

Museum of Newport Irish History
Michael F. Crowley Lecture

The Irish in Newport:
A Question of Upward Mobility in the 19th Century

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Connell - Mother's maiden name O'Connell

Initial Funding: Humanities Institute, Fairfield University

Research

- Study Irish immigration to Newport to the 19th century at neighborhood level
- **“Collective memory”** - Irish-American community’s narrative of immigration struggle for assimilation and upward mobility
- **Quantitative history** - historical data from 19th century – including 1865 Civil War income tax data
- **GIS historic maps** – recreate street patterns and streetscapes circa 1880s locate Irish residents to historic neighborhoods
- Interpret spatial structure and social organization of Irish in Newport in the late 19th century

Newport - complex cultural heritage: Museum of Newport Irish History

Newportirishhistory.org



Museum of Newport Irish History Interpretive Center



2011



“In the heart of Newport’s best known Irish-American neighborhood, visitors will learn about Irish immigration to Newport County from the 1600s to the present and of the many contributions made to our community by individuals of Irish descent.”

Digital Revolution – Access to Historical Records

- ☐ Census & Immigration Records **Ancestry.com**
- ☐ Historic Maps Historic Map Works

Historicmapworks.com
- ☐ Historic Pictures Redwood Library
Newport Historical Society
Restoration Foundation
Preservation Society
Library of Congress
- ☐ Minnesota Population Center NAPP - complete 1880 Census
National Historic GIS

1940 Census – December 2014
- ☐ National University Ireland
Galway NUI - Galway Landed Estate Database

Historic Geographical Information System - HGIS

Blaskowitz Map - 1777

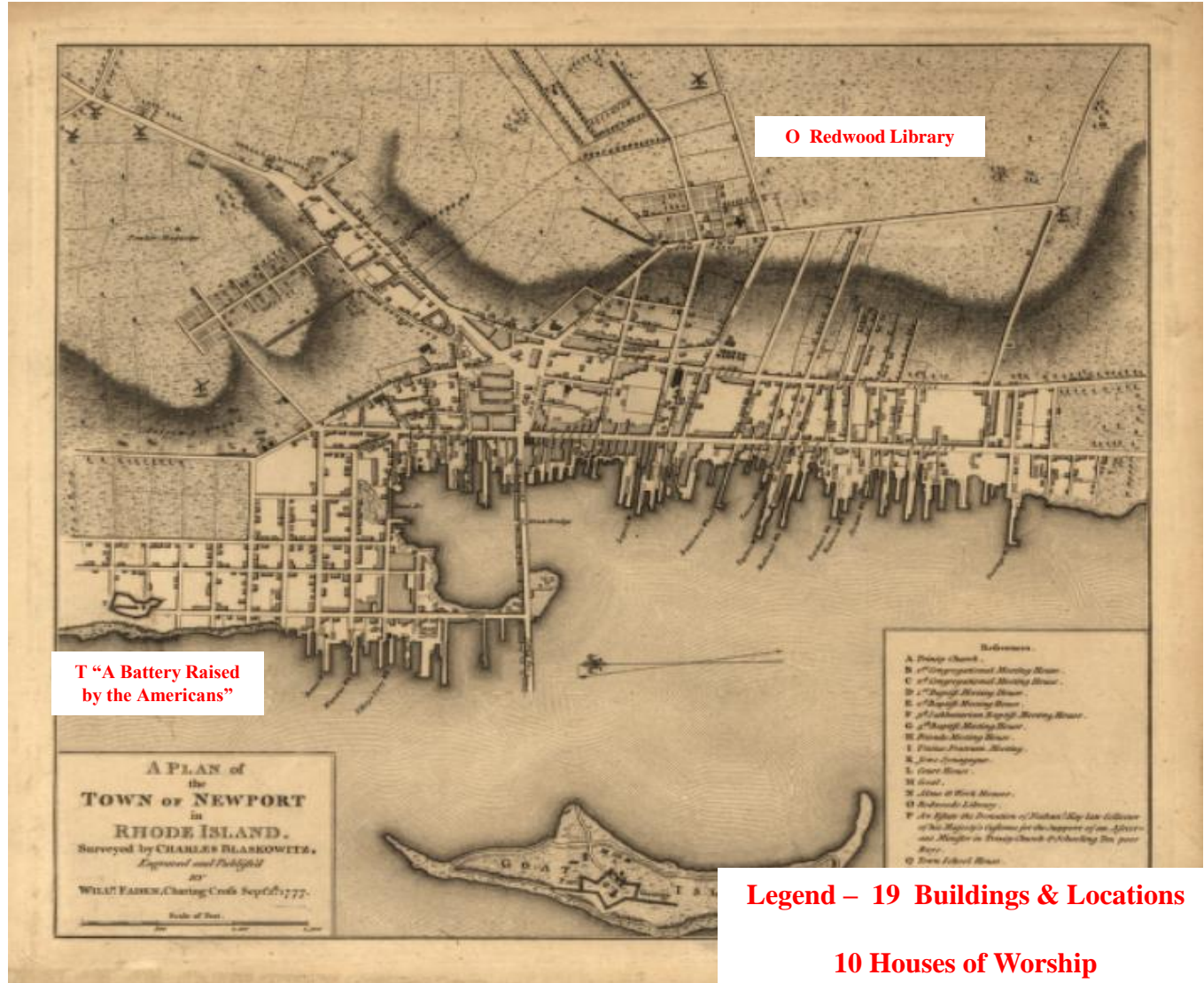
Charles
Blaskowitz

British Naval
Office &
Surveyor

1777 - Streets &
Intersections

T "A Battery Raised
by the Americans"

O Redwood Library



Historic GIS

- Historical digital street maps of Newport, RI – circa 1880
- Resources: Blaskowitz 1777
G.M. Hopkins & Co. maps – 1876, 1893
“Bird’s-Eye” maps – Library of Congress - 1878
City Directories – 1865, 1880

Delete contemporary streets - add
streets removed

Edit address range file for each
street segment – circa 1880
addresses

Geocode: locate historic records
to street and neighborhood



19th Century Census Data

U.S.

Newport

	Nativity	Parentage	Nativity	Parentage
1800 – 1840	None	none	None	none
1850	US Census reported for state & county	none	10% sample from Census manuscripts	none
1860	US Census reported for state & county	none	10% sample from Census manuscripts	none
1865			Rhode Island State Census	Rhode Island State Census
1870	US Census reported for state, county, large cities	None	IPUMS 5% sample	none
1875			Rhode Island State Census	Rhode Island State Census
1880	US Census reported for state, county, large cities	US Census reported for state, county, large cities	NAPP 100% enumeration	NAPP 100% enumeration
1885			Rhode Island State Census	Rhode Island State Census
1890	US Census reported for state, county & cities	US Census reported for state, county, large cities	n.a	n.a.
1895			Rhode Island State Census	Rhode Island State Census

Irish in Newport – 19th Century

	Population	Born Ireland	Born U.S. Parents – Born Ireland*	Irish Born in Ireland + 1 st Gen.
1800	6,739			
1810	7,907			
1820	7,319			
1830	8,010			
1840	8,333			
1850	9,563	11.1%		
1860	10,508	15.3%		
1865	12,688	1,921 15.1%	3,215 25.3%	40.4%
1870	12,521	18.8%		
1875	14,028	1,995 14.2%	3,069 21.8%	36.1%
1880	15,693	2,312 14.7%	2,965 18.8%	33.5%
1885	19,566	3,087 15.7%	2,658 13.5%	29.2%
1890	19,475			
1895	21,537	3,114 14.6%	3,332 15.5%	30.1%

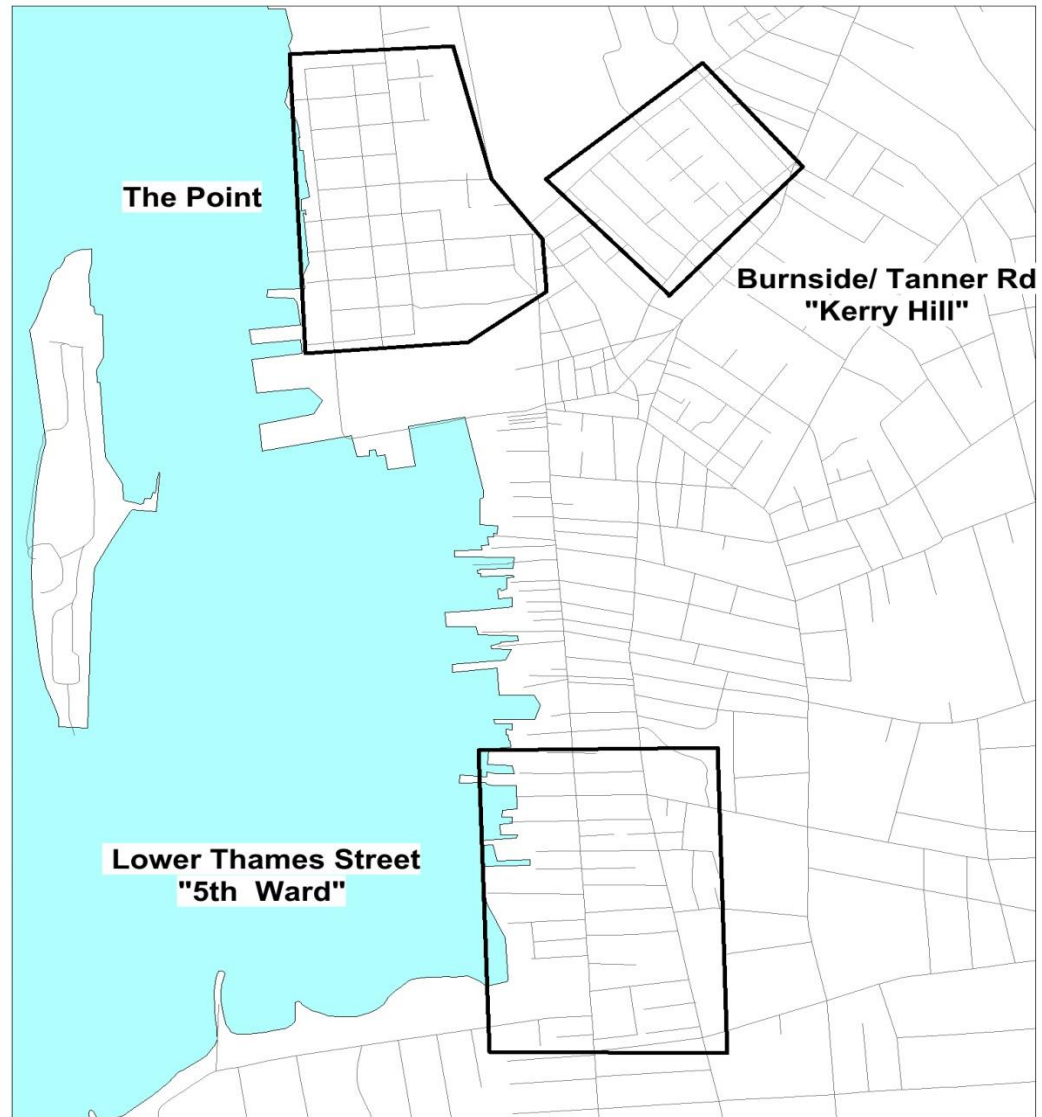
Collective Memory - Irish Neighborhoods

Present day Irish-American community narratives refer to Kerry Hill and/ or 5th Ward

Research question:
spatial boundaries of neighborhoods in the 19th century

5th Ward : “Newport’s best known Irish-American neighborhood”

NMIH - website



Source - "Collective Memory"

1865 State Census – Nativity & Parentage by Ward

Ward	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Neighborhood within Ward	Point	Kerry Hill			5th Ward	
Nativity						
Native – born RI or US	1,700	2,108	1,715	2,280	2,167	9,970
Irish – born in Ireland	152 7.8 %	379 14.8%	240 11.7	303 11.1%	842 24.8%	1,921 15.1%
Parentage						
American – both parents US born	1,420	1,848	1,555	1,993	1,160	7,679
Irish – both parents or father born Ireland	273 14.0 %	574 22.4%	331 16.1	484 17.7%	1,558 45.8%	3,215 25.3
Irish		37.%			70.6%	
Total Population	1,944	2,558	2,059	2,730	3,397	12,688

Social Class - Civil War Income Tax - 1865

- Civil War – total war - very expensive
- Federal government (North) depended upon import/export taxes – borrow to fund Civil War Massive deficits – crisis
- Revenue Act of 1862 - income tax (from 1863 to 1867) - established the Office of Internal Revenue to collect the tax.
- Tax income (net) & personal property associated with wealth: carriages, pianos, yachts, gold watches, silver and gold plate
 - 3% tax on income \$ 600 - \$ 10,000
 - 5% > \$ 10,000
 - \$ 1 - gold watch
- Analyze income tax records – social class structure of Newport in 1860s
- Rhode Island - from 1663 to 1889 – property qualification to vote - \$ 134
- Discriminate against poor and Irish immigrants – ongoing political battle

1865 Civil War Income Tax

\$ 300 or less		93	24.9
\$ 300 - \$ 600		72	19.3
\$ 600 - \$ 1,000		57	15.2
\$ 1,000 - \$ 2,500		78	20.9
\$ 2,500 - \$ 5,000		42	11.2
\$ 5,000 - \$ 10,000		16	4.3
\$ > \$ 10,000		16	4.3
Total		374	

- Total of 676 individuals listed, 374 paid income tax
- 676 tax payers – 8.8% of population over 20
- 3 taxpayers – “Irish” - parents born in Ireland *

1865 Income Tax – Top 20 Incomes – 3 Irish**

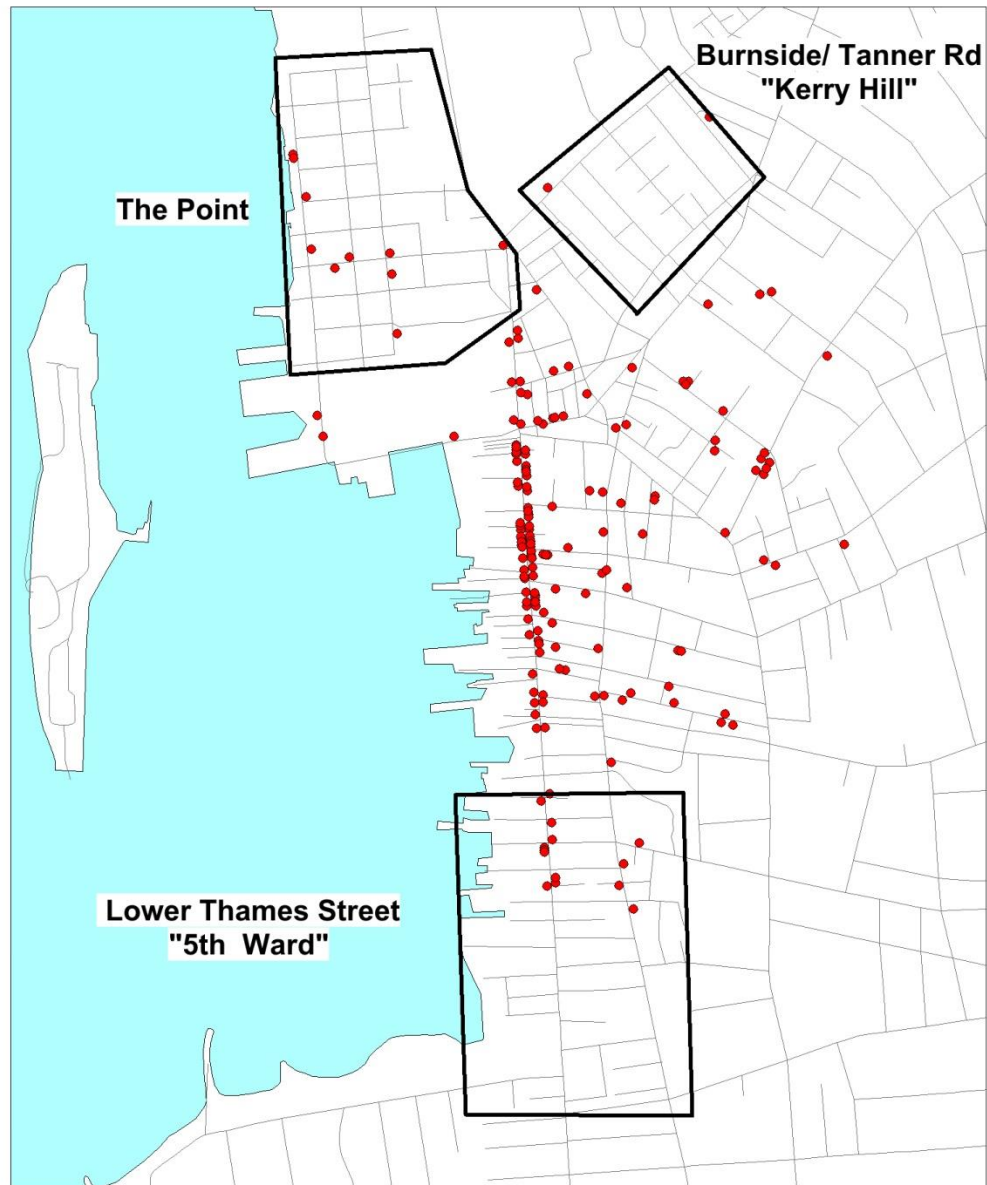
				Income
1	Griswold	George	Touro Street	\$46,035
2	King	Edward	Bowery Street	\$37,271
3	Powell	Samuel	Bowery near King	\$24,218
4	Thorndike	John	Touro Street	\$24,065
5	Kinsley	Rufer	198 Thames Street	\$20,558
6	Robinson	Andrew	Spring Street	\$20,108
7	King	William	61 Washington Street	\$16,814
8	Hazard	Isaac	15 Kay Street	\$16,295
9	Otis	Allen	Beach corner Greenough	\$15,313
10	Hunter	Thomas	Broad Street	\$13,991
11	Tompkins	Hamilton	Redwood Street	\$13,205
12	Tweedy	Edmond	Spring near Bellevue Court	\$11,793
13	Weaver	Joseph	13 Perry Street	\$10,500
14	Tompkins	Frederick	Redwood near Cottage	\$10,141
15	Carry	John	179 Thames Street	\$10,116
16	Sands	Julia	Greenough Place	\$9,057
17	Peckham	Duncan	14 Mary Street	\$8,578
18	Norman	George	Old Bath Road	\$8,228
19	Lawrence	William	Ochre Point	\$7,478
20	Pannon	Charlotte	1 Mount Vernon Court	\$7,189

				Income
1	Parker	Samuel	37 Division Street	\$877
2	Cottrell	John	7 Dearborn Street	\$309
3	Cottrell	Michael	13 John Street	\$282

Geocode - 1865 Civil War Tax Payers

N=2 Kerry Hill

N = 12 5th Ward



N = 374 individuals with taxable income

1880 Census - Nativity & Parentage - Irish in Newport

		Newport %	Newport # 15,718
Native – born RI – both parents RI		29.0	4561
Native – born RI - parents US		4.9	767
Native – born US – parents US		15.8	2488
Irish 1st generation Born US – parent Ireland		18.8	2965
Irish – born in Ireland		14.7	2312
“Irish” in Newport		33.5%	
Other foreign-born		9.4	1472

Other foreign:

Britain 734

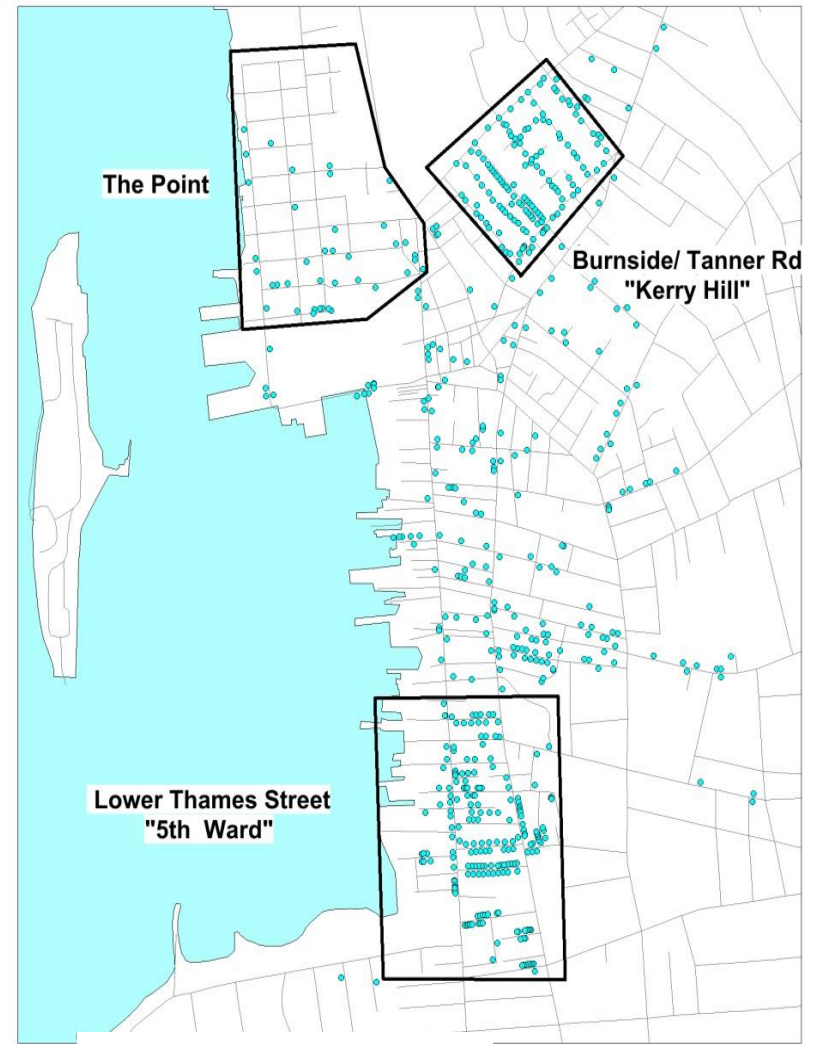
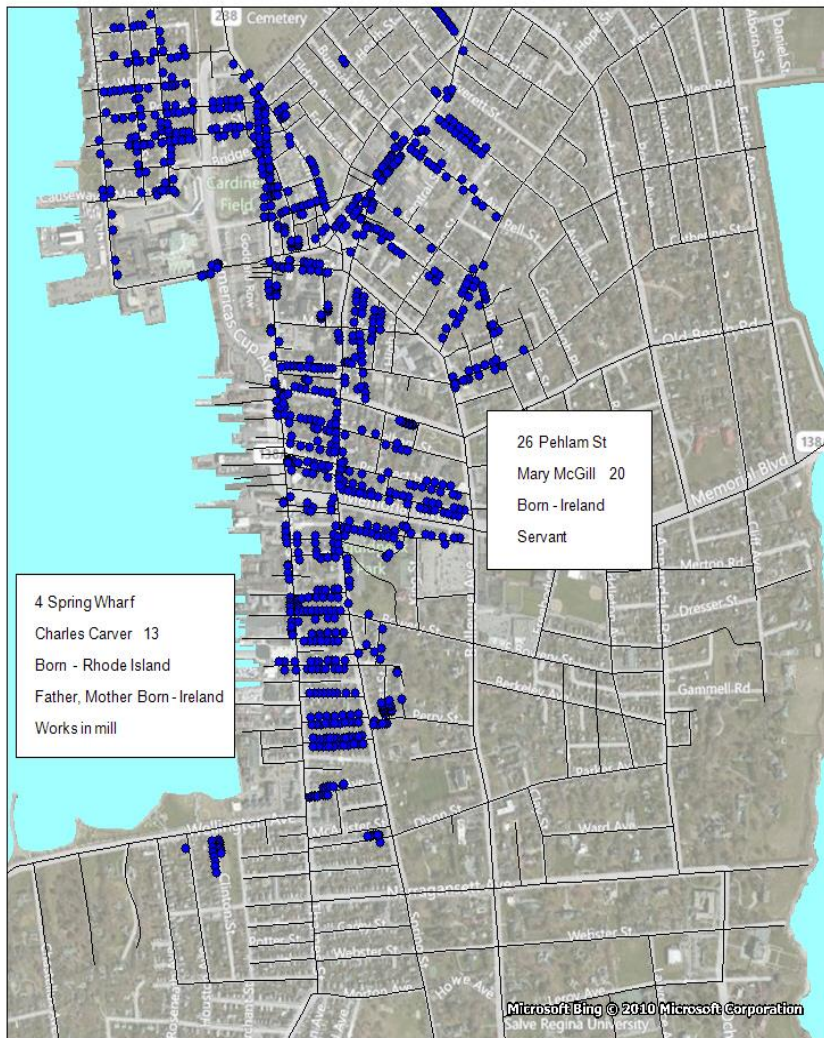
Germany 307 *

Geocode 1880 Census

Newport – 15,735

- **NAPP** files – same order as Census manuscripts - by Enumeration Districts
- Add street name & number to NAPP Census records
- 10,345 records with both street number & street name
- 5,428 without street number
- City Directory - locate street number or nearest cross street or mansion
- 11,410 geocoded to street address
- 3,799 to street & nearest cross-street or mansion
- 564 street without any cross-street

Geocode 1880 Census Records



1880 Census - Geocoded - by Neighborhood

	Point	Kerry Hill	5th Ward	Rest of Newport*	Total
Native – born RI – both parents RI	54.6 %	17.0 %	21.7 %	37.4 %	34.7 %
Native – born RI - parents US	7.5	1.9	2.6	5.7	5.0
Native – born US – parents US	20.4	12.6	4.5	19.5	16.2
Irish - born US – parent(s) Ireland	6.9	26.0	26.1	12.2	18.8
Irish – born in Ireland	4.6	36.6	34.0	14.9	14.7
“Irish”	11.5	62.6	60.1	26.1	33.5
Other foreign-born	6.0	5.9	11.1	10.3	10.5

Rest of Newport - ex. Bellevue Avenue



Chateau-sur-Mer

George Peabody Wetmore

1846 - 1921



Governor of Rhode Island - 1885-1887

U.S Senator – 1895 – 1913

George Peabody Wetmore inherited Chateau-sur-Mer from his father William Shepard Wetmore, who made a fortune in the China trade.

William Wetmore commissioned the architect, Seth C. Bradford to build the chateau in 1851. Richard Morris Hunt directed a major renovation between 1869 and 1880.

George Peabody's career as U.S. Senator included encouraging the U.S. Navy to expand the Newport naval base on Narragansett Bay.

Trustee of the **Redwood Library and Athenaeum** and Newport Hospital

1880 Census Chateau-Sur-Mer Bellevue Avenue

Upstairs - Downstairs - Back Stairs

		Relationship			Occupation 1880		Born	Father - born	Mother - born	Nativity
WETMORE	GEORGE P.	Head	33	Married	HOME		England	Mass	Vermont	Foreign born
WETMORE	EDITH M. K.	Spouse	31	Married	AT HOME		New York	New York	New York	Native
WETMORE	WILLIAM I. K.	Child	5	Single	HOME		New York	England	New York	Native
WETMORE	EDITH W. K.	Child	9	Single	HOME		Switzerland	England	New York	Foreign born
WETMORE	MAUDE A. K.	Child	7	Single	HOME		France	England	New York	Foreign born
CALLAGHAN	JOHN	non-relatives	32	Single	BUTLER	Servants	England	England	England	Foreign born
COSGROVE	JOHN	non-relatives	23	Single	FOOTMAN	Servants	New York	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - 1st generation
JOHNSON	JOHN	non-relatives	35	Single	FOOTMAN	Servants	England	England	England	Foreign born
WHITE	JOHN H.	non-relatives	19	Single	FOOTMAN	Servants	England	England	England	Foreign born
RAIMOND	MARIA	non-relatives	30	Single	MAID	Servants	Belgium	Belgium	Belgium	Foreign born
RUSSELL	MARIE	non-relatives	24	Single	NURSE	Servants	France	France	France	Foreign born
MCDONALD	ANNIE	non-relatives	26	Single	CHAMBER MAID	Servants	Canada	Canada	Canada	Foreign born
RILEY	ELIZABETH	non-relatives	28	Single	CHAMBER MAID	Servants	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - born Ireland
WILSON	ELIZABETH	non-relatives	32	Single	LAUNDRESS	Servants	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - born Ireland
MARTIN	NELLIE	non-relatives	18	Single	KITCHEN GIRL	Servants	Rhode Island	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - 1st generation
DRUM	MARY A.	non-relatives	28	Single	LAUNDRESS	Servants	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - born Ireland
QUALTER	ANNIE	non-relatives	26	Single	KITCHEN	Servants	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - born Ireland
THORNTON	THOMAS	non-relatives	40	Married	FARMER	Servants	Ireland	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - born Ireland
SHEKAY	JOHN	non-relatives	20	Single	FOOTMAN	Servants	Rhode Island	Ireland	Ireland	Irish - 1st generation
CUPPINGER	LOUISA	non-relatives	37	Married	COOK	Servants	France	France	France	Foreign born

1880 Census – Occupation*

Occupation	Native	Born US Parents Ireland	Irish Born	Other Foreign Born	Total
Professional	1.7 %	0.6 %	0.0 %	1.0 %	1.1 %
Merchants	10.9	2.3	2.9	8.2	7.6
Foreman Skilled Craftsmen	8.9	5.9	3.6	5.0	6.7
Craftsmen	14.2	10.7	6.8	7.5	11.1
Skilled Workers	24.1	13.0	8.3	15.2	17.8
Armed Forces	7.0	13.7	6.3	15.5	9.0
Service Workers	16.5	17.4	15.4	19.8	16.8
Servants	10.1	21.5	29.2	20.3	17.3
Laborers	6.7	15.0	27.5	7.4	12.5

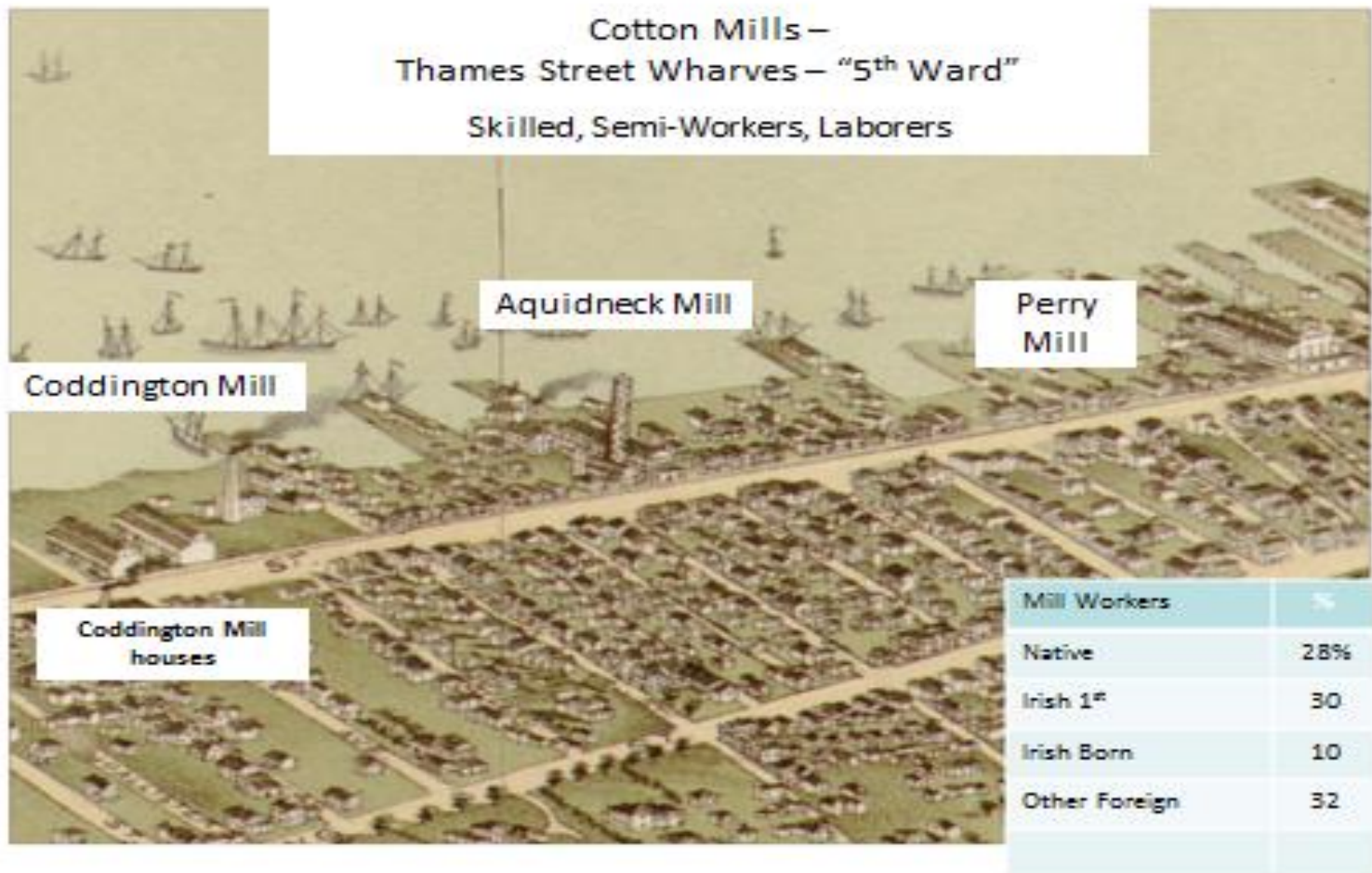
Laborers – include “work in cotton mill”

Newport 1880 Census - Male – Female in Work Force

Male		Native	Irish 1 st Gen.	Irish Born	Foreign Born	All
	Skilled craftsmen	29%	18%	12%	20%	23%
	Service workers	7	14	8	16	11
	Servants	3	8	4	8	5
	Laborers	8	22	43	10	17

Female *		Native	Irish 1 st Gen.	Irish Born	Foreign Born	All
	Service workers	40%	30%	20%	27%	31%
	Servants	32	47	73	53	49%

5th Ward Cotton Mills – Thames Street



Location – Newport Gas Company “Gas House District”

5th Ward – Coddington Mill Houses - Sullivan Family

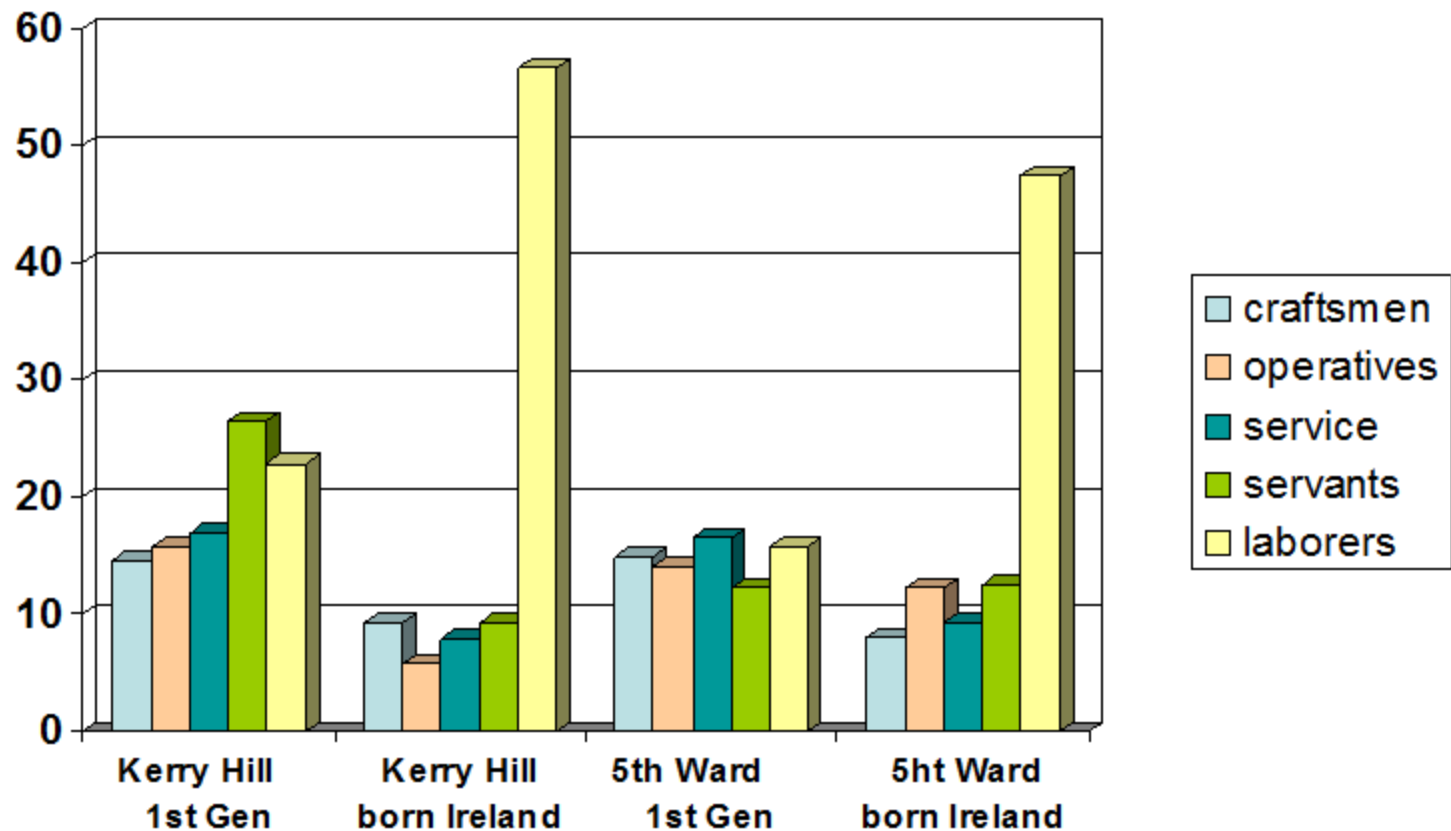
Parents born in Ireland – 5 Children Work in Coddington Mill

Jeremiah	Sullivan	48	Ireland	LABORER
Mary		48	Ireland	HOUSE KEEPER
Mary A.		22	Rhode Island	WORKS IN MILL
Jeremiah		20	Rhode Island	WORKS IN MILL
Mary		19	Rhode Island	WORKS IN MILL
Michael		18	Rhode Island	WORKS IN MILL
Timothy		13	Rhode Island	WORKS IN MILL
James		11	Rhode Island	AT SCHOOL
John		8	Rhode Island	AT SCHOOL
Lizzie		3	Rhode Island	AT HOME

Upward Mobility

1880 Occupation Irish – 1st Generation vs. Irish – Born in Ireland

Kerry Hill - 5th Ward



Collective Memory – 20th & 21st Century

- 19th century use nativity & parentage to define ethnicity
- Late 20th ask individuals to self-identify their “ancestry”

12 What is this person's ancestry or ethnic origin?

*(For example: Italian, Jamaican, African Am.,
Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian,
Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean,
Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese,
Ukrainian, and so on.)*

Census/ American
Community Survey - ACS

Ancestry Question

1st included – 1980 Census

- Research Question: few Irish born in Newport today – does Irish identity persist? Persist at the neighborhood level?

20th & 21st Century - Irish Ancestry

		Newport			Boston		New York	
		1900	2012		2012		2012	
Population		28,407	24,957		619,662		8,199,221	
1 st Ancestry		7,135	4,451		77,555		282,133	
2 nd Ancestry		2,523	2,279		22,640		122,480	
1 st Ancestry %		25.1%	17.8%		12.5%		3.4%	
2 nd Ancestry %		8.8 %	9.1%		3.5%		1.5%	
Total 1 st & 2 nd		33.9 %	26.9%		16.0%		4.9%	
Born in Ireland %		1.1%	.4 %		.5%		.2%	

1990 Census & 2012 American Community Survey

Collective Memory

1990 Census 2010 5yr ACS - Ancestry

5th Ward – Lower Thames Street

1990 – 2 block groups:

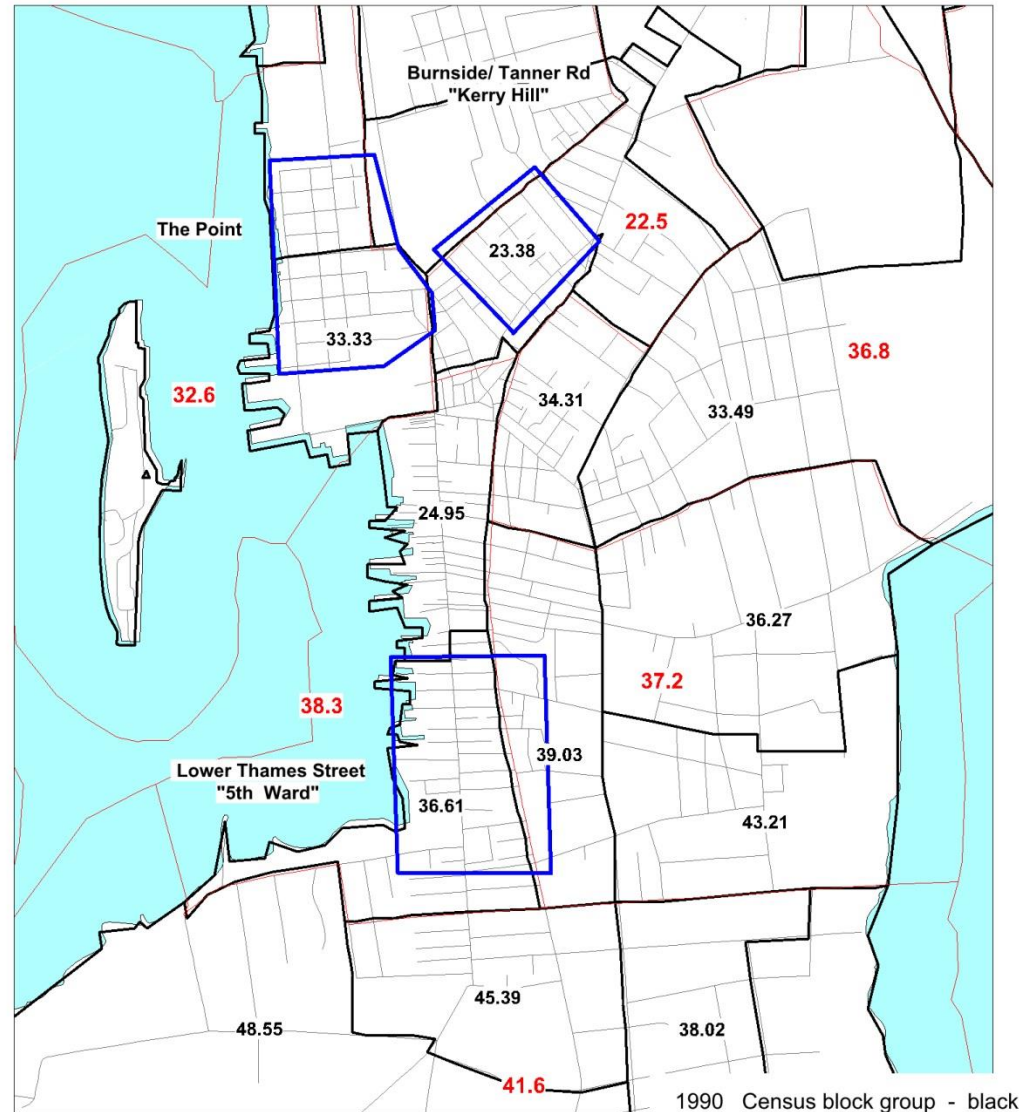
% Ancestry – Irish :

36.6 % 39.0%

2010 - 1 census tract:

% Ancestry - Irish:

36.3%



Percent = % 1st ancestry irish + % 2nd ancestry irish

2010 Census tract - red

Key Findings

- By 1850 the number of immigrants from Ireland was substantial and immigration would continue for the rest of the century. In 1865, the Irish community was over 40% of the population with two defined Irish neighborhoods. A strong sense of ethnic identity was established which continues to the present.
- Only a few Irish had high enough income to pay the Civil War income tax which provides another indicator of low socio-economic status.
- Analysis of the 1880 NAPP Census data illustrates that the Irish population remained concentrated in two neighborhoods in the city.
- In 1880 the Irish, particularly immigrants, were at the bottom of the occupational scale, 1st generation Irish had some upward occupational mobility.
- 1990 and 2010 Census data on Ancestry illustrate the continuing strong ethnic identity of Irish in Newport and especially in the 5th Ward