

**Crampton, Matthew**

***Human Cargo: Stories and Songs of Emigration, Slavery and Transportation***

**Muddler Books**, 2016, pp164, £9.99

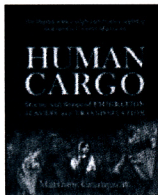
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*Human Cargo* is a collection of eye-witness accounts and songs about emigration, slavery and transportation.

The author powerfully links these tales from previous centuries, when desperate people made horrific journeys, forced or otherwise, to the experiences of those caught up in the refugee crisis of today. Traffickers have not changed their tactics in hundreds of years, charging extortionate rates to cram their human cargo into inhumane conditions, not caring how many might die in the process.

Using contemporary writings, advertisements and lyrics, coupled with illustrations from a variety of sources, the book traces not only the slave trade but others taken against their will or duped into servitude. Others were deported for minor crimes or were fleeing famine, clearances and poverty.

Matthew Crampton is a writer and folk singer and



the book has grown out of an acclaimed words and music show he put together to perform at a folk festival in 2015, with further performances including a benefit for the Refugee Council and a feature on Radio6 Music. A CD is in production and further details, including event booking, can be found on [www.humancargo.co.uk](http://www.humancargo.co.uk).

These tales and songs provide a vital insight into history which resonates today, giving voices to the dispossessed and helping to deepen our understanding. Well worth seeking out.

*Jayne Gould*