

Museum of Newport Irish History  
Michael F. Crowley Lectures

**The Irish in Newport - Building a Community  
St. Mary's Church:**

**The Great Collection of 1881**

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Fairfield University, Fairfield CT

*Manhattan's Waterfront: From Henry Hudson to the High Line*

**Johns Hopkins University Press - May 2018**

*Grand Central: Railroads, Engineering and Architecture in New York City 2001*

*Grand Central's Engineer: William Wilgus & the Planning of Modern Manhattan – 2011*

JHUP

# Collective Memory

- ❑ Irish-American Community in **Newport**, Aquidneck Island, RI
- ❑ Vibrant - persistent over long historical period: collective as well as genealogical
  - Vibrant: “Crowd-Sourcing” – May 2017 at Salve Regina University < detailed family history
  - Persistent: Over 170+ years from “Black 47” – 1847
- ❑ Collective Memory
  - Institutional: historical - Newport Museum of Irish History NMIH
  - fraternal - Ancient Order of Hibernians
  - educational - grammar schools, St. Catherine’s, De LaSalle
  - religious - St. Mary’s, St. Augustin’s, St. Joseph’s, ....
- ❑ Endogamy - marry within ethnic group

## Data: Collective Memory – 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- 19<sup>th</sup> century use nativity & parentage to define ethnicity: where was person born, where were parents born
- U.S. Census 1980: 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.)

US Census

**American Community Survey ACS**

Ancestry Question

## Data: Endogamy

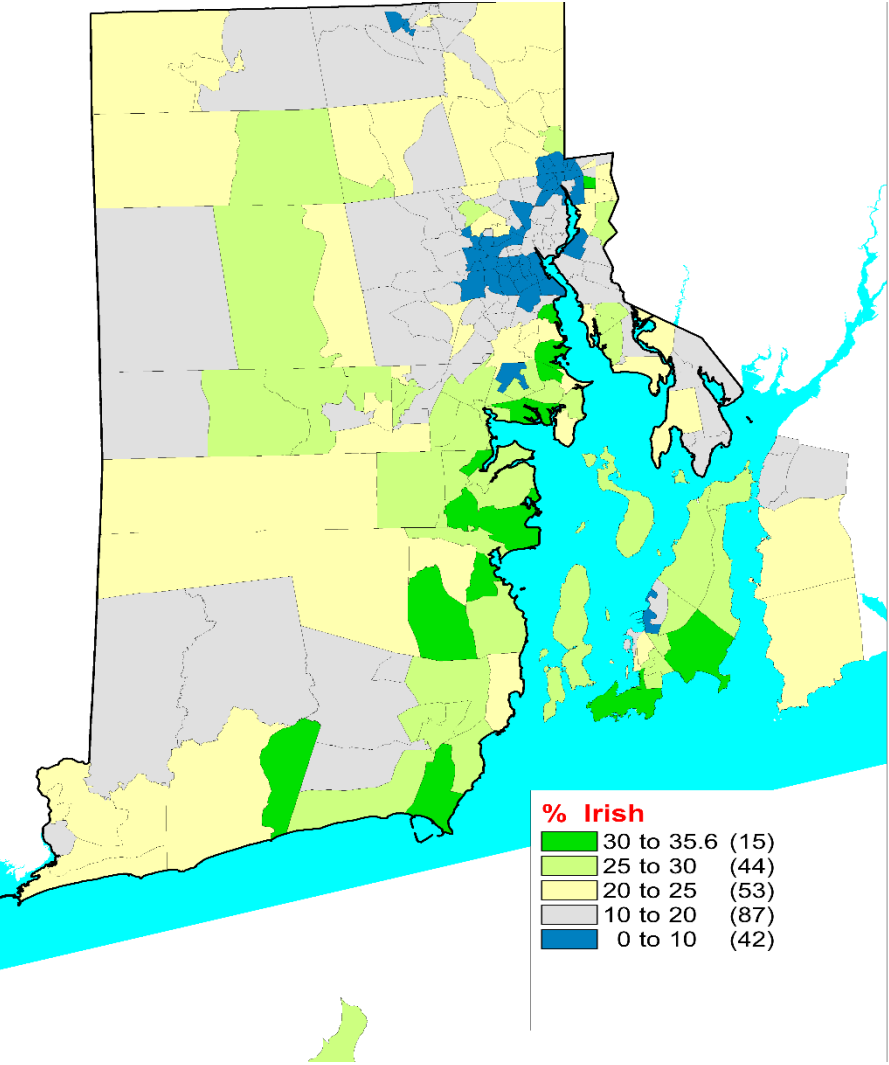
- Did you identify yourself as Irish? If married, how would your spouse identify her/his ethnicity?

### Census Q - What is your Ancestry?

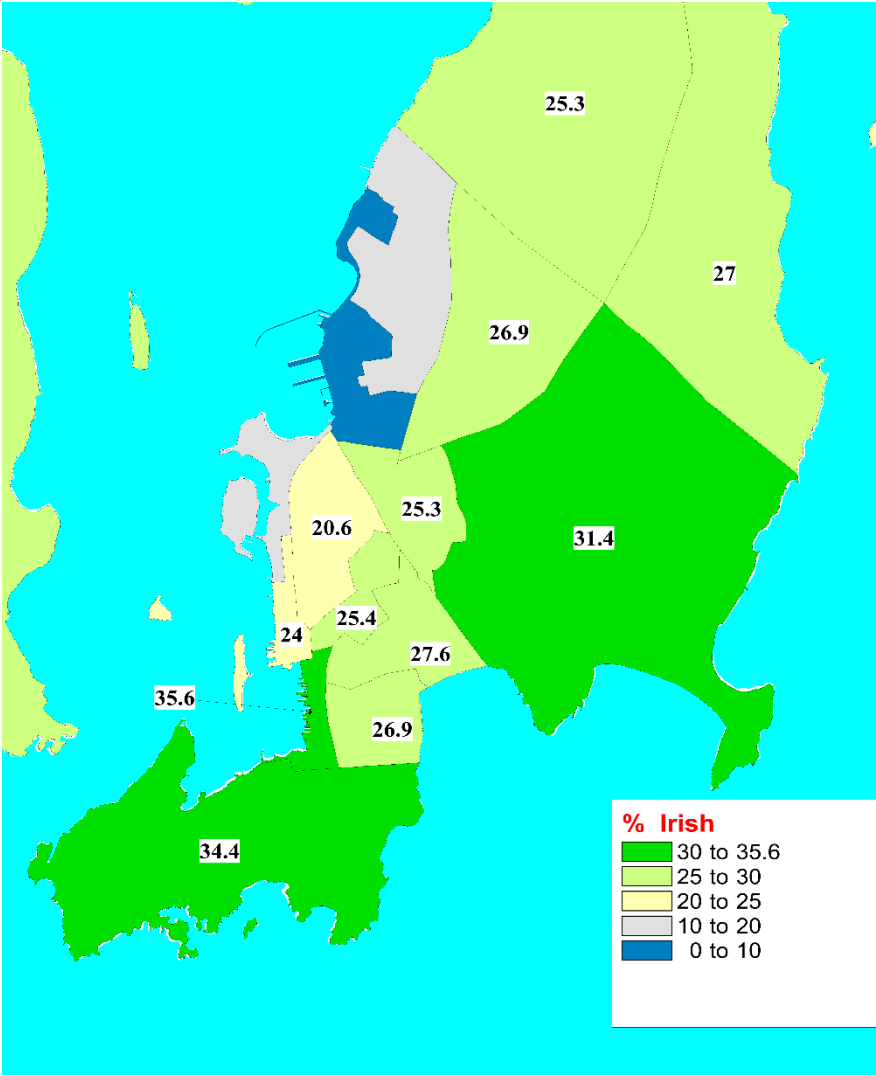
		<b>Newport</b>			Boston		New York	
		1990	2016		2016		2016	
Population		28,407	24,672		619,662		8,199,221	
<b>Irish</b>								
Total 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>		<b>33.9 %</b>	<b>26.7%</b>		14.1 %		4.4 %	
Born in Ireland %		1.1%	.4 %		.5%		.2%	

**1990 Census & 2016 American Community Survey**

ACS 2016 - Ancestry by Census Tract



RI - 241 Census Tracts



Aquidneck Island – 15 Census Tracts

US 73,306 Census Tracts

**% Irish**

Newport **35.6**  
**34.4**

Middletown **31.4**

Top 1% (733) of All Census Tracts in US

Highest - 62% - Suffolk County MA

## 1880 Census - Nativity & Parentage - Irish in Newport

		<b>Newport %</b>	<b>Newport # 15,718</b>
<b>Native</b> – born RI/US – parent RI?US		49.7	7816
<b>Irish</b> – born in Ireland		<b>14.7</b>	<b>2312</b>
<b>Irish 1<sup>st</sup> generation</b> <b>Born US – parent Ireland</b>		<b>18.8</b>	<b>2965</b>
<b>“Irish” in Newport</b>		<b>33.5%</b>	
Other foreign-born		9.4	1472

Other foreign:

Britain 734

Germany 307 \*

# St. Mary's Our Lady of the Isle

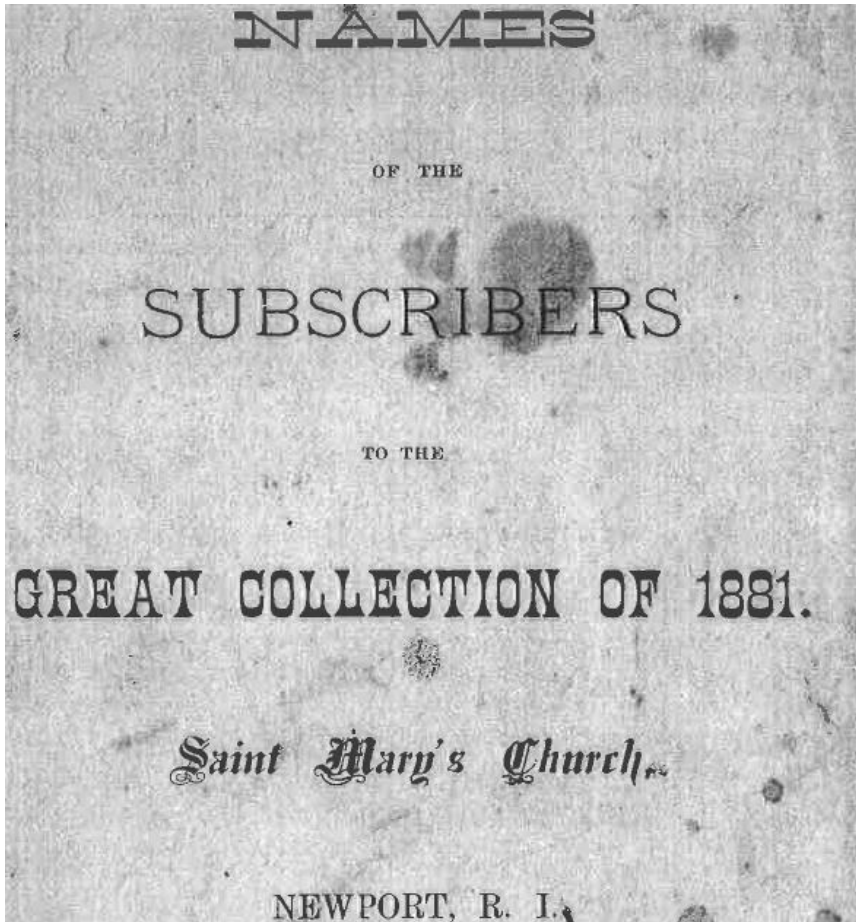
Center of Catholic  
Community

1<sup>st</sup> Roman Catholic Parish in  
RI  
April 1828

Church - 1848



## Institutional Structure – Catholic Church - St. Mary's



“...liquidation of the debt”

N = 661

Fr. Philip Grace, D.D.

Report – 30 pages

“Words of Counsel to the Catholics of  
Newport” – 4 pages

“I deem it of much importance to  
invite their attention to certain evils  
which, I regret to say, attracted my  
attention during the visitation of the  
parish.”

- Absence Mass - fathers
- Drunkenness - dispense liquor to  
young people
- Marriage - without birthplace  
records



Joseph Meisters 80 Bavaria

\$ 500

1880 8 Green St w/ Mary  
Quinn & son Andrew

1870 wife Elizabeth, France  
gardener  
estate \$1,000

27 - \$ 100 contributions

22 - men 11 gardeners  
1880 Census

## PHILIP GRACE, D. D.,

*Pastor of St. Mary's*

*Newport, R. I., November 27, 1881.*

NOTE.—If any person who has paid, finds his name omitted or wrongly classified let him please inform the pastor and the error will be corrected on the second list.

	Promised.	Paid.
✓ Michael Butler, Perry street.....	\$	\$100 00
Was always generous to the church,		
Joseph Meisters.....		500 00
William Hammond.....		100 00
James Casey.....		100 00
✓ Michael Nolan, Coggeshall avenue....		100 00
✓ John Curley.....	100 00	
Patrick Rafferty.....		100 00
✓ John Martin, Lee avenue.....		100 00
Edward Matthews.....		100 00
Richard Lawton.....		100 00
New York Lady.....		100 00
Col. J. N. Bonaparte.....		100 00
Thomas Galvin.....		100 00
I always found Mr. Galvin's advice sound and disinterested.		
Dr. Grace.....		100 00
Mrs. J. J. Abraham.....		100 00
Bernard McGowan.....		100 00
✓ Patrick Nolan, Bellevue avenue.....	100 00	
Mrs. M. A. Lynch.....		100 00
Mrs. M. Quinn.....		100 00

Timothy Sullivan — Burnside Ct.

\$ 100

Michael Butler  
“Was always generous  
to the Church”

Thomas Galvin  
“I always found Mr.  
Galvin's advice sound...

Col. J. N. Bonaparte  
Grand-Nephew of  
Napoleon Bonaparte

New York Lady  
Mrs. J.J. Abraham  
Mrs. M.A. Lynch  
Mrs. M. Quinn  
Mrs. M.A. Donnelly N.Y.

## Burnside & Callender

Martin Shea.....	....	20 00
Michael Fitzgerald....	.... 10 00	
Eugene Sullivan.....	....	20 00
Alexander Kane.....	.... 10 00	5 00
Mrs. Collins.....	....	10 00
✓ John Burns....	....	15 00
✓ James Welch....	....	10 00
Richard Reynolds....	....	25 00
John Dinan....	....	15 00
Jeremiah O'Leary...	....	10 00
Daniel Pickett....	....	5 00
✓ Daniel Cronan....	....	10 00
Jahn Hagerty..	.... 10 00	5 00
✓ Dennis McMahon....	....	20 00
John Murphy....	.... 10 00	
Mrs. Sullivan	....	6 00
Mrs. Hamilton....	....	5 00

### CALLENDER AVENUE.

✓ James Drury.	....	10 00
✓ John Courtney....	....	10 00
✓ Widow Patrick Sullivan	.... 15 00	10 00
Simon Coffee ...	.... 10 00	
✓ John S. Duggan....	....	10 00
Jeremiah Shea....	....	10 00
✓ James Horgan	....	30 00
Bartholomew Shea....	....	15 00
✓ Florence Sheehan.	....	5 00
✓ Patrick Waters..	....	10 00

“Was believed to have hidden from the priest”

“I observed a good spirit in the people of Green Lane, and feel confident they would be blest by God if the male portion of them was more punctual to receive the sacraments of the Church”

“Good promises but nothing substantial”

“Himself was at work, and his wife was report not at her residence”

“Not remarkable for going to church”

# DEARBORN STREET.

✓ John McCormick.....		
Has made a generous promise. I hope the parish will witness its fulfillment.		
✓ Patrick Murphy.....		35 00
C. V. Danahy.....		20 00
✓ Richard Pascoag.....	10 00	
Has no pew.		
✓ John Harrington.....		10 00
✓ Mrs. Sylvester Horgan.....		5 00
✓ John Sullivan.....		10 00
✓ James Brennan.....		5 00
Daniel Murphy.....		10 00
Mrs. Donovan.....	5 00	
John Canove.....		
John Maher.....		15 00
It is just to John Maher to say, he wished to pay double this amount, but from circumstances, I considered the amount marked sufficient.		
Daniel Sullivan, Thames street.....		20 00
Timothy Buckley.....		25 00
Thomas Duggan.....		10 00
Bernard Mooney.....		
I did not call on him at all.		
Mrs. Sullivan.....	14 00	2 00
✓ Frederick Groeseneck.....		5 00
✓ Timothy Sullivan.....		15 00
✓ John Sullivan.....		10 00
✓ William P. Smith.....	12 00	6 00
✓ Florence Sullivan.....		5 00

## Fund Raising

Donations	N	\$ 9,088
\$ 500	1	\$ 500
100	25	2,500
50	15	750
35 – 45	3	115
30	7	210
25	38	950
20	34	680
15	36	540
12	6	72
10	186	1,860
9 – 6	19	122
5	151	755
2 – 4	12	33
N = 533		
Pledged – Not Paid		
N = 128		\$ 1,620

Notes:

41 highest

Totaled \$ 3,750

41% of all

“Ladies List”

N = 131

\$ 1,044

## St. Mary's – Location of Contributors - Parish

Great Collection of  
1881 Report

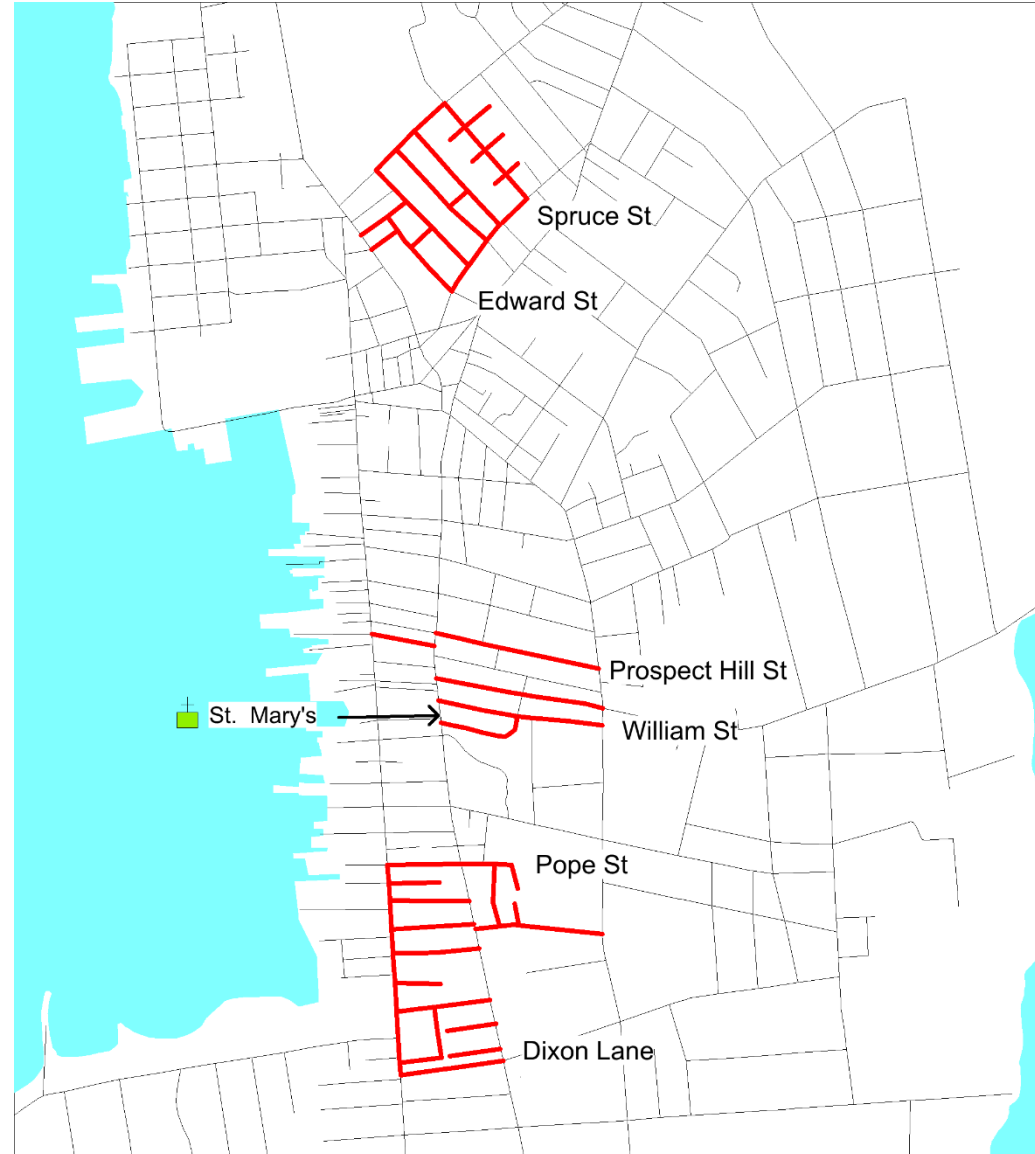
Lists 20 specific streets

Vs

“Neck District”

“Bannister’s Wharf to  
Tanner”

“Point & Scattering  
from Different  
Quarters”



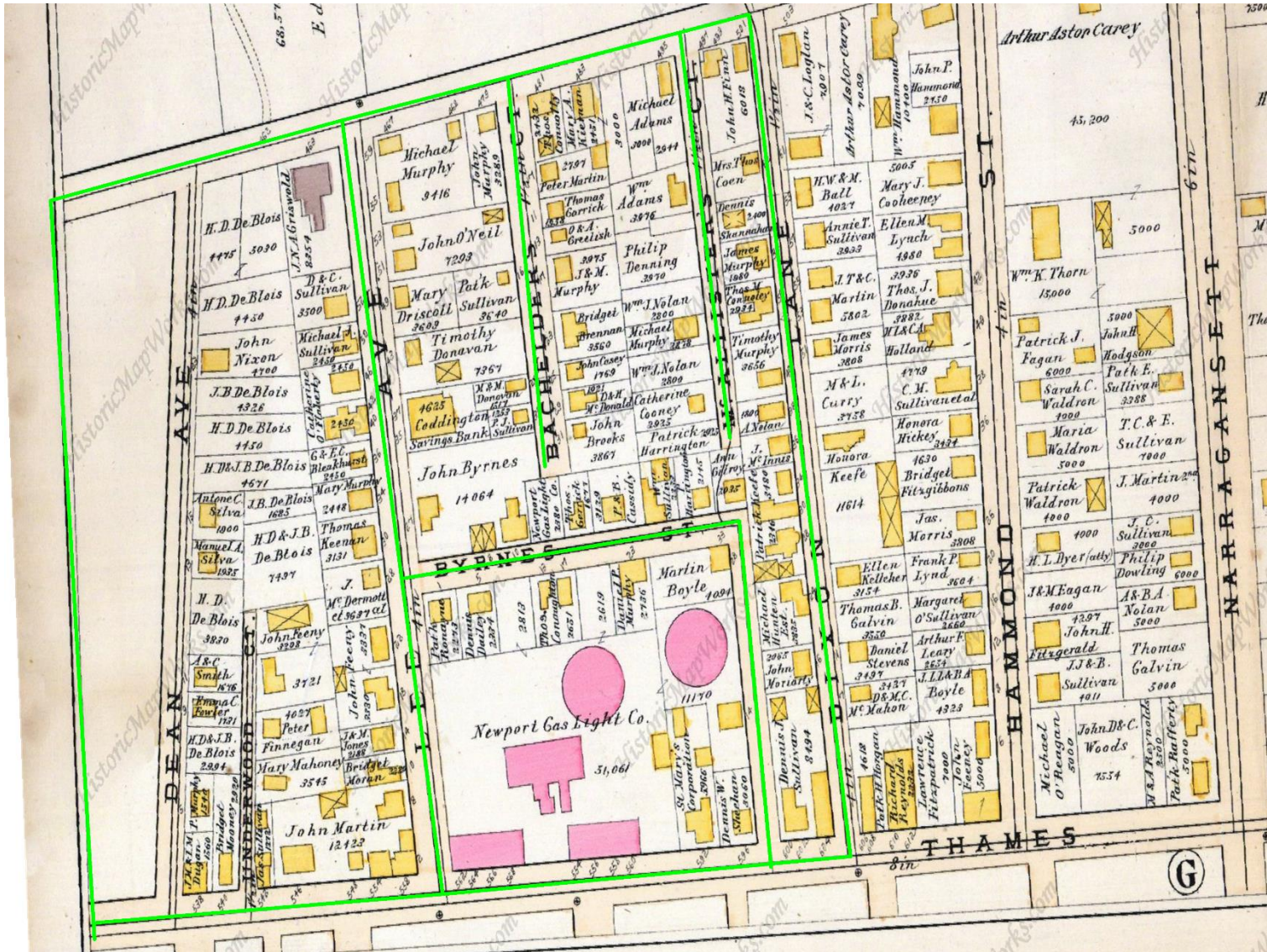
Kerry Hill

Williams St – St. Mary's

Lower Thames - 5<sup>th</sup> Ward



## 5<sup>th</sup> Ward – Lower Thames St: Dixon to Dearborn - Thames to Spring St



## Selected Streets Contributions

	N	Tot.	Avg.
Dixon	22	\$ 315	\$ 18
Bachelor's Court	14	\$ 75	\$ 9
Lee Ave +	34	\$ 272	\$ 13
Holland St	34	\$ 185	\$ 11
Dearborn	30	\$ 253	\$ 13
	134	\$ 1,100	

## 5<sup>th</sup> Ward – Lower Thames 1880 Census: Ethnicity & Occupation

	Dixon St	Lee Ave	Bachelors Court	Holland St	Dearborn
Native	20 %	5 %	9 %	6 %	13 %
Born Ireland	<b>51 %</b>	<b>35 %</b>	<b>57 %</b>	<b>50 %</b>	<b>33 %</b>
1st Gen Irish	<b>15 %</b>	<b>58 %</b>	<b>42 %</b>	<b>40 %</b>	<b>46 %</b>
<b>Irish</b>	<b>66 %</b>	<b>93 %</b>	<b>99 %</b>	<b>90 %</b>	<b>79 %</b>
	39/59	232/250	88/89	169/190	148/187

	Newport	Male	Female
	6014	316	79
Occupation			
Professional	5%		3%
Managerial	8%	4%	
Clerical	3%		
Sales	4%		
Craftsmen	20%	24%	
<b>Operatives</b>	19%	15%	<b>47%</b>
Servants	17%		<b>38%</b>
Service Workers	8%		6%
Laborers	16%	<b>48%</b>	



Cotton Mills –  
Thames Street Wharves – “5<sup>th</sup> Ward”

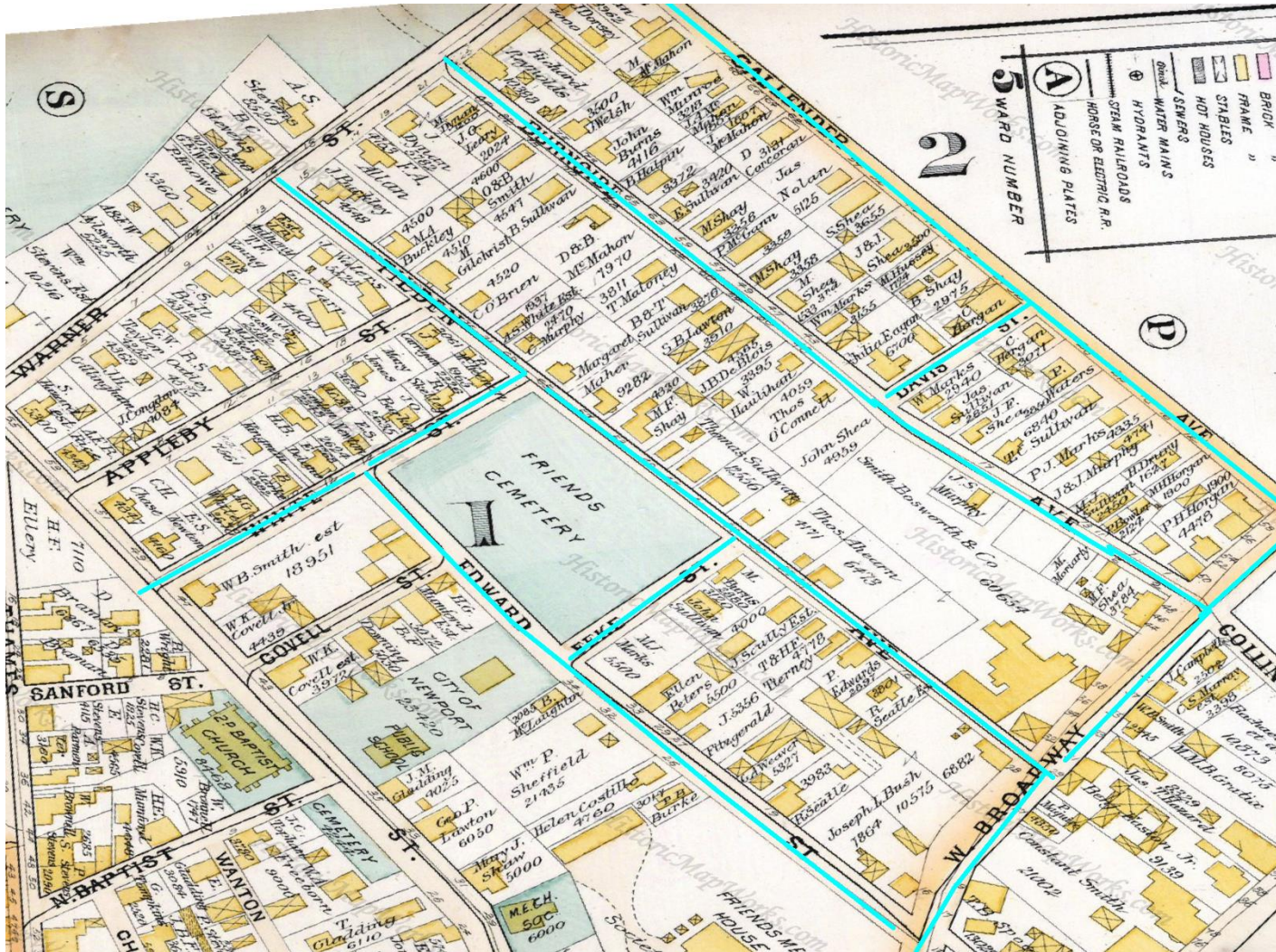
Skilled, Operatives



Mill Workers	%
Native	28%
Irish 1 <sup>st</sup>	30
Irish Born	10
Other Foreign	32



## Kerry Hill: Farewell St to Spruce St - Tanner St (W. Broadway) to Warner St



### Selected Streets Contributions

	N	Tot.	Avg
Spruce St (Kingston Ave)	17	\$ 85	\$ 8
Callendar	36	\$ 345	\$ 12
Burnside Ave	30	\$ 256	\$ 12
Green Lane (Tilden)			
Edward St	28	\$ 313	\$ 11
	121	\$ 1,000	

Kerry Hill - 1880 Census - Ethnicity

	White St	Green Lane	Burnside	Burnside Court	Callender	Spruce St
Native	43 %	9 %	9 %	0	10 %	56 %
Born Ireland	30 %	46 %	47 %	11 %	48 %	25 %
1st Gen Irish	24 %	44 %	39 %	89 %	38 %	16 %
Irish	54%	90 %	86 %	100 %	86 %	41 %
	20/37	134/169	137/160	9/9	216/252	108/265

		Male	Female
	6014	265	70
Professional	5%		
Managerial	8%	3%	
Clerical	3%		
Sales	4%	4%	
Craftsmen	20%	22%	
Operatives	19%	14%	24%
Servants	17%		57%
Service	8%		16%
Workers			
Laborers	16%	48%	

## Key Research Questions

How much of a sacrifice did parishioners make in 1881 to support St. Mary's?

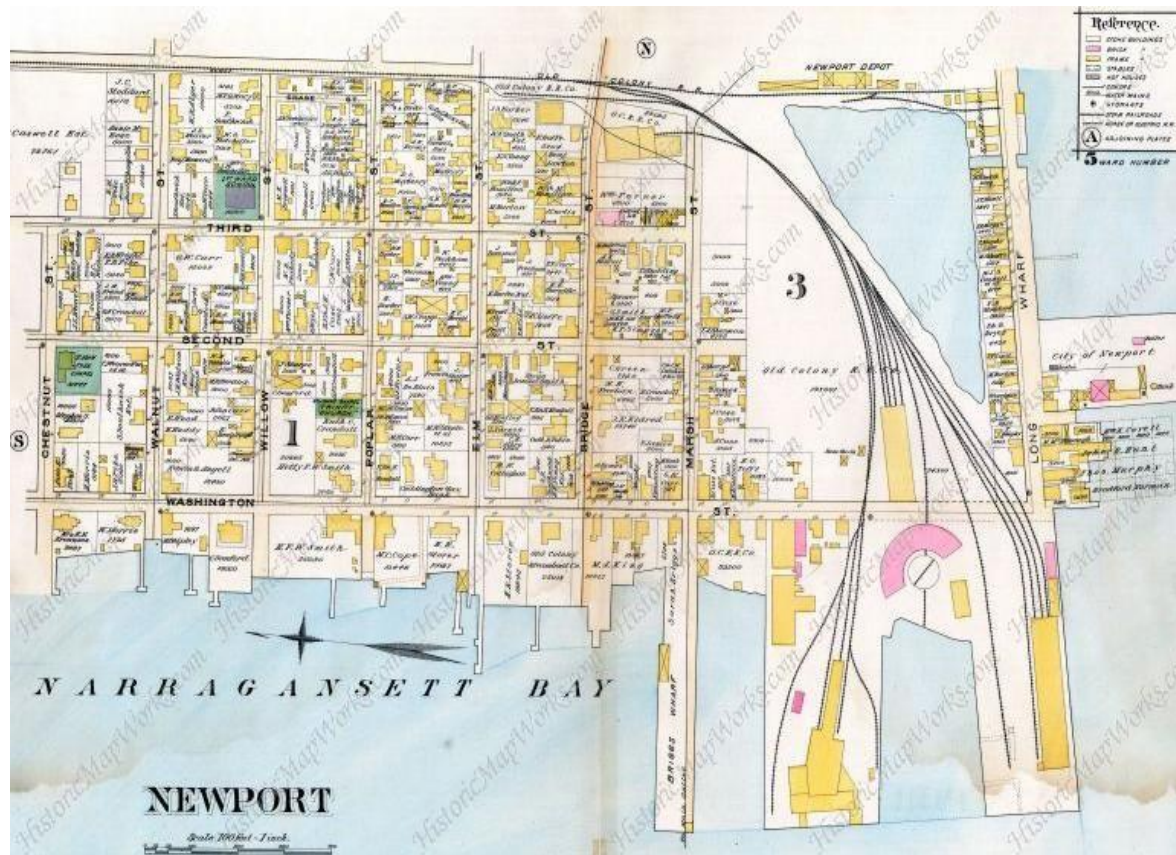
A contribution of \$ 10 or \$ 20 in 1881 – equivalent of ??\$ in 2018 ?

Great Collection - 137 years ago

Need historic data on wages/ earnings circa 1880



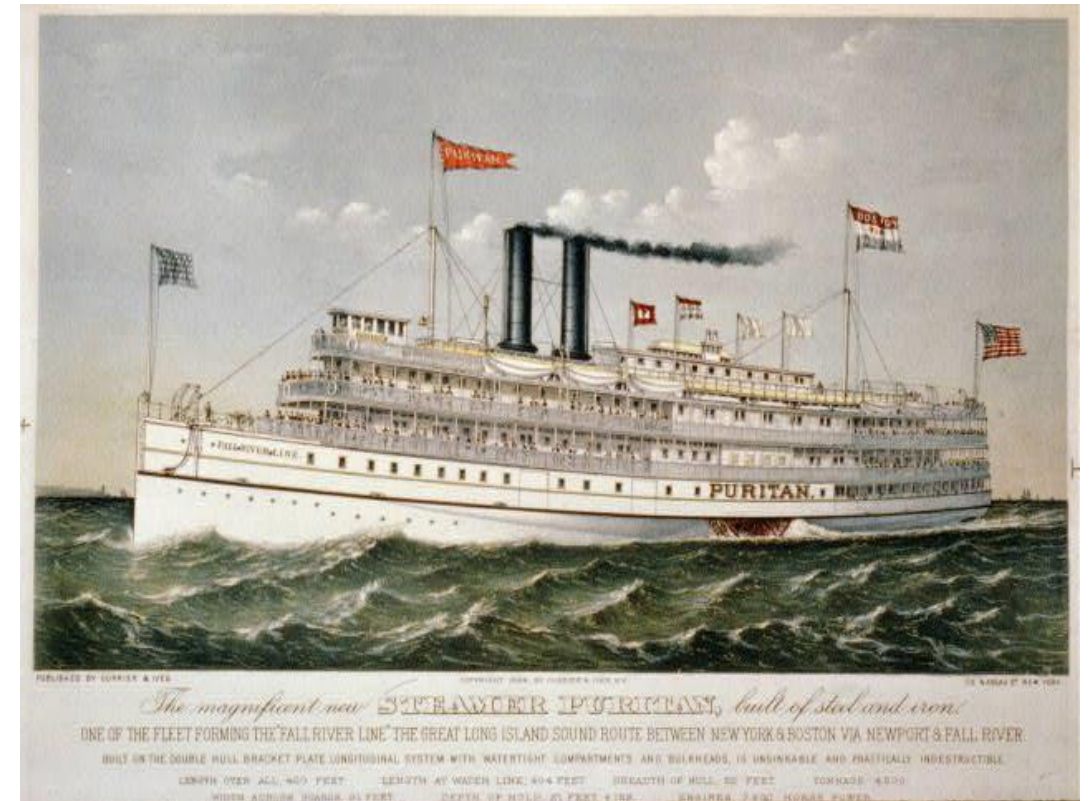
## Fall River Line – Old Colony RR



Map: Historic Map Works  
1893 Richards

Major maintenance & repair  
facilities for **steamboats & RR**

Records at Mystic Seaport  
Library



# Mystic Seaport Library: Old Colony RR Records

## Payroll - September 1879

10+ hour work day  
days/ wage

Monthly Income

Jerry F Sullivan Foreman  
Robert Bostwick Blacksmith

James Mahoney Helper\*

Michael Murphy Helper\*

William Philips Fitter

Payroll Blacksmith Boiler Fitter				
Sullivan Jerry F Foreman B.	27.4			
Bostwick Robt. Blacksmith	\$ 2.50	7.50		
Beary John "		7.40		
McKey James "		7.40		
McDonnott James "				
Sullivan Michael "	22.5	7.25		
Mahoney Jas. Helper	\$ 1.90	1.90		
Fitzgerald Michael "				
Sullivan Patk "	22.5	1.60		
Murphy Michael "	\$ 1.50	1.50		
Murphy bon. "				
McGowan Patk "				
Sullivan Norance Hatchman				
Palch M.P. Foreman B.M.				
Sullivan Michael Fitter	16.7	3.5		
Phillips Mr. Fitter	\$ 3.30	3.30		
Burke Jas. "		7.80		
Ballaghy bon. "				
Bohkins Jas. Rivetter		7.70		
McDonnell Evans "				
Wiley Thos. "				
Husley John "				
		2.60		

\$ 80.00 salary

\$ 61.50

\$ 42.75

both  
contributed \$ 10

\$ 33.75

\$ 55.37

## Level of Support for St. Mary's

\$ 10 in 1880 = \$ ?? in 2018 **very, very complicated**

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: 1880 – 2017 CPI + 2,173%

\$ 1 in 1880 = \$ 21.73 in 2017    \$ 10 in 1880 = \$ 217

**VS**

James Mahoney    22.5 days x \$ 1.90 = \$ 42.75    \$ 10 = approx. 1 weeks income

Michael Murphy    22.5 “ x \$ 1.50 = \$ 33.75    \$ 10 = approx. 1+ weeks income

U.S. Census – 2017 median household income approx. \$ 60,000 / \$ 5,000 month / \$ 1,250 week

James Mahoney, Michel Murphy from Kerry Hill - \$ 10 contribution in 1880

**equivalent to \$ 1,250**

**St. Mary's Great Collection of \$ 9,088 = \$ 1,136,000**