

The 7 year rule for Abandonment was derived from a 1604 Act.

Title - An Act to restrain all Persons from Marriage until their former Wives and former Husbands be dead

"II. Provided always, That this Act, nor any Thing therein contained, shall extend to any Person or Persons whose Husband or Wife shall be continually remaining beyond the Seas by the Space of seven Years together, or whose Husband or Wife shall absent him or herself the one from the other by the Space of seven Years together, in any Parts within his Majesty's Dominions, the one of them not knowing the other to be living within that Time."

In other words if the spouse has been transported for seven years the remaining spouse is free to marry after that seven years. The new marriage would not be bigamous even if the spouse returned.

If the transportee returns he/she is open to reclaim his/her marital rights and the new marriage is voidable but not automatically void.

Parish registers often note the spouse has been transported for this very reason.