



THE NEWSLETTER OF

THE MUSEUM OF NEWPORT IRISH HISTORY

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The Irish in Newport 1840 – 1850

An Examination of the official U.S. Census for Newport County for 1840 and again for 1850 shows in detail many aspects of Irish life and immigration in Newport.

The 1840 census shows a total of 8,333 persons in the City of Newport, while the 1850 census lists 9,063.

In the 1840 census there were, by the author's estimate, 360 persons of Irish descent. This is based on a review of each sheet of the census, using the most common Irish names such as Dunn, Conley, Roach, Murphy, Sullivan, Congdon, Kelly etc. Since Brown and Smith could be either Irish or English names, it was assumed that of the 26 persons listed with those surnames, 12 were of Irish heritage.

The 1850 census lists 791 Irish-born persons and 497 persons with Irish surnames. Using the aforementioned assumption with the Brown/Smiths (one-half of them are Irish), the total population of those with Irish heritage would have been 1,318.

So, now we find that in 1840 the "Irish" population of the City of Newport was about 4 1/2 % and in 1850 was 14 1/2 %. The sharp increase was caused, no doubt, by a surge in immigration due to the great famine of the 1840s. The immigration continued into the 1860s and we will examine that in the next Newsletter.

POPULATION SCHEDULES OF THE
SIXTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES
1840
Roll 504
RHODE ISLAND
Volume 1 (1 - 274)
Bristol, Kent, and Newport Counties



(continued on the next page)

The 1840 Census

A detailed look at the 1840 census of Newport County reveals the following facts about the several towns:

Newshoram (Block Island) This town had only 12 persons of Irish lineage including:

** JOHN DUNN (a man in his 20s), his wife (also in her 20s) and one male child under 5 years of age. His occupation was in agriculture.

** GEORGE CONLY (a man in his 20s), his wife (also in her 20s) and two male children under the age of 5.

** EDWARD CONLY (a man in his 20s), his wife (also in her 20s), MABE CONLY (in her 50s) and two female children between the ages of 15 and 20.

NOTE: A very interesting item comes to light when examining the 1840 census, in that there were two female Slaves over 50 years old listed in Newshoram. The resources at the library were unable to come up with the dates of the RI state laws which freed the slaves. A call to Keith Stokes at the Chamber of Commerce, who is knowledgeable about Black History, answered the question. Keith, who is a good historian, informed us that RI had passed several laws abolishing slavery in the 1790s. However, the laws were not well enforced. In addition, slaves could still opt to remain with their families (former owners). In 1840 there were 5 slaves listed in the census and he was familiar with the fact that there were slaves on Block Island at that time.

Little Compton

In a total population of 1,327 there were only 7 Irish families.

Tiverton

Of a population of 3,182 there were 30 Irish. The census showed one person in agriculture and one person in manufacturing or trade.

NOTE: The 1840 census listed only the following occupations: mining, agriculture, commerce, navigation of the ocean, navigation of lakes & canals, learned professions and engineers. Therefore, many Irish (and others) had no listed occupation. This was changed for the 1850 census where a specific occupation was stated.

Portsmouth

This town had a population of 1,706 with 44 persons of Irish descent. Of special note is the fact that of 28 persons listed as being in mining, 14 were Irish with the names of Bradley and Dunn. So, we can be sure that these folks were working at the Portsmouth coal mines where their forebears started in 1809, forming a part of the original Newport Irish community. (As we have seen in earlier Newsletters, while there were Irish immigrants in Newport since the 1650s, the first community can be said to have begun in about 1809 with the opening of the mines.)

Middletown

This town's population was only 891 with 25 Irish names and only one person with a listed occupation (see above). That person's occupation was agriculture. Quite apparently, given Middletown's predominance of farms at the time, virtually all its citizens were engaged in that occupation.

Newport

The population was 8,333 and, as we have indicated above, there were 360 persons of Irish descent. The Irish names were:

Bowen	Dunn	McGowen (2)
Burns	Faley	McMannus
Cahall	Gavett	Murphy (7 listings)
Cahoone	Greene	Norton
Callahan	Holland	O'Donald
Collins	Kelley (2)	Riley
Congdon (2)	Maguire	Ring
Connelly	Malloney	Roach (2 listings)
Doharty	Martin	Shannahin
Donnagan	McCann	Shean
Dowling	McCarthy	Sullivan (5 listings)
Dring (2)	McCormick	Welch
Duggan		

It should be noted that several of the spellings of these names were probably distorted, with names such as Shannahin possibly suspect and perhaps Doharty not spelled correctly.

In the next Newsletter we will examine the data from the 1850 census. In the meantime, we'd like to hear from any reader who would know the county of origin of their ancestors or themselves. Board Member Pat Murphy has submitted the following IRELAND'S 32-HORIZONTAL, SAVE ONE Square which lists all the Counties of Ireland except one. He requests that you send us your family's County of origin. Pat is sure that every County of Ireland is represented here in Newport County !

IRELAND'S 32-HORIZONTAL, SAVE ONE

CAVANTRIMTIPPERARYCLAREKILDAREARMAGHTYRONEFERMANAGHLAOISLIGO
ROSCOMMONAGHANCORKILKENNYLOUTHLEITRIMAYOWATERFORDUBLINDERRY
OFFALYLIMERICKERRYLONGFORDOWNWEXFORDONEGALWAYWICKLOWESTMEATH

The Museum of Newport Irish History is looking for your family's County of origin. Hopefully, you may know the town or even the townland of your ancestors. Please supply this information to Vin Arnold in the near future. It is thought that the Irish came to this area from all thirty-two counties. Irish places of birth are listed on many tombstones in the local cemeteries.

If there is doubt about this, you may write to both the following addresses:

For those naturalized in the state courts Supreme Court
Judicial Record Center
5 Hill Street
Pawtucket, RI 02860

For those processed in the Federal Court

Director, New England Region
380 Trapelo Road
Waltham, MA 02154

Also, records of arrivals at Ellis Island are kept in:
National Archives and Records Administration
Northeast Region
10 Conte Drive
Pittsfield, MA

** Call (413) 445-6885 for hours and directions.

BARNEY STREET/ ST. JOSEPH'S CEMETERY NEWS

After concluding our very successful dedication of the restored Barney Street Cemetery, the Cemetery Committee continues to work on beautification and "final" details, as well as the summer chore of lawn mowing and trimming. Special thanks to member **Brian Pelletier** who planted and cared for the many beautiful Tiger Lilies and other flowers. Thanks also to **John Booth** for the trimming services and other 'overseeing' services. A special thanks to B&B welding who have installed support members on the outside all along the fence. This will 'firm-up' the fence. John Booth will later tie these down in discreet cement emplacements. Finally, we are working on a bronze plaque which will give a brief history of the site and list the names of those interred here. This plaque will be placed inside the fence. If you have not yet been to the site, please stop by and enjoy one of the most beautiful, peaceful areas in all of Newport.

The Tombstones of St. Joseph/ Barney Street Cemetery

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>YEAR OF DEATH</u>	<u>PLACE OF BIRTH</u>
<i>Margaret Cooper</i>	26	1843	Balimahan, Ireland
<i>Ellen King</i>	28	1850	Thume, Co. Galway
<i>William White</i>	25	1842	Castelines, Co. Cork
<i>Timothy O'Sullivan</i>	54	1836	Bere Haven, Co. Cork
<i>John Sullivan</i>	52	1848	Kilcasin (now Adrigole) Co. Cork
<i>Edmond Barry</i>	40	1834	Carrighowill
<i>Mary Roach</i>	13 months	1840	
<i>Thomas Welsh</i>	36	1844	Car(akock?) Co. Cork
<i>James Fitzgerald</i>	36	1837	Newmarket, Co. Cork
<i>Ann Flanagan (Doyle)</i>	24	1841	
<i>Francis Short</i>	9 months	1843	
<i>Edward Short</i>	5 months	1847	
<i>John Bohana</i>	30	1851	Carrickinshuree, Co. Waterford
<i>Bridget O'Sullivan</i>	19	1843	Co. Limerick
<i>Partick Crimim</i>	22	1852	Co. Cork
<i>Honora McCormick</i>	28	1851	
<i>Henry Hunter</i>	1 yr. 3 mos.	1853	
<i>James Hanley</i>	5	1835	Co. Longford
<i>Richard Hanly</i>	14	1836	Co. Longford
<i>Thomas Calahan</i>	10 months	183(?)	
<i>Michael Calahan</i>	10 months	1834	
<i>Doherty</i>	9 days	1842	

MUSEUM BOARD MEETING

The Museum Board of Directors met on Tuesday, September 7th at the LaForge Casino Restaurant.

The Board elected Bill Nagle as a member. Bill has been very active in Newport community affairs, serving on the Council among other duties. Bill is a very welcome addition to our Board.

In other actions, the board voted to buy a brick for the Rhode Island Irish Famine Memorial. These bricks cost \$150.00 each. Our brick will have the simple inscription: *The Museum of Newport Irish History*. Members and friends who wish to contribute a brick should write to:

The Rhode Island Irish Famine Memorial
P.O. Box 28077
Providence, RI 02908

The Memorial will be located on the grounds of the new Heritage Harbor in Providence and will occupy a prominent place in an outdoor plaza.

Other News and Recent Reading

The newest edition of the magazine Ireland of the Welcomes has an excellent article on Dean/Bishop George Berkeley who, as we know, was one of our most renowned residents. He lived at Whitehall in Middletown during the late 1720s. The article mentions his time here and the fact that his infant daughter, Lucia, is buried in Trinity Cemetery. Bishop Berkeley was, and still is, regarded as one of the great philosophers of the world.

Incidentally, the International Berkeley Society meets here every several years and the most recent meeting was this past April 21 - 24.

The September/October issue of the PRESERVATION magazine has a wonderful article about the John Stevens Shop and John Howard and Nick Benson. The article discusses all the superb work that this family has done in creating beautiful gravestones and other memorials, carved in the old tradition. The Museum was extremely fortunate to have had Nick restore the beautiful Celtic cross for the St. Joseph/Barney Street Cemetery. The Museum will retain a copy of this article for anyone interested.

FROM THE LIBRARY

New Acquisitions:

*** Edited by R.F. FOSTER: THE OXFORD ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF IRELAND
(1991) This is a superb, lavishly illustrated book. A great reference.

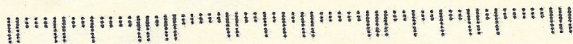
*** Cecil Woodham-Smith: THE GREAT HUNGER Harper & Row 1962.
This is the definitive book on the history of the famine of the 1840s.
We were lucky to find a copy (First Edition) in excellent condition.

St. Patrick's Day Parade Programs

Through the generosity of Board Member Pat Murphy, we have a collection of St. Patrick's Day Parade Programs dating from 1974. The dates are: 1974, 1982, then 1986 through 1999. We are interested in "filling out" this series, so if anyone has any programs from the first parade onward, please call. The first parade in this "modern" series started in 1956.

Speaking Program planned for October 31st

Hold the date now !! The Museum is planning a Speaking Program for Sunday, October 31st at 3:00 PM. We will have a distinguished educator and author from Bradford College, Doctor Patricia O'Malley. She will speak about the early Irish in Massachusetts and describe her methods and techniques of research. Dr. O'Malley has recently published the second in a series of books on the Irish in Haverhill. The location of the lecture will be announced and a separate notice will be mailed.



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