach a special rebate of ten marks on cash rates, which added to higher commissions in Europe allowed him to undercut the prepaid tickets by five dollars. Scharlach was also at liberty to alter the name on the ticket, omit the price and was exempted from paying cancellation fees. This allowed him

⁸⁵ The Hamburg brokers agreed to quote a difference of no more than two marks below the price of direct Union steamers. Also the fares to embarkation ports such as Liverpool, Southampton or Glasgow through Hull Grimsby, London or West Hartlepool were fixed at 26 marks (17,5M for the ocean transport and 8,5M for inland transport). G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 580, Contract between H.A.P.A.G and 'Vereinigung Hamburgischer Passagier-Expedienten' 1-6-1892.

⁸⁶ An eastbound-pool between the members of the N.D.L.V. would eventually be established in November 1892 on the same principals as the westbound pool. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 22-6-1892, 12-7-1892 and 5-8-1892.

⁸⁷ Spiro & Co, L. Scharlach & Co and Karlberg & Co opened offices in Rotterdam.

⁸⁸ Initially the directors of the H.A.L. opposed the traffic via Hamburg and Bremen through the Hamburg agents. They much rather attract the migrants directly to Rotterdam. The directors feared that the indirect expedition would be detrimental to the Dutch port and turn to the advantage of H.A.P.A.G. which was expected to find a way to cut short the Hamburg agents. Moreover, the agents with their boarding houses and other interests in Hamburg were not expected to be willing to divert the traffic directly to Rotterdam. Yet the connections in Hamburg had proven a very efficient means of pressuring Ballin. The establishment of these agents exposed the H.A.L to increase of indirect migration to England through the port and the abuses which H.A.P.A.G. fruitlessly had tried to control. Yet they preferred those risks rather than seeing the flow directed through Antwerp.

to greatly speculate writing out many orders when he expected prices to increase. But also if he obtained better conditions from the British lines H.A.L. passengers could easily be cancelled and transferred to British Lines. Van den Toorn warned that Scharlach controlled their sales in America. Other agents sold order tickets through him and alienated from the company⁸⁹. In the meantime H.A.P.A.G. decided to take the passage agency in New York in own hands. C.B. Richard who had represented the company practically since it's founding in 1847, was cast aside. Richard joined forces with Scharlach and with their long established contacts in the U.S. represented a real threat. Especially since Richard was out for vengeance and was making approaches to the British Lines who had not renewed the pool agreement⁹⁰. Van den Toorn was blaming the latter for lack of cooperation to put an end to the abuses: *Not only do they (brokers) corrupt the inland, prepaid and cash rates or alienate the agents from us; they also blacken our reputation by mistreating the passengers*⁹¹. The Dutch authorities started applying stricter boarder controls because of the increasing arrivals of poor migrants needing assistance. The American authorities were also complaining about the poor quality of migrants arriving with H.A.L. ships. The company decided to withdraw all facilities from Scharlach and retake complete control of the business⁹². Richard and Scharlach took matters in own hands for their part by chartering a ship, the *Red Sea*, taking care of the expedition themselves⁹³.

4.3) Remaining internal and external pressures and the outbreak of a general rate war

Despite the failure of getting control over the agent-network and not coming to terms with outside competition the N.D.L.V. had positive effects on the cohesion among its members. Rates were set a higher levels and joint action on aspects of the business became more common. However, the tonnage clause created some tensions. Introducing new tonnage and optimizing its use put extra strains on a capital intensive business. To make the tonnage count a minimum of

⁸⁹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 27-3-1893, 17-3-1893 and 29-5-1893.

⁹⁰ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 27-3-1893 and 7-4-1893.

⁹¹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 29-5-1893.

⁹² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 14-7-1893.

⁹³ The ship arrived with many sick and was quarantined creating important costs. An estimated forty passengers were deported on the shipowner's expenses, as the American law prescribed. This experience appeared to have deterred the agents to renew another attempt. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn 19-7-1893.

fifty passengers westbound and fifteen eastbound needed to be on board. When it was feared that the quota was not going to be met, passengers could obtain 'last minute deals'. H.A.L. booked passengers as low as 5\$ net, while H.A.P.A.G. even booked passengers for free paying commission to the agents. The N.G.L. launched a new service the Roland Line, who just as the Union Line carried freight and steerage passengers only to increase its capacity. H.A.P.A.G. even converted sections of cattle steamers to carry the minimum amount of migrants. If conferences are set out to fight overcapacity, then the tonnage clause was not the most strategic move of the N.D.L.V. to reduce it⁹⁴. Secondly the contract was not valid for four years because of the non inclusion of the English lines, and thus needed to be renegotiated every year. Companies that did not fill their quotas were accused of having been attributed a too large share while the company with extra's claimed not having received what they ought to have. Especially during the initial years of the pool it was felt that falling short too often could result in a reduction of the quota. Extra commissions were used to compete outside lines but also to make sure that the quotas were filled if not surpassed. The H.A.L. paid 3848 dollars extra commission in 1892. The first half of 1893 the amount reached 9179 dollars⁹⁵. The price for the passage augmented but so did the commissions. These commissions were often returned to the passengers to enable the agents to increase their sales. This practice together with the order-system makes one wonder to what extent the quoted gross rates for prepaid tickets reflect the increase in costs for the passenger.

The financial crisis of 1893 made the migrant rates westbound drop. Tensions between the British and Continental lines became more obvious with the collapsed market. As van den Toorn reported back from the continental conference; *should the competition of the English lines become too strong, it was decided to send some express steamers to English ports to keep them on their Island*⁹⁶. Yet an agreement was anticipated and the Continental Lines felt strong enough to introduce 'city rules' for the eastbound traffic limiting the sale of tickets in New York to joint

⁹⁴ The members of the pool were quick to realize this as well. The increase of number of passengers attributed to an increase in tonnage would first be lowered in 1895 to finally being cancelled in 1899.

⁹⁵ Traffic stopped came to a near standstill I September in 1892 while it did only pick up in March 1893. For the period 1-7 tot 31-12-1893 extra commissions amounted to 12739\$. The source stopped mentioning the extra commissions for subsequent years. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 222, Letters of Van den Toorn, 20-3-1893 and 14-7-1893.

⁹⁶ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 22-12-1893.

offices before the signing of contracts⁹⁷. On the initiative of the Continental Conference this was expanded to prepaid tickets as well. The city agents made great efforts to book for British lines. Yet van den Toorn was confident that the short term loss would largely be compensated by the long term win of putting an end to the abuses and allowing the inland agencies to increase their sales. At a meeting in Cologne another attempt was made to convince the British lines to join the pool, since rate agreements had proven to be unsustainable⁹⁸. The Pool lines gave the British lines two weeks to reflect on the proposal. In the meantime they decided to attack them in Libau, Russia to put on the pressure. The British Lines did a counterproposal but again disagreement among themselves obstructed it. Especially the duration was put forward as the main objection by Boumphrey, director of the Cunard Line⁹⁹. All the agents in New York had to be reinstated and extra commissions were paid¹⁰⁰. The continental lines opened a regular service to Queenstown alternating sailings on the eastbound route while sailings to and from Southampton would be increased. The pool members considered the situation as a good barometer to see to what extent the International Navigation Company would defend the interests of the Red Star Line against the ones of the American Line¹⁰¹. A rate of ten dollars was agreed for the service to the Irish port while the British lines used the migrant brokers in Rotterdam to undercut the continental fares by orders at fifteen dollars from Rotterdam to New York¹⁰². The war also spread to the Mediterranean and Scandinavian market¹⁰³. Yet the Continental Lines were aware

⁹⁷ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 4-1-1894, minutes 669-672.

⁹⁸ The offer consisted of 12 % of the continental traffic, prices not to be lower than the lowest price quoted by a pool member, no extra commissions, the compensation rate to be 60 Mark. In return they proposed an agreement for the Scandinavian market and the withdrawal for steerage passengers from Great Brittan and Ireland. A month later the counter proposal was made to withdraw both from British and Scandinavian market in exchange for 6% of continental market. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 10-3-1894. 18-1-1894,

⁹⁹ Boumphrey said: "not be prepared to put the Cunard Line at the mercy of Ballin for three years". He claimed to be willing to agree for a year while the continental wanted at least three years. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 226, Letters of Van den Toorn Letter 20-4-1894.

¹⁰⁰ That the market plummeted is best illustrated by the fact that the British lines transported only 200 direct passengers from the British Isles during the first quarter of 1894. Thanks to the introduction of city rules they were able to secure a good share of indirect continentals. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 2-4 - 1894 to 11-4-1894. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meetings 30-3-1894 and 4-4-1894, minutes 717-739.

¹⁰¹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 10-4-1894.

¹⁰² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 24-4-1894.

that they could not hit the British lines as hard as the other way around. Englishmen were believed by the continental lines to be too tied to their own national lines to board foreign ships. Moreover the board of Trade hindered the Continental Lines to board steerage passengers from English ports on the westbound route¹⁰⁴. An agreement with the American Line, joining the fight against the British Lines allowed the pool members to attack the British at the heart of their business¹⁰⁵. German express steamers with a rate of fourteen dollars to London were pretty full, yet the chaos among the agents made it impossible to prevent continentals from boarding the ship to then buy a three dollar ticket from London to the continent¹⁰⁶. The Continental Lines initially responded with extra commissions instead of lowering the rates. This had the advantage of binding agents to the lines and prevented agents and brokers from speculating, writing out prepaid blanks in bulk to use them when the prices increased¹⁰⁷. However, the measure did not prove effective because prepaid business halved since the introduction of low rates by the British Lines. A drastic cut of eight dollars on prepaid and a similar one on eastbound rates followed¹⁰⁸. The pool was about to burst since its purpose of increasing incomes was totally impossible and hence useless with current prices¹⁰⁹. Negotiations with the British lines resumed in 1895. It was agreed to jointly raise the rates while negotiations continued. The strategies set out by the pool where members with a plus raised their rates to allow companies that were short to book passengers at good prices instead of having to lower theirs started to be implemented. Reports of agents still tampering with orders persisted, but the negotiations and the previous introduction of joint offices made them realize that they risked to be shut out of the business. The most

¹⁰³ In the meantime major continental and British lines had opened direct services from Italy to catch a share of the booming market. After the reluctance of the British lines to join the pool, the H.A.P.A.G reopened the direct Scandinavian service under the Scandia Line.

¹⁰⁴ The British Board of trade helped their national lines by strictly enforcing the rules regarding the space per steerage passenger on foreign lines. The British way of measuring differed from German laws and its strict enforcement significantly lowered the number of passengers that could be carried by German Express steamers. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 22-12-1893, 2-8-1894 and 24-8-1894.

¹⁰⁵ Agreement reached at a conference in Cologne. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letter of Van den Toorn 27-4-1894.

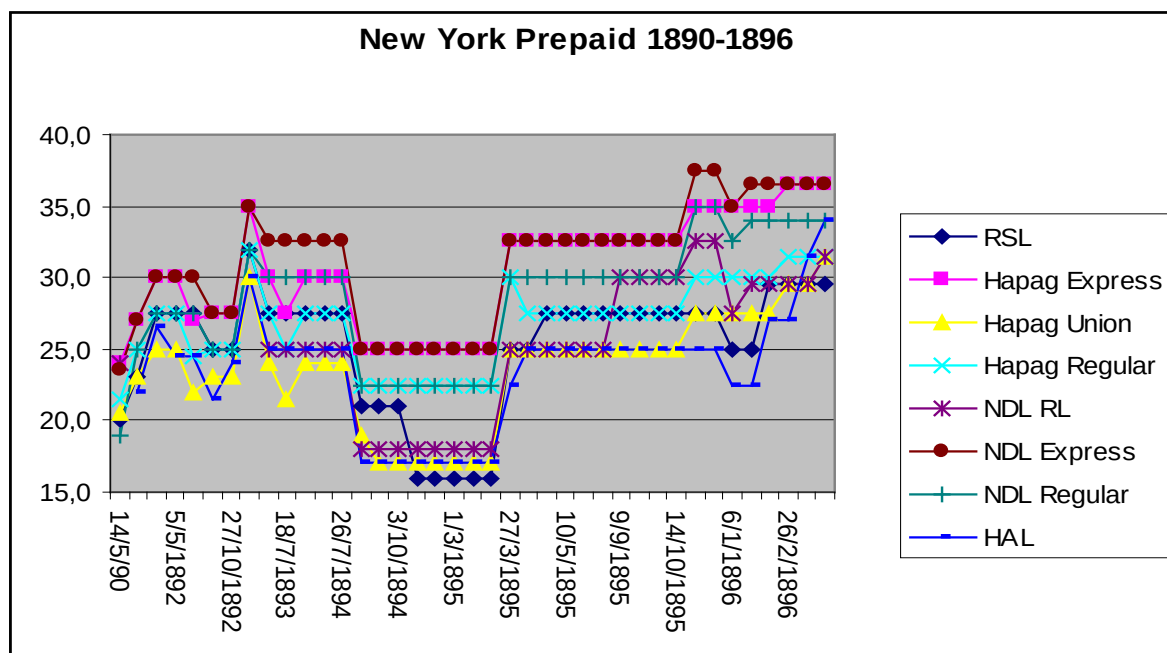
¹⁰⁶ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letter of Van den Toorn 11-5-1894.

¹⁰⁷ The Red Star Line stuck the longest to the policy of extra commissions going up to 7 dollar commission on a 21dollar ticket. G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letters of Van den Toorn 5-9-1894.

¹⁰⁸ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, meeting 26-7-1894, minutes 775-777.

¹⁰⁹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letter of Van den Toorn 10-12- 1894.

important agents established the New York City Agents Association presided by Falck which tried to come to terms with the shipping companies¹¹⁰. This was also stimulated because of an agreement between the H.A.P.A.G. and the English lines which allegedly allowed controlling the number of passengers going through Hamburg¹¹¹. Agents agreed to abide all conference rules and to stop drawing orders on European houses in exchange for a guarantee of a minimum amount of business¹¹². The C.G.T. joined the agreement with the New York agents¹¹³. In the meantime the long awaited pool-agreement with the British lines materialized. The continental lines withdrew from the British and Scandinavian market while the British lines' share of the continental traffic was limited to six percent and their minimum rates had to at least equal the lowest fare of continental regular or express services¹¹⁴.



At last an agreement involving British and Continental lines allowed concluding loyalty agreements with the agents and brokers which had important repercussions on transatlantic ocean

¹¹⁰ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letter of Van den Toorn 15-6-1895

¹¹¹ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letter of Van den Toorn 24-4-1895

¹¹² G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, Meeting 19-6-1895, minute 843, meeting 13-8-1895, minutes 861-871 and meeting 4-9, minute 875.

¹¹³ However, outside migrant agents would pose a constant threat of demoralizing the business again if a new line on the North Atlantic route was to be established.

¹¹⁴ G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 223, Letter of Van den Toorn 15-9-1895.

fares. As the graph below illustrates the pool agreement allowed continental lines to significantly increase the prepaid prices in 1892. Yet discord among the British Lines delayed further increases and forced the companies to pay out high commissions cutting into their profits. When the market collapsed tensions increased resulting in a rate war. Negotiations resumed in March 1895 during which prices were increased. When all lines signed the agreement prices were raised again reaching unprecedented levels. Compared to 1885, prepaid prices of the Holland America Line doubled going from seventeen to thirty four dollars. The agreement would set new standards for fixing ocean fares for the following two decades.

Steerage price formation and shipping conferences on the North Atlantic: a complex story

The widespread migrant agent-network on both sides of the Atlantic clearly undermined the shipowners' ability of fixing prices for transatlantic transport. The introduction of conference agreements therefore became as much a matter of controlling migrant agents and brokers as a matter of fixing prices. Yet the lack of common interest to increase prices and opposite interest in stabilizing the market between migrant agents and shipowners greatly compromised the working of conferences. Migrant agents and brokers profited from the competition between shipping companies. Their capacity of playing off rival lines against one another intensified this competition. The analysis of the New York Continental Conference illustrates the internal and external pressures on shipping conferences. The mistrust between the conference members prevented them from concluding longstanding agreements. This led to constant renegotiations and uncertainty about the continuation of the conference. Every expansion of a company by the opening of new service on the North Atlantic route created tensions on whether these should be included in the conference or not. The differentials on the ocean rate based on speed and quality of service were agreed upon in order to guarantee each member a fair chance to secure part of the traffic. Yet because most ocean passage was sold in connection with inland transport this guarantee was very fragile. The competition on the ocean rate moved to the competition in obtaining the lowest inland fares which could increase or cancel out ocean rate differentials. Price agreements for the prepaid market in the U.S. were further demoralized by the lower European cash rates. Hamburg migration brokers opened branch offices across the Atlantic to

undercut prepaid rates by drawing orders on their European offices. The competition of British lines impeded the continental lines of getting control on the agent-network. This competition culminated in Hamburg where most of the indirect continental migrants via England traveled through. All kinds of facilities violating the agreements were given by the shipping companies to the brokers to remain competitive. The rivalry between the lines drove the market of prepaid tickets in the hands of some Hamburg migration brokers. The chaos which spread from Hamburg explains why Ballin, manager of the H.A.P.A.G was the driving power behind the conference agreements. Instead of making the market more transparent all kinds of abuses covering up price cuts expanded during the first seven years of the Continental Conference. Cheating on conference agreements was too hard to detect and no effective means were put into place to deter lines and agents from doing so. The only solution was to divide the market into shares. The establishment of the N.D.L.V., pooling the continental traffic decidedly improved the harmony among the Continental Lines. The increased collaboration helped augmenting the pressures on the British Lines to reach a compromise. Eventually the agreement involved arrangements for the three sub-markets of European migration; the British-Scandinavian, the Mediterranean-Oriental and the Continental market. Experience had learned that a rate war on one of the sub-market easily spread disrupting the whole market. By geographically dividing the North-Atlantic market the Continental Lines tried to protect themselves from external price cuts. With no lines left to play off against each other the New York migrant agents feared being cut off the business and organized themselves to come to terms with the shipping companies. The harmony between the lines gave the long awaited possibility of obtaining loyalty from the migrant brokers and agents.

The agreement had an immediate impact on the cost of prepaid tickets. Over the last ten years the purchaser often received a discount on the gross rate of the ticket from the migrant agents. They cut their commission in order to sell as many tickets as possible which were used to attract clients for other business. The increased gross prices during the first two years after the formation of the N.D.L.V. was followed by an increase in commission which when given as a discount to the purchaser of a prepaid ticket cancelled out the increase of the costs of migration. Moreover, the prepaid market was often flooded by orders sold at lower European cash rates. The improvements of the fleet and the services offered by the Holland America Line could not be charged to the purchaser. Also the competition between the shipping companies determined to a great extent both prices for the ocean passage as for the inland transport. For the period

analyzed here shipping companies went great lengths to reduce the inland transport and even sold it below costs at times to ensure a market share. Only when the harmony between all lines was established, did the cost for the migrant to cross the Atlantic substantially increase. Before the agreement net prices of migration roughly balanced between 15\$ and 20\$, when excluding the low points of 10\$ during rate wars. In 1896 it peaked at 32\$. In short the net price of migrant passage sold in the U.S. remained low because of an unstable market corrupted by the agent-network during the decade 1885 to 1895. The lack of research on passenger steam shipping companies has downplayed their importance in migration history which has failed to measure the true impact of these companies on the organization, costs and risks of migration. Chain-migration patterns on the North-Atlantic developed the way they did partly because the transport sector saw a good business opportunity in it. This article is only a first step into uncovering how the super-structure of transport networks influenced migrant routes and possibly migrant flows. Most of the companies analyzed here also managed or had interests in lines to other continents, especially to South America. Yet research on the organization of the South-American passenger market is inexistent. Such study would not only shed more light on the inter-influence between the South and North American market, but also reveal new insights on the transmigration patterns between North and South America.

Appendix 1

Principal actors 1885-1895

Continental Conference (1885-1895) Nord Atlantische DampferLinien Verband (1892):

Established in 1883, reorganized May 15th 1885 and again March 23rd 1887,

Core members:

Holland America Line

Red Star Line

Hamburg America Line

North German Lloyd

Other continental Lines:

French Line (member of the Continental 1886-1895, did not join the N.D.L.V. but separate agreement was concluded with the Line which adhered the rules and price fixing of the New York Continental Conference)

Thingvalla Line

White Cross Line (discontinued passenger service end of 1880's)

Carr Line (merged with Union Line in 1885)

Union Line (pool agreement with Hamburg America Line in 1886)

Mediterranean Conference 1885-1895

Established November 20th 1885 reorganized August 3rd 1888 and again January 22nd 1894

Fabre Line (1885-)

Italian Line (1885-)

Red Star Line (1885-)

Holland America Line (1885-)

Anchor Line (1888-)

North German Lloyd (1894-)

Hamburg America Line (1894-)

French Line (1894-)

North Atlantic Steam Traffic Conference (British Lines 1885-1895)

Allan Line

Anchor Line

American Line

Beaver Line

Cunard Line
 Dominion Line
 Guion Line (discontinued its service in 1894)
 Inman Line (taken over by the American Line in 1886)
 National Line (Discontinued passenger service in 1892)
 White Star Line

Appendix 2

The following price series is based on conference minutes and the correspondence between the head-agent of New York and the board of directors. These are gross rates, thus including the agent's commission.

RED STAR LINE New York Service

R.S.L	Outward Regular	Prepaid Regular	Return Regular
30-4-1885	25	20	45
5-5-1885	20	20	40
28-7-1885	23	22,5	45,5
10-11-1885	23	25	48
1-3-1886	23	25	46
2-8-1886	21	15	34
16-4-1887	23	23	43
1-12-1887	22	22,5	41,5
1-2-1889	21,5	22	40,5
14-5-1890	21,5	20	38,5
7-3-1892	21,5	23	41,5
4-9-1892	21,5	27,5	46
1-7-1892	21,5	25	43,5
27-10-1892	21,5	25	43,5
1-3-1893	21,5	32	50,5
4-4-1893	21,5	27,5	46
3-8-1894	21,5	21	39,5
3-10-1894	14	21	32
3-11-1894	14	16	27
8-12-1894	12	16	25
18-3-1895	16	16	29
27-3-1895	16	25	38
13-4-1895	20	27,5	44,5
11-5-1895	25	27,5	49,5
5-6-1895	20	27,5	44,5
14-9-1895	25	27,5	49,5
14-10-1895	20	27,5	44,5
5-12-1895	25	27,5	49,5
8-1-1896	25	25	47

18-2-1896	25	29,5	51,5
-----------	----	------	------

The Holland America Line New York Service

H.A.L.	Outward Regular	Prepaid Regular	Return Regular
30-4-1885	23	18	41
15-5-1885	17	17	34
28-7-1885	20	19,5	39,5
10-11-1885	20	22	42
1-3-1886	20	22	40
3-8-1886	18	12	30
16-4-1887	21	21	39
1-12-1887	19,5	20,5	37
1-2-1889	19,5	20,5	37
15-10-1889	20	21	38
14-5-1890	20	19	36
7-3-1892	20	22	39
9-4-1892	21	26,5	44,5
5-5-1892	21	24,5	42,5
1-7-1892	21	21,5	39,5
27-10-1892	21	24	42
1-3-1893	21	30	48
4-4-1893	21	25	43
29-6-1894	18	25	40
26-7-1894	16	25	38
2-8-1894	16	17	30
3-10-1894	14	17	28
10-12-1894	12	17	26
21-3-1895	16	17	30
27-3-1895	16	22,5	35,5
5-4-1895	16	25	38
10-5-1895	20	25	42
6-6-1895	16	25	38
14-9-1895	25	25	47
14-10-1895	20	25	42
5-12-1895	25	25	47
6-1-1896	25	22,5	44,5
18-2-1896	25	27	49
13-3-1896	25	31,5	53,5
19-3-1896	25	34	56

Hamburg America Line New York Service

H.A.P.A.G.	Outward Regular	Prepaid Regular	Return Regular	Outward Union	Prepaid Union	Return Union	Outward Express	Prepaid Express	Return Express
30-4-1885	25	20	45						
15-5-1885	20	20	40						
28-7-1885	23	22,5	45,5						
10-11-1885	23	25	48						
1-3-1886	23	25	46	21	23	42			
3-8-1886	21	15	34	19	13	30			
16-4-1887	24	24	45	22	22	43			
1-12-1887	23	23,5	43,5	21,5	22	40,5			
1-2-1889	23	23,5	43,5	22	22,5	41,5	26	26	49
14-5-1890	23	21,5	41,5	22	20,5	39,5	26	24	47
7-3-1892	23	25	45	22	23	42	26	27	50
9-4-1892	23	27,5	47,5	22	25	44	26	30	53
22-6-1892	23	24,5	44,5	22	22	41	26	27	50
1-3-1893	23	32	52	22	30	49	26	35	58
4-4-1893	26	27,5	50,5	22,5	24	43,5	28	30	55
13-7-1893	26	25	48	22,5	21,5	41,5	28	27,5	52,5
?-?-1893 ¹¹⁵	26	27,5	50,5	22,5	24	43,5	28	30	55
26-7-1894	18	27,5	42,5	16	24	37	20	30	47
4-8-1894	18	22,5	37,5	16	19	32	20	25	42
21-8-1894	18	22,5	37,5	16	17	30	20	25	42
7-3-1895	18	22,5	37,5				20	25	42
27-3-1895	18	30	45	16	25	38	20	32,5	49,5
11-4-1895	18	27,5	42,5				20	32,5	49,5
15-4-1895	18	27,5	42,5	18	25	40	20	32,5	49,5
14-5-1895	20	27,5	44,5	20	25	42	22	32,5	51,5
3-7-1895	22	27,5	46,5	22	25	44	24	32,5	53,5
14-9-1895	30	27,5	54,5	27	25	49	32	32,5	61,5
14-10-1895	25	27,5	49,5	22	25	44	27	32,5	56,5
14-11-1895	25	30	52	22	27,5	46,5	27	35	59
5-12-1895	30	30	57	27	27,5	51,5	32	35	64
26-2-1896	30	31,5	58,5	27	29,5	53,5	32	36,5	65,5

¹¹⁵ This date is uncertain. The reduction in PP was a temporary measure of the HAPAG to fill its quota's. HAPAG had problems to fill its quota due to the consequences of the 1892 cholera outbreak. Further study will have to point out when exactly it was advanced again.

21-3-1896	30	31,5	58,5	27	31,5	55,5	32	36,5	65,5
-----------	----	------	------	----	------	------	----	------	------

North German Lloyd New York Service

N.G.L.	Outward Express	Prepaid Express	Return Express	Outward Regular	Prepaid Regular	Return Regular	Outward Roland	Prepaid Roland	Return ¹¹⁶ Roland
30-4-1885	27	22	49	25	20	45			
15-5-1885	22	22	44	20	20	40			
28-7-1885	25	24,5	49,5	23	22,5	45,5			
10-11-1885	25	27	52	23	25	48			
1-3-1886	25	27	50	23	25	46			
3-8-1886	23	17	38	21	15	34			
16-4-1887	25	25	47						
1-12-1887	26	26	49						
1-2-1889	26	26	49	23	23,5	43,5			
14-5-1890	26	24	47						
7-3-1892	26	27	50	23	25	45			
9-4-1892	26	30	53	24	27,5	48,5			
1-3-1893	26	35	58	24	32	53			
4-4-1893	28	32,5	57,5	26	30	53	24	25	46
18-7-1893	30	32,5	59,5	28	30	55	26	25	48
?-?-1893 ¹¹⁷	28	32,5	57,5	26	30	53	24	25	46
29-6-1894	26	32,5	55,5	24	30	51	22	25	44
26-7-1894	18	32,5	47,5	16	30	43	16	25	38
3-8-1894	18	25	40	16	22,5	35,5	16	18	31
1-3-1895	18	25	40	16	22,5	35,5	16	18	31
27-3-1895	18	32,5	47,5	16	30	43	16	25	38
15-4-1895	22	32,5	51,5	20	30	47	20	25	42
3-7-1895	24	32,5	53,5	22	30	49	22	25	44
9-9-1895	24	32,5	53,5	22	30	49	22	30	49
14-9-1895	32	32,5	61,5	30	30	57	30	30	57
25-9-1895	35	32,5	64,5	30	30	57	30	30	57
14-10-1895	27	32,5	56,5	25	30	52	25	30	52
15-11-1895	27	37,5	61,5	25	35	57	25	32,5	54,5
5-12-1895	32	37,5	66,5	30	35	62	30	32,5	61,5
1-1-1896	32	35	64	30	32,5	59,5	30	27,5	54,5

¹¹⁶ The Roland Line was a slower service specialized in migrant transport and freight. Lloyd introduced this big tonnage service to maintain it's share in the pool-agreements which were recalculated at the end of each year based on the tonnage in use.

¹¹⁷ The raise in Outward was a temporary measure to for the excess of passengers the Lloyd had at the time. Further study will have to point out when exactly it was reduced again.

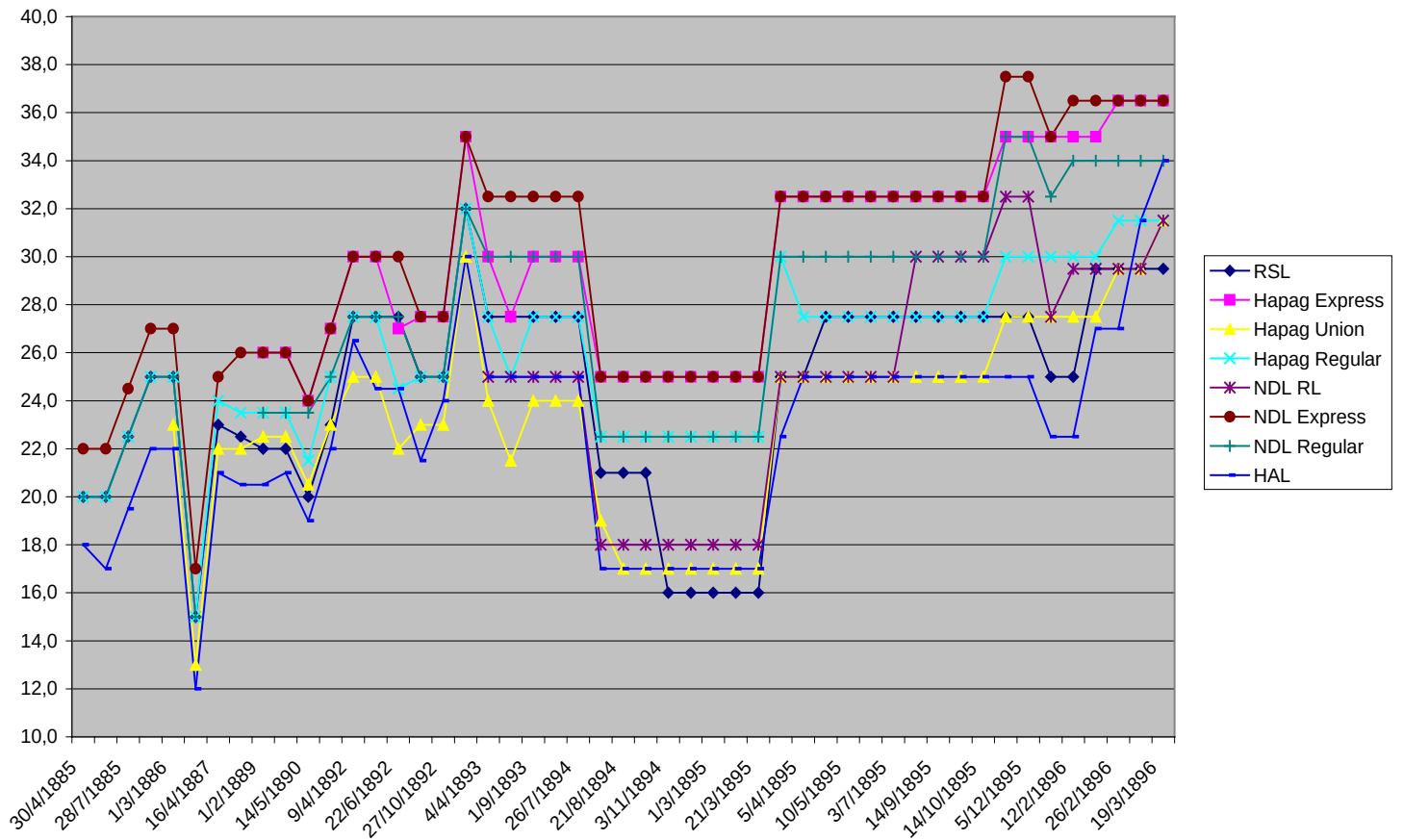
12-2-1896	32	36,5	65,5	30	34	61	30	29,5	56,5
20-3-1896	32	36,5	65,5	30	34	61	30	31,5	56,5

North German Lloyd Baltimore Service

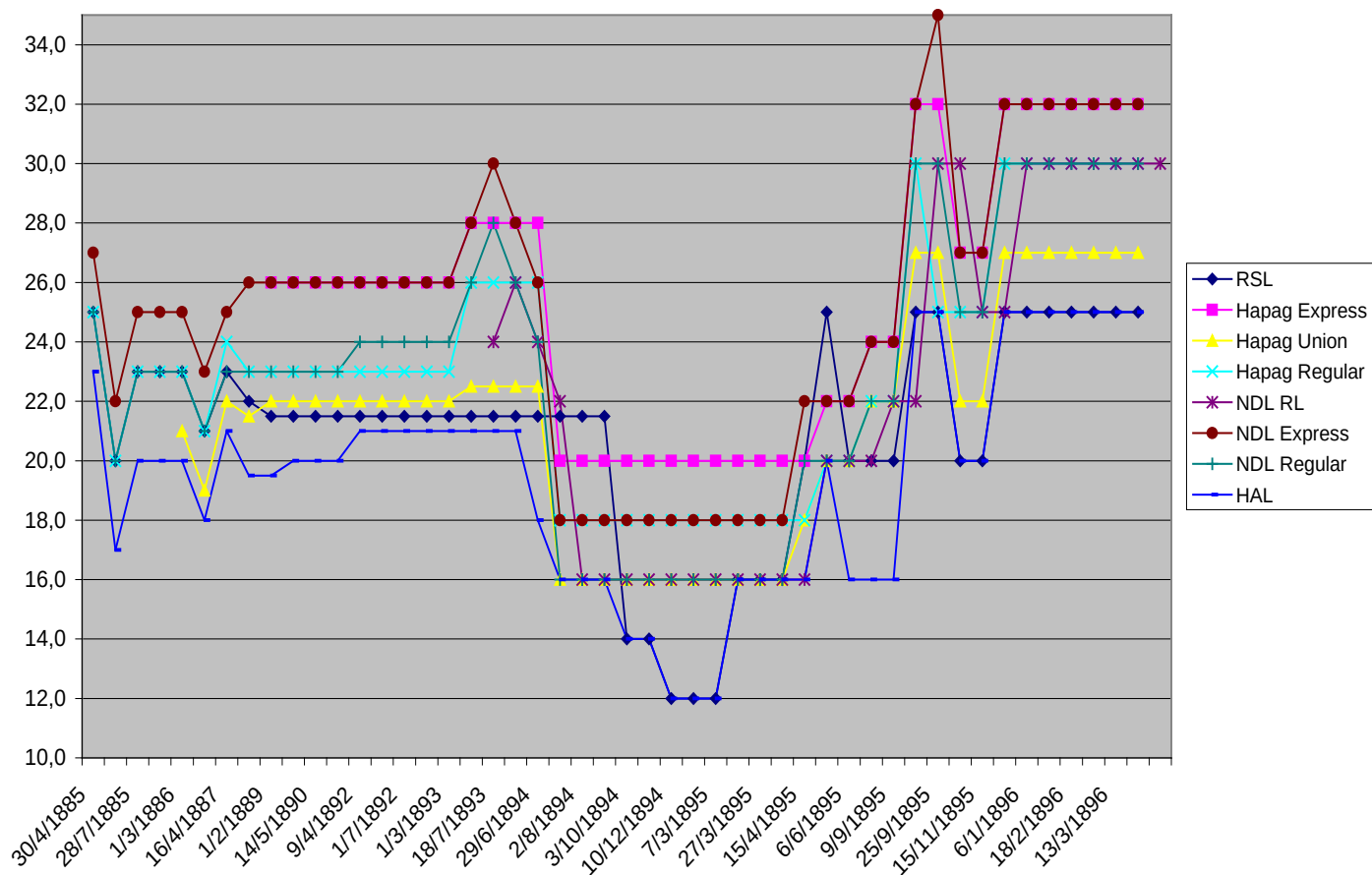
N.G.L.	Outward Regular	Prepaid Regular	Return Regular	Outward Roland	Prepaid Roland	Return Roland
30-4-1885	25	20	45			
15-5-1885	20	20	40			
28-7-1885	23	22,5	45,5			
10-11-1885	23	25	48			
1-3-1886	23	25	46			
3-8-1886	21	15	34			
16-4-1887	23,5	23,5	45			
1-12-1887	22,5	23	42,5			
1-2-1889	22,5	23	42,5			
14-5-1890	22,5	21	40,5			
7-3-1892	22,5	23	42,5			
9-4-1892	22,5	25	44,5			
1-3-1893	22,5	32	51,5			
4-4-1893	24,5	27,5	49	22,5	25	44,5
18-7-1893	26,5	27,5	51	24,5	25	44,5
?-?-1893 ¹¹⁸	24,5	27,5	49	22,5	25	44,5
29-6-1894	24,5	27,5	49	22,5	25	44,5
26-7-1894	24,5	27,5	49	22,5	25	44,5
3-8-1894	24,5	22,5	44	22,5	18	37,5
1-3-1895	13	22,5	32,5	13	18	28
27-3-1895	13	27,5	37,5	13	25	35
15-4-1895	13	27,5	37,5	13	25	35
3-7-1895	19	30	46	19	27,5	43,5
9-9-1895	19	30	46	19	27,5	43,5
14-9-1895	27	30	54	27	27,5	51,5
25-9-1895	27	30	54	27	30	54
14-10-1895	22	30	49	22	30	49
15-11-1895	22	30	49	22	30	49
5-12-1895	27	30	54	27	30	54
1-1-1896	27	30	54	27	27,5	51,5
12-2-1896	27	31,5	55,5	27	29,5	53,5
20-3-1896	27	31,5	55,5	27	29,5	53,5

¹¹⁸ This date is uncertain, somewhere in the fall of 1893.

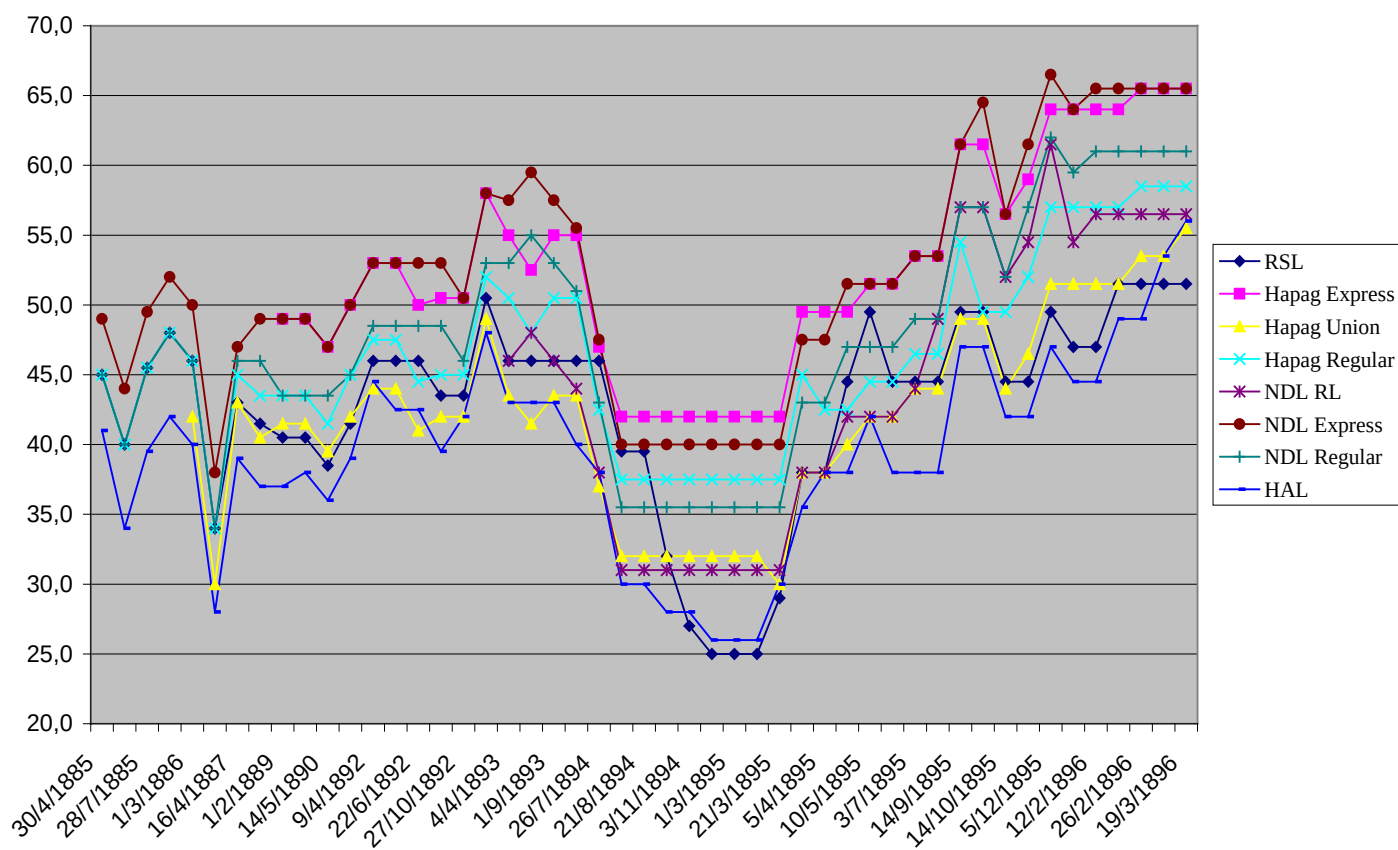
Prepaid Prices in dollars for New York service of Continetal Conference Lines



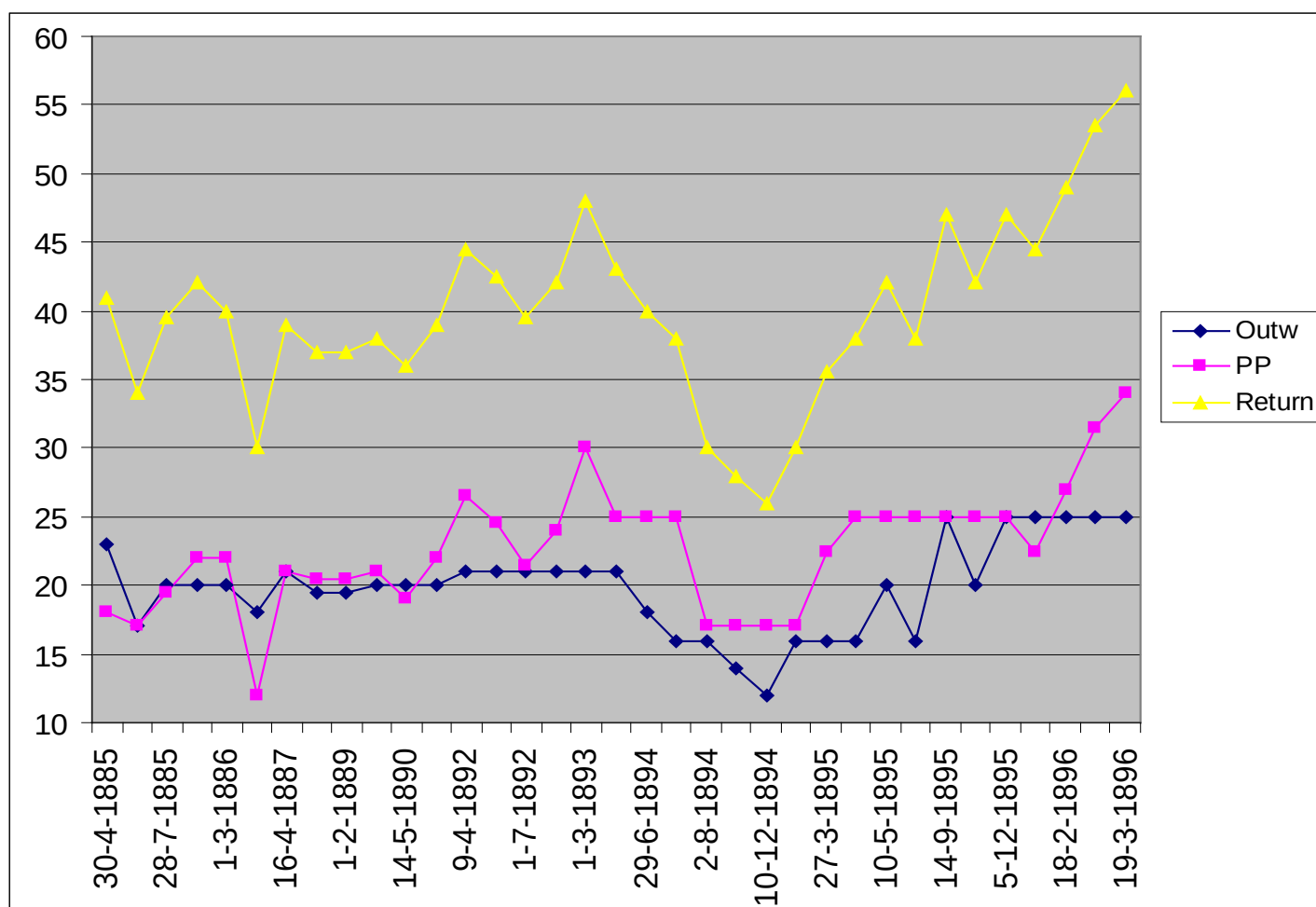
Outward Prices in dollars for New York Service of Continetal Conference Lines



Return prices in dollars for New York Service of Continental Conference Lines



Price evolution of the Holland America Line 1885-1895



Bibliography

Primary Sources

Hamburg Staatsarchiv (H.S.A.)

H.S.A. Consulaat Liverpool: Auswanderungsangelegenheiten 1851-68 nr 8.

Diplomatic Archives Nantes (A.D.N.)

A.D.N, Consulats, New York, nr. 7.

The Rotterdam Community Archives: The Holland-America Line Archive (G.A.R.-HAL)

318.02 Directie V

Nr. 53 Correspondentie privaat kopieboek, november 1884-april 1887.

Nr. 112-118 Corresspondentie, private brieven van Van der Toorn, hoofdagentschap New York 1883-1914

318.04 Passage

G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 221-226, Diverse brieven NASM New York, 1887-1897.

G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 243, N.D.L.V. minutes.

G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 563, Continental Conference minutes, 1885-1895.

G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 580, N.D.L.V. minutes.

G.A.R., H.A.L., 318.04, 767, Diversen van den Toorn en Willmink

Secondary sources

Aldcroft D. *Studies in British transport history, 1870-1970*. (London, 1974).

Aldcroft D. *The Development of British Industry and foreign competition 1875-1914* (London, 1967).

Bade K. *Europa in Bewegung: Migration von späten 18. Jahrhundert bis Gegenwart*. (Munich, 2000).

Bastin R. "Cunard and the Liverpool emigrant traffic 1860-1900" (Unpublished Master thesis, University of Liverpool, 1971).

Bickelmann H., "The Emigration Business" in: *Germans to America 300 years of Immigration 1683 to 1983* (Stuttgart, 1982).

Boyce G. *Information, mediation and institutional development: The rise of large scale enterprise in British Shipping 1870-1919*. (Manchester, 1995).

Brattne B. "The Importance of the Transport Sector for Mass Migration" in: *From Sweden to America a history of the migration*. (Minneapolis, 1976).

Broeze F. "Shipping Policy and Social Darwinism: Albert Ballin and the Weltpolitik of the Hamburg-America Line 1886-1914." *The Mariner's Mirror*, LXXIX, (1993), 419-436.

Broeze F. "Albert Ballin, The Hamburg-Bremen rivalry and the dynamics of the Conference system" *The International Journal of Maritime History*, III, 1, (1991), 1-32.

Lamar C. *Albert Ballin: Business and politics in Imperial Germany 1888-1918*. (Princeton, 1967).

Cohn R. "The transition from sail to steam in Immigration to the United States" *The Journal of Economic History*, LXV, 2, (2005), 469-495.

Deakin B and Seward T. *Shipping Conferences: a study of their origins, development and Economic practices*. (Cambridge, 1973).

Deltas G., Sicotte R. and Tomczak P., Passenger Shipping Cartels and their effect on Trans-Atlantic Migration. Working Paper, 2001; 1-23.

Engelsing R. *Bremen als Auswandererhafen 1683-1880*. (Bremen, 1961).

Evans N. "The port Jews of Libau 1880-1914" *Journal of Jewish Culture and History*, (2004), 1-24.

Evans N. "The role of foreign-born agents in the development of mass migration through Britain, 1820-1923" in: *Maritime Transport and Migration: The Connections between Maritime and Migration Networks* (St Johns, 2007).

Falkus M. *The Blue Funnel Legend: a history of the Ocean steam ship company 1864-1973*. (Basingstoke; 1990).

Feys T. "Radeloosheid in crisistijd: pogingen van de Belgische regeringen om een deel van de arme bevolking naar de Verenigde Staten te sturen 1847-1857." *Belgisch Tijdschrift Voor Nieuwste Geschiedenis*, XXXIV, (2004), 195-230.

Feys T. "Gateways to the New World: The fierce competition for the migrant trade" in: *Antwerp = America: Red Star Line, carrier of hope* (Antwerp, 2005).

Feys T., The battle for the migrants: The evolution from port to company competition 1840-1914 in: *Maritime Transport and Migration: The Connections between Maritime and Migration Networks* (St Johns, 2007).

Flayhart W. "The expansions of American interests in Transatlantic Commerce and trade 1865-1893" in: *Global Markets: The internationalization of the sea transport industries since 1850*. (St Johns, 1998).

Flayhart W. *The American Line 1872-1902*. (New York, 2000).

Gelberg B. *Auswanderung nach Übersee: Soziale Probleme der Auswanderungsbeförderung in Hamburg und Bremen von der Mitte der 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg*. (Hamburg, 1973).

Genesove D. And Mullin P. "Rules, Communication and Collusion: Narrative evidence from the Sugar Institute Case" *The American Economic Review* XCI, 3, 2001, 379-398.

Gould J. "European inter-continental emigration. The role of "diffusion" and "feedback"" *Journal of European Economic History*, IX, 2, (1980), 267-314.

Gould J. "European Inter Continental migration 1815-1914: Patterns and causes" *Journal of European Economic History*, VIII, 3, (1979), 593-679.

Gould J. "European inter continental migration, the road home: Return migration from the USA" *Journal of European Economic History*, IX, 1, (1980), 41-112.

Greenhalgh-Albian R. and Barnes J. *The Rise of New York Port: 1815-1860*. (Hamden, 1961).

Greenhill R. "Competition or cooperation the Global Shipping Industry: The origins and impact of the Conference system for British Shipowners before 1914" in: *Global Markets: The internationalization of the sea transport industries since 1850*. (St John, 1998).

Harley C. K. "Ocean freight rates and productivity: 1740-1913: The primacy of mechanical invention reaffirmed" *Journal of Economic History*, XLVIII, 4, (1988) 851-876.

Hutchins J. *The American Maritime Industries and Public Policies 1789-1914*. (Cambridge, Mass., 1941).

Huldermann B. *Albert Ballin*. (Berlijn, 1922).

Hvidt K. "Emigration Agents: The development of a business and its methods" *Scandinavian Journal of History* . III, 2, (1978), 178-202.

Hyde F. *Cunard and the North Atlantic 1840-1973: A history of shipping and financial management*. (New Jersey, 1975).

Jones M. *American Immigration*. (Chicago 1992).

Kamphoefner W. "The volume and composition of German-American Return Migration" in: *A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930*. (Chicago, 1991).

Keeling D. "Transatlantic Shipping cartels and migration between Europe and America 1880-1914" *Essays in Economic and Business History*. XVII, 2, (1999), 195-213.

Keeling D. "The Transport Revolution in the Transatlantic Migration 1850-1914" *Research in Economic History*, XIX, 1, (1999) 39-74.

Keeling D. "Costs, Risks, and Migration Networks between Europe and the United States, 1900-1914" in: *Maritime Transport and Migration: The Connections between Maritime and Migration Networks* (St Johns, 2007).

Murayama Y. Information and Emigrants: Interprefectural differences of Japanese emigration to the Pacific Northwest, 1880-1915. *Journal of Economic History*, LI, 1, (1991), 125-147.

Morawska E. "Return Migrations: Theoretical and research agenda" in: *A Century of European Migrations, 1830-1930* (Chicago; 1991).

Murken E. *Die grossen transatlantischen Linienreederei-Verbande, Pools und Interessengemeinschaften bis zum Ausbruch des Weltkrieges: Ihre Entstehung, Organisation und Wirksamkeit*. (Jena, 1922).

Osborne D. "Cartel Problems". *The American Historic Review*, LXVI, 5, 1976, 835-844.

Ottmüller-Wetzel M.A. "Auswanderung über Hamburg; Die H.A.P.A.G. und die Auswanderung nach Nordamerika 1870-1914" (Unpublished master thesis, Freien Universität Berlin, 1986).

Pirrong S. "An application of Core theory to the Analysis of Ocean shipping markets" *Journal of Law and Economics*, XXXV, 1, (1992), 89-131.

- Safford J. "The decline of the American merchant marine 1850-1914: A historiographical appraisal" in: *Change and adaptation in maritime History: The North Atlantic fleets in the 19th century* (St Johns; 1985).
- Sicotte R. "Competition and Cartels in Liner Shipping Industry. A Historical Perspective" in: *Business and European Integration since 1800* (Goteborg, 1997).
- Sjostrom W. "The Stability of Ocean shipping Cartels" in: *How Cartels endure and how they fail* (Cheltenham, 2004).
- Sloan E. in: *Global Markets: The internationalization of the sea transport industries since 1850*, (St. John, 1998).
- Sloan E. "Collins versus Cunard: The Realities of a North Atlantic Steamship rivalry 1850-58" *The International Journal of Maritime History*, IV, 1, (1992), 83-100.
- Steidl A., The 'Relatives & Friends Effect': Migration Networks of Transatlantic Migrants from the Late Habsburg Monarchy in: *Maritime Transport and Migration: The Connections between Maritime and Migration Networks* (St. Johns, 2007).
- Stigler G., "A Theory of Oligopoly" *Journal of Political Economy*, LXXII, 1, 1964, 44-61.
- Thomas B. *Migration and Economic growth: A study of Great-Britain and the Atlantic economy*. (Cambridge, 1956).
- Van der Valk L.A. "Landverhuizers via Rotterdam in de negentiende eeuw" in: *Economisch en Sociaal-Historisch jaarboek* (Amsterdam, 1976).
- de Vannoise-Pochulu M-F. "La politique de la Compagnie Générale Transatlantique et l'émigration vers les Etats-Unis à partir du Havre (1875-1914)" (Unpublished Master thesis, Paris XII University, 1993).
- Ville S. *Transport and the development of the European Economy 1750-1918*. (London, 1990).
- Walker M. *Germany and the emigration 1816-1885*. (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).
- Wegge S. "Chain migration and information networks: Evidence from 19th Century Hesse-Cassel" *The Journal of Economic History*, LVIII, 4, (1998), 957-986.
- Williams D. "Forum: Globalization and Sea Transport" *The International Journal of Maritime History*. II, 1, (1999) 195-229.
- Williamson J. and Hatton T. *The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and Economic Impact*. (Oxford, 1998).
- Wyman M. *Round Trip to America: The Immigrants return to Europe 1880-1930*. (London, 1993).
- Wüstenbecker K. "Hamburg and the transit of east Europeans" in: *Migration Control in the North Atlantic World* (New York; 2003).