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THE NEWSLETTER OF
THE MUSEUM OF NEWPORT IRISH HISTORY

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THE IRISH IN NEWPORT COUNTY

1850 Census

In our previous Newsletter (Summer 1999) we summarized the Irish-born and "other" Irish population as being 791 Irish-born and 497 others with Irish surnames. This equaled 1,288 out of a total population of 9,063 in the City of Newport.

LITTLE COMPTON

In Little Compton, of the total population of 1,462, there were 26 Irish, with 9 born in Ireland. They were:

- Mary Downey - age 22 - residing with a farmer named Brown
- Thomas Murphy - age 48 - whose occupation is listed as a laborer and his wife - age 48 - and their four children
- Michael Macon - age 20 - a laborer
- Joan Murphy - age 23 - no occupation listed.

MIDDLETOWN

Middletown had 22 Irish listed out of a total population of 830. Of those, only three were born in Ireland:

- Michael Farley - age 26 - a laborer
- Homer O'Brien - age 22 - a farmer
- Margaret Harrington - age 18 - a farmer

Other names are:

- Joseph Higgins - age 35 - a blacksmith
- David Congdon - age 47 - a farmer and his wife and five children
- Lydia Collins - age 17 - no occupation given

PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth recorded 19 Irish-born citizens with only 6 other Irish names. It is interesting to note that 6 Irish were listed as "miners", obviously working in the Portsmouth Coal Mines. The names of those miners were Harrington (John and Daniel), Newman, Sullivan, Shay and another Harrington, Jeremiah. None of these names were recorded in the 1840 census of Portsmouth.

THE MUSEUM SPONSORS A TALK AT SALVE

At Bellevue House, one of the summer hotels, there are 13 Irish-born persons listed as "waiters". Among them are 4 Harringtons Murphy, Doyle, Fitzgerald, McMahan and Cunningham. The Atlantic House, also a favorite summer residence, lists 8 Irish-born waiters.

One of the more unusual occupations listed in the 1850 Census is that of a "muleskinner". This was James McGowan, age 37, born in England. Interestingly enough there were two other "muleskinners" listed in Newport. One wonders how there were enough mules to skin ?? Going along with the times are listed John Meade, Irish-born, a cooper and William Meade, age 50, a wheelwright (no doubt John's father, also born in Ireland.)

Other occupations of interest are Michael McGrim, 30, a mason, born in Ireland, Catherine Cottrel, 30, a servant for Captain Taylor, USN, Thomas King, Irish-born, a brewer and Thomas Garvey, 16, a blacksmith. Other blacksmiths were Timothy Morley (35), Jeremiah Sullivan (43) and John Ring (50) also from Ireland.

There is one listing for a person "born on the ocean", Jeremiah Holland, aged 10, so we know he was born in 1840 on the crossing. There were 7 men listed as stonecutter or mason. No doubt some of them were employed at Fort Adams, as it was still under construction until 1857.

There were two gardeners listed, Patrick Bagan (40) born in Ireland and Thomas Galvin (58) who had a successful landscape gardening business at the corner of Spring Street and Dearborn. His home still stands, although the gardens are gone. (See the Museum Newsletter of June 1998 for an article on Newport Irish Gardeners.)

Finally, we must list John Bohanna, age 30, who was a "boatman". John was born in Ireland, went to Nova Scotia and then came to Newport. He is buried in the Barney Street Cemetery. He died in 1851, only a year after the census was taken.

We have a list of all of the 1,288 Irish names for the Museum files, but obviously cannot list them here. If anyone has an interest in a particular name, please write to us and we will try to identify that individual.

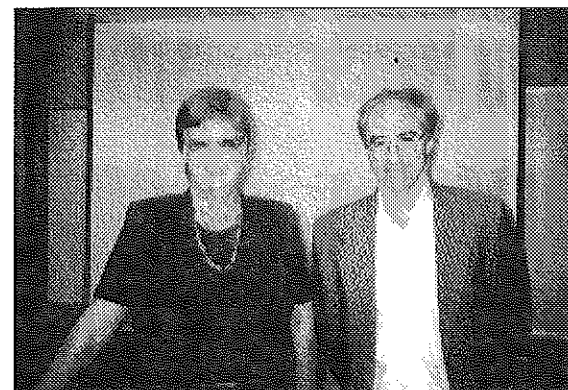
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GEORGE JONES, of Savannah Georgia, has sold to RICHARD SULLIVAN, Jr., of Boston, his estate opposite the Ocean House, consisting of a dwelling house and about three acres of land, for \$30,000. The estate has since been quit claimed to SARAH F. GARDNER, of Montreal, Canada, in consideration of one dollar.

The estate mentioned above in the 1850 Census -- as noted here in the Newport Mercury of 11/9/1861 -- was sold by Mr. Jones to one Richard Sullivan Jr. of Boston.

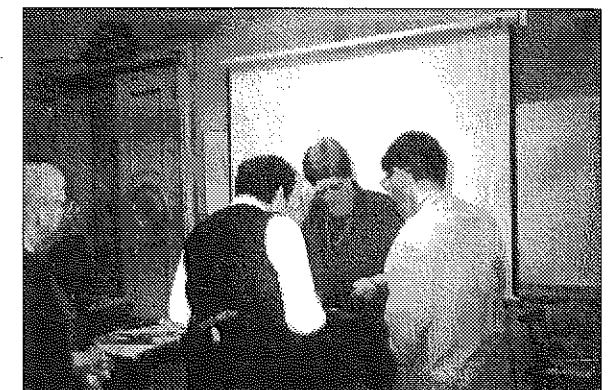
The Museum sponsored a talk by Dr. Patricia O'Malley on Sunday, October 31st at Salve Regina University. Professor O'Malley, author of a number of books about Irish immigration and life in her hometown of Haverhill, Massachusetts, is a Professor of History at Bradford College. Doctor O'Malley has also published in Ireland. Her publications there include "The Donovans of Dreenlamane" (1997) and "Letters to America from a Dying Sister" (1998).

Professor O'Malley highlighted her talk with a number of projected pictures of Irish families in Haverhill, including several of her own family. Her stories of these immigrants and their family histories brought the pictures to life. Patricia also discussed the various methods of research she used in finding the many people and families pictured. She recommended that the Museum take aggressive steps to ask for photographs in particular and then to get the stories behind them. She also said that she had spent many hours researching the census, newspapers and City Directories for information.

Doctor O'Malley also showed and read from many listings of people looking for their "lost" relatives as published in the Boston Diocesan newspaper, *The Pilot*. These listings, or "ads", are now published in an eight-volume book entitled "*The Search for Missing Friends*". The volumes list 78 names from Newport, along with the description and possible whereabouts of the "lost" person. The "Missing" notices date from 1831 to 1918. Typical is the 15 November 1845 notice that reads: "Of John and Michael Smith. His sons Thomas and John and daughter Margaret landed in New York last June and got no information of their father, mother or brother Michael up to this time. He is a native of Mayo, Parish of Attymass. Should he see this advertisement he will write immediately direct to Thomas Galvin, Newport, RI. Editor's Note: This is, no doubt, the Thomas Galvin who came to Newport in 1844 to start his successful landscape business.



Professor O'Malley and Professor John Quinn of Salve chat before Dr. O'Malley's talk



Dr. O'Malley discusses some pertinent points with members of the audience

FROM THE LIBRARY

New Acquisitions:

** Edited by Michael Glazier:

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE IRISH IN AMERICA

University of Notre Dame Press

From the book jacket: "The Encyclopedia is a wonderful, informative book for all readers to enjoy. It is a monumental and unique work that commands the interest of anyone who studies American history."

** Dr. Patricia O'Malley: The Irish in Haverhill Volume I 1998

The Irish in Haverhill Volume II 1999

Two nicely done photo-histories of the Irish immigrants in Haverhill.

** Listings of Newport Irish "missing persons" from the Boston PILOT newspaper
Volumes I-VII (1831 - 1918)

PLANS FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING **MARCH 26 SUNDAY 10AM**

At the Board of Directors meeting January 10, the Annual Meeting date was set for Sunday, March 26th, at the LaForge Casino restaurant. Members and friends will "gather" beginning at 10AM for breakfast (from the menu - your choice - from the famous LaForge traditional Irish breakfast to coffee and toast). The formal meeting will be held at 12:00 Noon in the function room, followed by a talk by Professor John Quinn of Salve Regina University. John, who teaches Irish History at Salve, has promised us an interesting talk. All are welcome.

compared to later ones, was the result of land exchanges between Rhode Island and Massachusetts. In 1862, a significant part of Tiverton was given to Fall River in exchange for a westerly portion of Seekonk, which was incorporated into East Providence. Thus the 1870 Census for Tiverton shows a total population of only 1,907 (as compared to 6,928 in 1850).

The Rhode Island Boundaries 1636-1936 report makes interesting reading and is available in the Museum Library for anyone interested. At any rate, a sampling of Irish names and families from the 1850 Census gives us some insight into the work and "times" of the mid 19th century. One John Sullivan, age 16, was born "on the Atlantic Ocean". Others listed are as follows:

Patrick Rody - age 23 - a teamster Daniel Murphy - age 28 - a mason
Joseph McCall and Daniel Sullivan "machine painters"
Cornelius Sullivan - age 37 - a miner Edward McMahan - age 45 - "trader"
John Breman - age 65 - and John Kelly - age 50 - Shoemakers
Michael McDermott - age 45 - engraver Patrick Daly - age 39 - carpenter

The most frequently listed occupation was "laborer", but, as one can see, a number of other occupations, such as engraver, trader, shoemaker, etc. were "town" jobs. This likely occurred once Tiverton became a part of the City of Fall River, as those occupations wouldn't have existed in a rural Tiverton.

NEWPORT

The population of the city of Newport in 1850 was 9,063. There were 791 persons born in Ireland and 497 others with Irish surnames. The census lists the following at Fort Adams when Major Thomas Sherman, USA was commanding:

Joseph Horne--31--musician George McLaughlin--22--clerk
Thomas Clarke--25--stonecutter Charles Grant--23--tailor
Luke Lucas--26--**plaistener (**variation of plasterer)
Jeremiah O'Brien--28--soldier Joseph Jennings--40--saddler
11 others listed as laborers

All of these listed were born in Ireland, as well as 8 females with unknown jobs. There were also two U.S. born, a Mullholland and a Collins.

As we know, about this time in Newport's history, the city was becoming a mecca for Southerners escaping the heat for the Summer. One entry shows the following Irish-born as servants in the home of "George Jones of Georgia":

Patrick Casey - age 40 Ellen Hanley - age 30
Edward Mamger - age 21 Margaret Ellison - age 22
Mary Galbrith - age 24 Rosa Sheilds - age 22
Rose McMannus - age 18

** (In 1861 Mr. Jones sold his estate to one Richard Sullivan Jr. of Boston.)

To complete the listing of Irish names in Portsmouth there are Patrick Conroy, Daniel Sullivan, Daniel Sullivan II, Dennis Rigan, Margaret Connor, Mary Murphy and Eugene Riley. Also listed were Mary Shay, Mary Harrington and Ellen Harrington, wives of the miners. In summary, there were 25 Irish of the total population of 1,833.

JAMESTOWN

Of Jamestown's total population of 358, there were only 4 Irish names with three

Irish-born: Patrick Kelley - age 27 - a laborer

Bridget Muldoon - age 18 - no occupation listed

James Bergen - age 20 - a laborer

Rhode Island-born Patty Congdon - age 46 - was the other Irish person.

BLOCK ISLAND

New Shoreham (Block Island) had 1094 residents, all in the farming or fishing trades. Twenty-four persons were of Irish descent and only one, Margaret Murrty, (** spelling of this surname is questionable) was born in Ireland. There were several families named Dunn, with many children, and all were in the farming and fishing "business". Also listed were the Conley families:

Edward - age 34 - his wife - age 31 - and four children, a fisherman

George - age 38 - his wife - age 33 - and five children, farmer and fisherman

TIVERTON

Rhode Island History, published by the Rhode Island Historical Society (Vol.56, No.4, Nov.1998) printed a 1936 report of the Rhode Island State Planning Board. This report, entitled "Rhode Island Boundaries", by John H. Cady, details the changes in the state's boundaries made between 1636 and 1936, in agreement with the bordering state (Massachusetts).

These changes created a significant difference in the demography of Tiverton. This is demonstrated in the census data researched for this article. The 1850 Census shows the following:

Total population = 6928

Irish-born = 236

Irish born in the U.S. or other countries = 234

(Includes the Brown/Smith "factor")

Total "Irish" population = 470 or about 7%

When compared to the total Newport population in 1850 of 9,063, one looking at the data today would think that there must be an error or some disparity. The reason for the rather "large" number for Tiverton in the 1850 Census as

A BUS TOUR OF IRISH NEWPORT -- MARCH 4th 10 AM

President Arnold will conduct a narrated bus tour of "Irish Newport" on Saturday, March 4th, beginning at 10AM. The tour will start from the Hibernian Hall on Wellington Ave. The tour is free, however donations are much appreciated. Reservations are required and limited to 35. Please call Rita Clarke @ 848 - 7274. (First come basis).

MEMBERSHIP

Our Museum membership continues to grow nicely. We now have 162 members, with 43 Life Members. New Life Members are Maria Carroll, Rita Clarke, Bill Nagle and Dave Downes. Congratulations !