SAD STORY.

A small boy, about 11 years of age, was found yesterday morning in a lumber yard at the south part of the city, nearly frozen to death... It appears that he is an orphan, and does not know that he has any relations in this country, being of Irish descent. He has obtained a scanty living by selling the penny papers for several months, and has slept nightly under a pile of boards during that time where he had gathered a quantity of straw shavings.

DON'T FORGET THE POOR

...no doubt there are some even in the city of Middletown who suffer from cold and hunger.

--Two articles from the February 2nd, 1844 issue of The Constitution.

Irish Immigrants in Middletown, Connecticut: 1830-1860.

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Between the years of 1830 and 1860, the largest number of immigrants to have come to the United States at that time helped to transform it from a primarily agricultural, colonial nation, to an increasingly industrial and urban one. The growth of industrialization and urbanism during these thirty years was closely paralleled, if not dependent upon, the movement away from a homogenous New England society towards one that included many immigrant groups. The most important of these groups was the Irish. Their predominance over all other foreign-born citizens during this period made their effect upon the American economy and society most significant; it also made them the single most visible target for anti-immigrant nativist sentiments. The history of the Irish-born citizens of Middletown, Connecticut during these years is, in many ways, similar to that of the Irish in other parts of New England. The debt that this paper has, in terms of organization and interpretation, to Oscar Handlin's study of the Irish in Boston reflects the similarities between the conditions of the Irish in Middletown and in Boston. By taking on jobs that native Americans refused, and at wages lower than those Americans would have accepted, the Irish filled a position that was necessary to the growth of the industrial economy in this country, namely that of a permanent urban proletariat. The experience of the Irish in Middletown, and the reactions of other Middletown citizens to them, exemplify many of the reactions to the growth of urban society throughout the Northeast. Native Americans enjoyed, and worked for, the many benefits of urbanism—the higher standard of living, industrialization of previously difficult production processes, new consumer goods, etc.—while, at the same time, fearing and attempting to control or limit its other manifestations—the growth of a working class, the loss of colonial community
and values, the presence of an alien culture and religion within American society, etc. This paper attempts to examine the working and other social experiences of Irish immigrants in Middletown, as well as the reactions of sectors of the native American Middletown community to these immigrants, in order to better understand this period of change and urban growth.

During the years between 1835 and 1864, approximately 2,500,000 Irishmen left their country. (1) This mass emigration from Ireland was the result of years of English domination of the Irish people and their land. In his *Boston's Immigrants*, Oscar Handlin writes,

> With Cromwell came a host of land-hungry retainers who had to be satisfied at the expense of the native Irish. The great confiscation created a landlord class of foreign birth and religion while the policy of surrender and regrant destroyed the communal basis of land ownership and concentrated what land was left to the Irish in the hands of a few, reducing the remainder to the position of rent-paying tenants. (2)

This shift of land-ownership to the English also brought with it the discouragement of industrial development in Ireland. Those who could afford to finance manufacturing, and purchase its goods, were English citizens and transplanted Irishmen who invested, instead, in manufacturing in England. (3)

Those farmers left in Ireland found that raising enough crops to pay their landlords became their major concern, with "feeding themselves...a subsidiary matter, solved after a fashion by reliance on the potato." (4) The vast majority of the Irish population in the period before the great emigration, however, were not farmers but, rather, landless peasants or cottiers who "rented the use of enough ground for cabin and potato patch, paying for it by labor for the landlord and by the sale of the ubiquitous pig." (5)
Against this dreary social scene, a number of events took place between 1820 and 1850 which made emigration necessary. After the fall in grain prices of 1815 and 1820 made the collection of rents difficult, landlords decided it would be more profitable to them to leave their lands fallow. The Irish poor law of 1838 taxed landlords heavily and increased their willingness to emigrate the farmers and peasants from their lands, and from Ireland. This new poor law included relief of the poor in workhouses after their eviction from the land and provided assistance for emigration from the country. The potato blight of 1845-1860 destroyed all possible barriers to emigration. The famine left the farmers and cottiers, previously dependent on the potato and the "ubiquitous pig" for survival, without food or any means of support.

The Irish immigration to the United States, unlike later immigrations, for the most part, was a classical example of "push" immigration—immigration where the immigrant is escaping a dreaded homeland, rather than deliberately searching out and settling in an extremely desirable region. The Cork Examiner of March 10, 1847 made such an observation about the mass exodus of its day.

"The emigrants of this year are not like those of former ones; they are now actually running away from fever and disease and hunger, with money scarcely sufficient to pay passage for and find food for the voyage." (6)

These were not the Swedish or Czech immigrants of the post-Civil War years, working in American factories for a relatively short period of time to make money and, then, returning home. Nor were these the Scottish or English immigrants of the first three decades of the Nineteenth Century, looking for farming land or middle class merchant positions in New England. Finally, these Irish were not like the German immigrants who entered the United
States shortly after them, working in the middle and upper-middle class occupations of a new industrial economy, created, in large part, by their Irish predecessors. The Irish came to America without the skills necessary to move into industrial management positions, or to work as craftsmen or artisans, and did not have the capital required to begin their own businesses. They did not come to form a new society. They simply fled one in which they could no longer survive.

By 1860, some twenty-six hundred thousand Irish had come to the United States, most of them arriving in Boston and New York. Few immigrants arrived directly at either of Connecticut's main ports, New Haven or New London. Instead, immigrants arrived in Connecticut through working in labor gangs that travelled throughout New England, or by saving money and, eventually, leaving New York or Boston for an area that promised them more work. Irish women, daughters of Erie Canal workers, came from upstate New York to work in the mills of Massachusetts' Waltham system manufacturing towns. Similarly, canal and road construction helped place Irish workers in Connecticut. Carl Wittke writes,

In the early 1820's and 1830's, contractors brought in hundreds of Irish pick-and-shovel workers. In 1827, approximately 400 were working on the Enfield Canal near Hartford, Connecticut, and 170 came to New Haven to help build the Framington Canal. (9)

Enough Irish were working in Connecticut by July of 1829 that a Catholic priest, Rev. R. D. Woodley, from Boston, made a missionary tour through New London, New Haven, the Enfield Canal, and Middletown. The Irish came to Middletown, in particular, because of available work at the brownstone quarries in Portland.

The history of the Irish in Middletown is closely connected to that of the Portland quarries. These quarries yielded a brownstone of exceptional quality, "distinguished from all others in its
uniform color," which was used in the construction of many of the buildings on the campus of Wesleyan University, Middletown's Russell Library, and "the better class of residencies in New York and other cities." (11) The major Portland quarries of the thirty years preceding the Civil War were owned by Erastus and Silas Brainerd, the Middlesex Quarry Company, and the Shaler and Hall Quarry Company. The original attraction for most Irish immigrants to come to Middletown, these quarries continued to provide a good deal of employment for Irish citizens in the city throughout this period.

Although the first Catholic families in Middletown are reported to have been exiled Acadians who arrived in 1756, (12) the first Irish Catholics to do so were drawn by employment in the Portland quarries around 1829 and 1830. The Rev. James Fitton visited Middletown and Portland in 1830 and found that the "extensive work at the brown stone quarries gave employment to several laborers, the majority of whom, with their families, were members of the Church." (13) Although there is little data about these early settlers, it is known that by 1843 they included some thirty families. (14)

The assimilation process of these families to the intricacies of the American political process was aided in that year by a number of local sources, including newspapers and, apparently, the Portland quarry owners.

In this campaign the Democrats appealed to the Irish voters "to come forward and unite in sustaining the Democratic ticket." The Whigs were accused, on their part, of using more than logical appeals to gain the support of the Irish. They parcelled out the Irish laborers in the Portland quarries in companies of five, and led them to the polls to vote the Whig ticket. (15)

Whatever "logical" problems existed in such an action, it is clear
that, even though small in number, the Irish workers in the quarries were recognized in 1843 as a distinct, and important, social and political group. Middletown was a predominantly Whig city, and Whig newspapers and quarry owners attempted to integrate the new immigrants, at least politically, into the mainstream of the community. An article in the Middletown Whig newspaper, The Constitution, from 1844, is an example of efforts at gaining the Irish vote.

IRISH CITIZENS ATTENTION!
(Villainous Conduct of the Locofoco Select Men of Berlin)

We have heretofore referred to a most disgraceful act of the Locofocos Select Men of Berlin in regard to the Irish citizens of that town. Several of them, who were worthy, industrious men, and good citizens were warned out of town by these "Democratic" (Heaven save the mark!) Select Men, for no other reason than that they were Whigs, and would have been made freemen this Spring! This step is taken to prevent them from being made voters. What a commentary is this on the loud-mouthed professions of these patent "Democrats!" We shall give the names of the parties in a day or two. The men guilty of this outrage shall be exposed, and their names held up to public scorn and contempt! (16)

Appeals by both political parties to Irish-born workers demonstrate that Irish immigrants in the Middletown area were viewed as a block of voters that, although subject to manipulation, would act as a separate group with specific interests—in the case of the 1843 elections, interests revolving around continued employment at the Portland quarries.

The religious history of the Irish in Middletown is also related to the operation of these quarries. The new church built to replace the overcrowded St. John's Church of 1845 was done so, around 1846, with a great deal of help from the Portland quarry companies that employed much of its congregation. D.J. Donahoe reports in his history of St. John's,

The new church, therefore, was soon found too small for the increased attendance... The proprietors of the
Portland quarries, seeing the need that existed for a larger church, and admiring the devotion of the people as well as the determination of the clergyman, made a generous offer of all the stone which would be needed in the erection of the new edifice. Almost every dollar which went to defray the expenses of building this new church was collected from members of the congregation. (17)

In other words, the 1846 St. John's Church was financed, almost completely, by the Church's congregation and the employers of many of its members.

Although Donahoe is careful to point out the "generous" nature of the quarry owners' donation,—the owners did make the new construction possible,—the gift may reflect these men's admiration, not only for the spiritual "devotion" of the Irish, but for their devotion to the quarry companies as well. The only Catholic church in Middletown, St. John's had a central, if not the central, position in the daily lives of most of the quarry workers and their families. In a period in which Yankee workers had already expressed their militancy throughout New England, the quarry owners were able to solidify an already-dependent relationship between the Irish and themselves with their new status as the only outside financiers of the new church. Families that were tied to the Portland quarries financially and, as we have seen, politically, were now indebted to them for their spiritual and social well-being.

According to the 1850 census for Middletown, 723 of 4,129 Middletown citizens were Irish—approximately 17.5% of the population.* The census for that year is often illegible and inaccurate and lacks specificity in its occupational descriptions. Farm laborers, railroad laborers, day laborers, quarry laborers, etc. are all listed simply as "laborers." Nonetheless, the census does show one

* I have approximated all my percentages from the census records to the nearest tenth of a percent. Some figures from the 1860 census that are not matched with corresponding ones from the 1850 census are left alone because of the apparent unreliability or unavailability of the appropriate 1850 data.
important fact: well over half (about 64.8%) of all laborers in Middletown during that year were Irish-born. The Irish-born population of Middletown occupied almost four times its proportionate share of laborer positions. About 21.1% of the Irish were laborers of some sort. (18) The 1860 census shows similar figures. The 963 Irish-born citizens now occupied 18.5% of Middletown's total population, itself now equal to some 5,195 citizens. About 19.5% of these Irish were laborers of some kind, making up 81.0% of the city's laborers in that year. Of these laborers, 35.6% are listed as "quarry laborers," making up about 6.9% of the Irish-born population. An unknown number of those listed as "laborers" or "day laborers" also worked at the Portland quarries on a temporary or permanent basis. (19) Many Irishmen in both years are listed as "stone cutters" who may or may not have all worked in the Portland quarries; it is clear that some did, however. Many sailors, seamen, ship carpenters, and sea captains worked directly or indirectly for the quarries, whose brownstone was transported along the Northeast coast in various schooners that left from the Connecticut River. In 1860, 11.1% of such men were Irish. The quarries also employed smiths, of whom Middletown Irish made up 45% in 1860. (20) All this census data confirms what the 1843 political scandals and the 1846 donation of Portland brownstone have suggested—namely, that the economic life and survival of a great many Irish families in Middletown, during this period, was dependent on these nearby quarry companies.

It is difficult to discover the exact nature of the Irish worker's labor in the Portland quarries. An 1884 description of a contemporary quarry lists the 300 workers of the Brainerd brothers' quarry along with 45 oxen and 36 horses but also describes the removal of brownstone as dependent on electrically-powered
explosions. (21) Such methods were non-existent during the years 1830-1860, and one imagines the process of removing the stone from these quarries with picks, hammers, and shovels, as well as gunpowder, as both a dangerous and physically-exhausting one. A description of quarry work during the years after the Civil War is found in a recent article on the Portland quarries in The Middletown Press.

The work was seasonable [sic]. "April first was hiring day," recalls S.M. Whitby whose father Samuel Whitby had come from England, started as a water boy in the quarry, and worked himself up to being superintendent, a post he held until his death in 1905. "Work ended at frost, usually in November.

"Many of the men were Swedes who came for the season, returning to their families in the fall, buying a return ticket for the following year."

"The workday was 10 hours long, although I have a suspicion they sometimes worked longer. The hours were kept in a time book which was used by the men to obtain credit at the local store...where the charges were noted. The bills were sent directly to the quarries.

"The men were not paid until the end of the season, then getting about $300." (Presumably after the charges from the stores were deducted). (22)

Although Whitby describes a later era in which Swedish immigrants made up the majority of the laborers, his memories of his father's days at the Portland quarries shed some light on working conditions for Irish workers in earlier years. The ten-hour day, if it existed at all—and the history of the ten-hour movement during the pre-war period raises doubts—, was probably extended more often than "sometimes" for the Irish workers. Unlike the Swedes, the Irish had left their native land permanently and, hence, did not engage in the annual migration that Whitby mentions.

A contemporary description of quarry labor during roughly the same period (1884) points out similarities between the roles of Swedes and Irishmen in the quarries.

It will readily be seen that these quarries must employ a small army of workmen. Nearly all nationalities are represented. The majority are Swedes, who are strong
and reliable and not given to strikes. The wages, hours of labor, etc., are regulated by agreement between the quarry companies. The workmen are cutters, rockmen, or teamsters, etc., according to their employment. There are also bosses, measurers, time-keepers, etc. Every place where quarrying is carried on has its "rock boss," who oversees the gang of workmen, has charge of the blasting, etc. There are usually seven or eight rock bosses, each with his gang of workmen, at work at once in the same quarry. Some of the men have been working here more than half a century. (23)

The majority of the workmen who were supervised in such "gangs" were Swedes in this period. Between 1830 and 1860, this majority was made up of Irish workers who, without any skills to offer and willing to take any work whatsoever, were also "strong and reliable and not given to strikes" in the minds of quarry owners. The division of labor by conceptual or managerial functions of the job as opposed to the physical or actual ones was paralleled, as late as 1884, by an ethnic division of labor. "Nearly all nationalities" were represented in these gangs of workers, and forty years earlier, the main nationality represented was Irish. Apparently, some of these same Irish workers were still quarry laborers in 1884. It is impossible to know whether the "company store" arrangement, the fixing by all the companies of workers' salaries, or the annual payment method of the later era existed during the years of Irish predominance in the labor force. Such methods of company control over workers' private affairs do not seem so unlikely, though, in a period when the quarries saw fit to aid the immigrants' political and spiritual decisions in the new society.

The Irish quarry workers were not quite as complacent as the 1884 description of the Swedes or Whitby's stories of his father would lead us to believe, and these workers' lack of complacency is informative of their conception of quarry work. The Hartford Times of June 22, 1853 reports that, in spite of the Irish workers' dependence on the quarry companies for so much of
their American existence, they still engaged in at least one formal confrontation with their employers.

"The Irishmen employed in the Portland quarries are on strike for higher wages. Most of them have refused to work, and threaten those who do work. Indignation meetings have been held, threatening bills posted, and high words used. The contracts are made for the season, and the owners do not yield. Upwards to 100 of the laborers have left the quarries, and work was temporarily suspended." (24)

Although this and other strikes by Irish laborers in Connecticut proved unsuccessful in changing working conditions, the 1853 strike does show Irish workers' reactions to a physically demanding job that, in addition to leaving them unemployed for a third of each year, also paid a relatively small salary. That "indignation meetings..., threatening bills..., and high words" were found necessary by an Irish laboring class that had been "given" the opportunity to reside in Middletown and worship in a church made possible by quarry company donations indicates the high degree of these Irishmen's dissatisfaction with their work and their wages.

For the Irish in Middletown, as for all Irish from the south of Ireland, the Catholic Church played an extremely important role in their lives in the new society. Surrounded by a largely hostile culture predicated upon Protestant values involving a distrust of Catholicism derived from the Reformation, the Middletown Irish turned to the Church as a refuge and as a central institution within their own community. Most of the Irish in Middletown during this period came from County Cork, the site of one of the major emigrations from Ireland, and from Queens County --both, counties from the Catholic south. The Church played an important role for immigrants in Middletown, not only as a social and cultural alternative to the already-existing Anglo-Saxon Middletown society, but, also, as the institutional embodiment of
a religion based on salvation and other-worldly mysticism. As it often has for oppressed peoples, a religion of salvation and after-life provided hope for an immigrant group whose daily life centered upon working at the lowliest jobs and living without the material comforts enjoyed by other citizens. Handlin quotes Kathleen Kennedy of Boston as writing in 1849:

"When we luck at him there, we see our blessed Saviour, stripped a'most naked lake ourselves; when we luck at the crown i'thorns on the head, we see the Jews mockin' him, just the same as--some people mock ourselves for our religion; when we luck at his eyes, we see they wer niver dry, like our own; when we luck at the wound in his side, why we think less of our own wounds an' bruises, we get 'ithin and 'ithout every day av our lives. (25)

Although the Irish in Middletown were probably not all as self-consciously aware as Kennedy of their empathy for the Crucifixion story, their allegiance to the Church from the first days of their settlement in Middletown suggests that Catholicism fulfilled as much a spiritual need as a social or cultural one for the immigrants.

The visits of two Catholic priests, R.D. Woodley and James Fitton, in 1829 and 1830, to the Middletown area show that the few families in the city wished to remain in formal contact with their Church. The establishment of a Catholic church, and the holding of Catholic services, in Middletown was met with some opposition from other residents. Donahoe relates the problems encountered by Middletown and Portland Catholics in 1836 when the Rev. Peter Walsh tried to hold services in Portland.

In the spring of 1836, Rev. Peter Walsh...visited the city one Saturday afternoon, but finding that the greater portion of the Catholics in this locality resided in Portland, he crossed the river and began to look about for a place in which to celebrate the mass. He was unable to secure a house, so he engaged a barn from one Captain Worthington, on the main street. The next morning, when he reached the place in company with his little congregation, he found the barn doors
bolted, and for some reason, which was never made very clear to him, the owner refused the use of the premises for religious purposes. Expostulations were vain and so the priest with his followers had to turn away. Father Walsh was just about to celebrate the mass under a large tree on the wayside, when a gentleman by the name of Joseph Myrick, who lived near Captain Worthington's residence, tendered the use of his dwelling to the worshippers. The offer was gratefully accepted, and the mass was duly celebrated. Mr. Myrick soon afterward joined the church, becoming the first convert in the county. (26)

Despite hostility from the community, Donahoe notes, the "congregation now began to increase rapidly and...the people, too, began to prosper materially, and felt themselves able to rent a house to be used solely for religious purposes." (27) The congregation moved through a succession of houses in Portland until it was deemed necessary and desirable to build a church in Middletown.

In 1843, the new Father of the congregation, Rev. John Brady, began to look for a site for a church in Middletown. Donahoe writes that, "One morning, he was visited by Mr. Charles R. Alsop, and surprised by an offer, at a very low figure, of the fine site where the church is now located." Brady immediately accepted the offer, only to receive another gift from the Alsop family, this time from Mrs. Richard Alsop, "a wealthy Catholic resident," in the form of five hundred dollars which "sufficed to pay for the land." The money necessary for the church building was raised, in part, from the congregation itself, each contributor receiving a plot in the new church's cemetery. Brady also "visited many industrial centers for the purpose of making collections for the undertaking." (28)

The contract of April 24, 1844 shows that the congregation had received two loans from Middletown banks equal to slightly over one thousand dollars. (29) A year later, when this original church was found to be too small for the congregation, Portland quarry owners made a donation of all the brownstone necessary to the
the construction of a larger building. Middletown's financial leaders had concurred—the Irish Catholics were welcome in the city.

It is interesting that the Alsop family played such an important part in Middletown's acceptance of the immigrants' religion. Charles R. Alsop, who offered Brady the land for St. John's at such an unusually low price, was mayor of Middletown between 1843 and 1845. He was also the president of the Berlin Branch Railroad and worked to get a charter for Middletown on the Berlin line. (30) The 1860 census for Middletown lists many Irish laborers as "R.R. laborers," and it is possible that many of the Irish "laborers" of an unspecified nature worked in railroad construction. Handlin writes of railroad labor as exceptionally harsh, with railroad companies often cutting laborers' wages once the labor gangs had left the workers' homes. The Boston Pilot warned "'all laborers who can get employment elsewhere to avoid the railroads...to...do anything...in preference to "railroading."'" (31) Although the "railroading" in the Middletown area may not have been as difficult and as exploitive of its labor force as it was throughout the rest of New England, the pool of potential and actual laborers within St. John's congregation cannot be disputed. In addition to its railroad connections, the Alsop family, located within and without the city limits, played an important role in the bank, manufacturing, and mercantile operations of Middletown. The authenticity of Mrs. Alsop's Catholicism has been questioned in other sources; however, no evidence can be found in contradiction with Donahoe's account. Nonetheless, her family, like the "industrial centers" of Middletown, and the Portland quarries, was not going to repeat Captain Worthington's performance. The laborers who were to contribute to the transformation of Middletown's environment and economy would not be denied their religious center, at least not by
the wealthier members of the Middletown community. The church was consecrated on September 10, 1886, "the impressive services being attended by a vast concourse of people." (32)

St. John's Church was connected, since 1849, with a parochial school for the education of the children of the immigrants. Andrew A. Cody, a graduate of a college in Fermoy, County Cork, was the school's principal until his death in 1866. The school did not receive the same acceptance within the city as the church appears to have had. After Cody's death, the school was operated by the Board of Education as a public school until May of 1872, when it was placed again under the auspices of the Catholic church. (33)

In addition to its importance in the spiritual and educational life of the immigrants, St. John's was a central part of the settlement and housing patterns of the Irish in Middletown. Stanley Lieberson, in his Ethnic Patterns in American Cities, describes two types of residential segregation of ethnic groups in America.

...first, if the ethnic group was of undesirable status, then the group would be involuntarily segregated; secondly, if proximity to members of the same group facilitated adjustment to the conditions of settlement in a new country or if members of an ethnic group simply viewed the residential proximity of members from the same group, as desirable, there would be voluntary segregation. (34)

The experience of the Irish in Middletown until the mid-1870's appears to have been shaped by aspects of both types of segregation. The latter, voluntary, form of segregation described by Lieberson seems to have predominated, but there is some evidence that suggests a certain degree of involuntary segregation of the Irish in less-desirable areas of Middletown.

David Ward, in his article, "The Emergence of Central Immigrant Ghettoes in American Cities: 1840-1920," suggests that settlement choices were dictated, in large part, by the availability of employment in a certain area. Of Irish immigrants in Boston
between 1840 and 1875, he writes,

Although many of Boston's Irish immigrants lived in
shantytowns on the edge of the city, the majority of
Irishmen were housed in the North End and Fort Hill
districts which were not only near to the long-established
Irish quarters on the waterfront but also adjacent to the
growing sources of employment within the emerging
business district. (35)

Employment as longshoremen and dock laborers on the waterfront
and as construction workers for the new warehouses of the Fort Hill
area drew the Irish to these areas, although increasing commercial-
ization of the latter region caused Irish to move more heavily into
the North End and South Boston, in later years.

The census data of 1850 and 1860 was taken according to
ward or neighborhood in Middletown. Both years' records show,
indisputably, that the Irish lived together. Families headed by
middle or upper-middle class Irish were scattered throughout
neighbors with non-Irish families of their own class, but those
headed by Irish laborers, in particular, tended to live together.
Female Irish servants lived in various parts of Middletown, often
in neighborhoods of households headed by manufacturers and bank
presidents. The lower classes of other groups did not live with the
Irish, however, with the exception of the few blacks and mulattoes
in Middletown, who often appear in the same census wards with the
Irish. Connecticut-born laborers, or laborers from Scotland and
England, usually lived apart from the Irish in their own working
class enclaves with native, Scottish, or English, grocers, tailors,
clerks, shop owners, etc., and, even, in 1860, a Massachusetts-born
"quack Doctor" who lived near a number of non-Irish laborers. Irish
laborers and their families, and the majority of the Irish population
of Middletown, lived apart from the rest of Middletown society.

The City Directories of 1868-69 and 1874-74 for Middletown,
as well as the tax assessments of 1860 of the State of Connecticut for the City of Middletown, show that most Irish lived in two neighborhoods within the small city. The first of these, made up principally of Bridge, Green, Miller, and Portland Streets, tends to follow Ward's interpretation of immigrant settlement patterns. Many of the Irish living in this area are listed as laborers in the Directories and as living near or under the bridge to Portland. Settlement in this area allowed quarry workers, who owned no coaches or carts, access to the bridge leading to the quarries on the other side of the Connecticut River. Like the Irish in Boston, these laborers lived near the site of their daily work. The low occupational status of those living in this area, and the undesirability of housing below or near the Portland bridge, suggest that such housing was not of the highest quality.

The second area of Irish concentration in Middletown centered around St. John's Church. An extraordinary number of Irish laborers lived on Liberty Street, with some addresses listing an extremely high number of residents in the Directories. Perhaps these dwellings were boarding-houses of some sort; whatever the case, they appear to have been exceptionally crowded. The other streets in this second Irish area include St. John's Square and St. John's Street, as well as Green Street, which also ran through this area. Although this neighborhood was very close to the other Irish district, it appears more centered around St. John's Church than around the Portland bridge. Both were on the north end of Middletown's Main Street, and the church was within easy walking distance of residents in either section.

Within the framework of Lieberson's analysis, the housing patterns of the Irish in Middletown suggest, mostly, a voluntary segregation, based on the desire to be closer to members of the
same ethnic group and accessibility of employment and the Catholic church, around the Portland bridge, the Catholic church, and the parochial school. Streets such as Liberty, Green, and Bridge were overwhelmingly Irish, a fact which must have created some sense of shelter and community within the city as a whole. The importance of St. John's Church to this pattern cannot be denied—it was the central institution in this Irish community. Still, a certain degree of involuntary segregation must have prevailed in the formation of such neighborhoods. The hostility to the Irish and their religion that was exhibited in the local Middletown press, as well as in the other newspapers of Connecticut, reflected the xenophobic tendencies of a large number of the city's native population. The Middletown Irish, occupying jobs that the native American and Scottish, English, and German population largely refused, also appear to have held housing that, in terms of its number of occupants and location, was less than desirable to those non-Irish groups.

William Shannon has written of the Irish of the pre-war years,

They were in great part the physical builders of the cities. Their labor met the urgent need of overgrown colonial towns for better streets and sewers, larger water systems, and new housing. The Irish swung the picks, lifted the shovels, and brought down the hammers that transformed the towns into cities. They suffered terrible hardships, for they did the roughest, most dangerous work. (36)

The Irish in Middletown were no exception to this pattern. The ten years between 1850 and 1860, in themselves, show a great increase in the number of Middletown residents working in factories and foundries, as well as in the total number of persons listed in the census as "manufacturers." The industrial transformation within this short time period was due, in large part, to the availability of cheap Irish labor in Middletown. Working in the quarries, in construction,
on railroad gangs, or in any situation requiring heavy, physical labor, the Irish helped to make Middletown more than an "overgrown colonial town" and something closer to an urbanized city.

Of the 723 Irish-born citizens listed in the 1850 census of Middletown, 152 were laborers of some kind, or 21.1% of the Irish-born population. Only 2.5% of those Middletown citizens not born in Ireland were laborers. Irishmen made up 64.8% of Middletown's laborers. (37) In 1860, only 44 of 238 laborers were not Irish-born, with the Irish making up, now, 81.0% of all laborers. Comprising 18.5% of the total Middletown population, 19.5% of all Irish were laborers—a percentage much higher than that for any other group. (38) These laborers worked, in some cases, on a seasonal basis—as in the quarries and, probably, in the railroad gangs—and on a day-to-day basis, whenever they were needed—for construction, shipping, or farm harvest purposes. Others, such as farm laborers, may have been employed all year round. Handlin's description of the conditions of laborers in Boston are helpful in understanding the quality of life of the Middletown Irish laborer.

An employed laborer could not earn enough to maintain a family of four. And as long as the head of the Irish household obtained nothing but sporadic employment, his dependents lived in jeopardy of exchanging poverty for starvation. Supplementary earnings—no matter how small—became crucial for subsistence. The sons were first pressed into service, though youngsters had to compete with adults willing to work for boys' wages. To keep the family fed, clothed, and sheltered the women were also recruited. In Ireland they had occupied a clearly defined and important position in the cottiers' economy. That place being gone, they went off to serve at the table of strangers and bring home the bitter bread of banishment. (39)

The 963 Irish residents of 1860 and their 606 American-born children—together forming 30.2% of the 1860 Middletown population—followed a similar pattern. (40) Some Irish laborers were as young as sixteen or seventeen while a number of immigrants' Irish
and American-born children were employed in factories. Irish women, beginning work at about the same ages as their brothers, were employed in large numbers as servants, domestics, maids, and washerwomen.

In 1860, approximately 21.8% of the Irish-born population in Middletown was employed in one of these servant positions, as opposed to 1.1% of the non-Irish population. All thirteen white washerwomen in Middletown were Irish, the other three being black or mulatto. About 80.4% of all domestics and servants were Irish women. (41) Indeed, as Handlin writes, "employment involving an element of personal service and therefore repugnant to Americans, quickly fell to the lot of the Irish." (42) Almost forty percent of the Irish-born population of Middletown in 1860 were employed as a laborer or a servant of some kind. (43) The vast majority of those Irish who were in any way employed were in these two groups.

In 1850, some 5.4% of the Irish in Middletown were employed as stonecutters, masons, brick makers, moulders, joiners, carpenters, or housepainters—in short, in some aspect of construction work. 36.8% of all those employed in these areas were Irish-born, an additional example of the Irish immigrants' importance in the urbanization of New England. (44) By 1860, the percentage of Irish-born masons, stone cutters, etc. had dropped to 27.9%—still a greater percentage than their place in the over-all Middletown population. 2.49% of the Irish in Middletown were employed in these construction trades in 1860. (45)

Although no factory workers are listed in the 1850 census, by 1860, slightly less than 1% of the Middletown population was employed as a "factory girl" or "factory boy." 22.9% of these were Irish-born, while 36.7% were the children of Irish-born parents. The Irish and their children had found a place of sorts in the new
industrial order. 11.1% of all those working on the sea or river in the shipping or related trades—as sailors, seamen, sail makers, ship carpenters, fishermen, or sea captains—were Irish-born in that year. (46)

Blacksmiths, silversmiths, tinsmiths, locksmiths, etc. made up less than one-half of one percent of the Irish population in 1850, with the Irish making up only 2.4% of all smiths in Middletown. (47) By 1860, however, 45% of all smiths were Irish, with slightly less than one percent of the Irish population employed in this area. (48)

Of the five men employed in Middletown in 1850 as a ferryman, teamster, boatman, or a carman, not one was Irish-born. (49) By 1860, 44% of these, including drivers, coachmen, and truckmen, were Irish. (50) A similar trend can be seen in the area of tailors, seamstresses, boot and shoe makers, and dress makers. In 1850, only one Irish shoe maker was employed in Middletown, with thirty-two non-Irish-born citizens employed in these occupations. (51) In 1860, 16 Irishmen were working in this field, making up about 34.1% of all those employed as tailors, seamstresses, etc. (52) 6.7% of all machinists and mechanics in Middletown were Irish in 1850 (53); by 1860, 16.9% were Irish, while 2.8% were the American-born children of Irish parents. (54)

An apparent decrease in the number of Irish workers as bank clerks or cashiers, clerks, bookkeepers, accountants, city clerks, and Custom House or Post Office employees took place during the years between 1850 and 1860. Although slightly less than 1% of these were Irish in 1850 (55), not one was Irish in 1860. (56) Nor were any of the 32 grocers, butchers, bakers, and saloon-keepers employed in Middletown in 1860 of Irish birth. (57)

These percentages for the Irish in Middletown are in accordance with those for Irish immigrants in other parts of New
England. The fairly large percentage of Irish employed as construction workers, smiths, and factory workers are part of a generally high level of Irish workers in these areas during the pre-Civil War years. The low level of grocers and small shop-keepers of Irish birth in Middletown is in keeping with an immigrant group that lacked the capital for such enterprises. The total percentage of Irishmen in all these lower-middle and middle class was in 1850 and 1860, 6.8% and 8.5%, respectively, of Middletown's Irish population. (58) A definite, though not major, shift upwards in the economic scale had occurred, with the Irish moving into a number of occupations formerly held exclusively, or predominantly, by native Americans or Anglo-Saxon immigrants.

"If the Irish progressed only slowly in the handicraft and retail trades," Handlin writes of Boston, "they made no impression at all on the financial occupations central to the city's commercial life." (59) The same is true for Middletown, despite the presence of a few wealthy Irishmen. The 1850 census-takers, true to their distaste for specificity, name Rupel Hopkins as an Irish-born "millionaire," with real estate valued at one thousand dollars. Johnathan Kilbourn, a hotel keeper, is listed in the same census as owning $10,000 of real estate, while his wife is recorded as owning $2,000 of real estate. Tax assessements for the State of Connecticut in 1860 calculate Kilbourn's total holdings at $15,762, including two houses, property in the form of a "store, mill, or manufactorie," and almost six thousand dollars in stocks and other investments. Charles Breuer, a jeweler, owned $17,750 of real estate, according to the 1850 census. After his death, his family enjoyed his $8,750 estate, according to the 1860 tax assessements. $12,530 of assessed property was shared by his wife and four children, according to the State tax collector. Patrick Pagan, the only Irish merchant in Middletown
in 1860, is listed in the census as owning some $22,000 in real
estate and a personal estate of $10,000. The tax assessors of the
same year were less generous, attributing only $17,100 to Fagan,
including three houses, one acre of land, and $3,600 invested in
merchandising and trade. Mrs. Fagan's property was assessed at $1,200
of real estate. William Barry, an Irish-born physician, owned
$10,000 of real estate in 1850, according to census records, while
Bartholemew Green, a stonemason, was listed as owning a thousand
dollars worth of real estate in the same year. Ten years later, tax
collectors would evaluate Green's real estate at $800. John L. Smith,
a silversmith, owned $7,000 of real estate in 1850, the census
records, and $8,915 of total property assessed by tax collectors
in 1860. Michael K. Griffin was assessed in that year as owning
$14,432 of property, including six acres of land, and more than
$5,000 invested in stocks.

Such wealthy Irishmen were a definite minority within
Middletown and, like well-to-do Irish in Boston, they "failed to
mitigate the abject circumstances of the group as a whole." (60)
Of thirty-two merchants in Middletown in 1850, only one, John R.
Savage, was Irish-born. (61) Similarly, Patrick Fagan was Middletown's
only Irish merchant in 1860. None of the manufacturers or bank
presidents listed in either the 1850 or the 1860 census was born in
Ireland. Of the professional class in Middletown—physicians,
professors, clergymen, dentists, druggists, lawyers, publishers,
school teachers, and music teachers—only seven of forty-five were
Irish in 1850, according to the census, including Congregationalist
and Methodist ministers. Despite the presence of such questionable
"Irishmen," the census of that year does identify five apparently
accurate Irish professionals—one printer, one lawyer, and three
physicians. By the time the 1860 census was taken, the Protestant
ministers identified as Irish in 1850 had either left the city or had cleared up matters with the census-takers. That census lists only four Irishmen—a lawyer, a music teacher, a Roman Catholic clergyman, and a physician—as members of the seventy-two total Middletown residents employed in these professional fields.

An analysis of the relative wealth possessed by all Irish immigrants in Middletown from both sets of census data shows the accuracy of Handlin's remarks about the unimportance of the wealthy Irish in Boston—and in Middletown. Of the $1,248,410 of real estate owned by all Middletown citizens in 1850, the Irish owned only $58,250. 17.5% of the 1850 population owned only 4.7% of Middletown's real estate; only 2.1% of the Irish residents owned any real estate whatsoever. In 1860, Middletown citizens together owned $2,514,405 of real estate and $2,131,554 of personal estates, according to the census. The Irish residents of the city owned $110,515 of real estate and $38,495 of personal estates. 18.5% of the Middletown population in that year owned 4.4% of that city's real estate and only 1.8% of its personal estates. 5.5% of the Irish population now owned some real estate while 1.8% owned some sort of personal estate. In short, the percentage of Middletown's financial resources owned by the Irish—at least, according to census data—in 1850 and 1860, was negligible.

The popular response, on the part of other Americans, to the presence of these Irish within their society was a complicated one. The upper classes greatly aided the Irish in Middletown while simultaneously trying to control and exploit them. The same Irish workers who brought about the new industrial and urban America did not enjoy many of its benefits, as the above analysis of the relative wealth of Middletown's Irish indicates. In the popular mind, the Irish were seen as both the cause and the product of the evils of
city life—a lazy, shiftless population of laborers, with more than its proper share of drifters, unemployed, drunkards, and criminals. The Irish were also seen as members of a strange hierarchical religious institution that threatened reformist and libertarian sentiments in the United States and Europe, its members completely dominated by the whims of one man in Rome. The Irish throughout New England quickly became symbols of a new industrial economy and the targets of many who feared that new economy's societal manifestations.

One of the ways in which the Irish came to symbolize this new industrialism was through their replacement of an "amateur" Yankee working class in the Waltham system mills of Massachusetts. Although Irish factory workers were few in number in Middletown, the Irish in Lowell and Chicopee, by 1860, made up the major part of those cities' labor force. Once again, the Irish were taking jobs that others refused.

Carl Wittke writes of the infusion of Irish into the Massachusetts mills' working classes,

The percentage of Irish employed in typical New England mills rose steadily from 1830 to 1860. By 1873, the labor force in both cotton and woolen manufacturing in New England was predominantly Irish...Lowell, "the city of spindles," had its "New Dublin" and Irish "Acre" as early as 1833, with about five hundred Irish living in a hundred cabins near the canal. Fall River employed about three hundred Irish in factories and foundries by 1850. (62)

These Irish workers filled places that were being abandoned by a Yankee working class that became more and more aware of their exploitation by manufacturers. Labor leader Seth Luther would write as early as 1833,

...we assert that the great body of the inhabitants of New England, look upon employment in a cotton mill with horror and detestation, and would think it as great a misfortune as could possibly befall them, to be driven by any circumstances, to labor in these "palaces of the poor," as now conducted. (63)

Luther notes the presence of Irish workers in Lowell at this
time, writing that, "At Lowell, 72 persons (Irish) were found 'in one half of a small house.'" Such misery is directly attributable to the "Manufacturing System," according to Luther, which has caused the United States to "be deluged by the hundreds of thousands of the miserable and degraded population of Europe." (64) Luther's discourse is a forerunner of a view that was accepted by many of the Yankee female workers in these mills during the 1840's. The Lowell "factory girls" whose stories and epic poems to the Waltham system filled The Lowell Offering began to see factory work as degrading and ill-rewarding. Most particularly, they watched it become work undertaken by the "miserable and degraded population of Europe." The work that was viewed with "horror and detestation" was being done increasingly by Irish workers. Dirk. J. Struik explains the results of this shift in the composition of New England's factory workers,

When English and Irish workers came to the factories and began to replace the Yankee farm girls, some of the paternalism slackened, but the exploitation remained. Unions were and remained bitterly opposed by the corporations; black lists and other persecution of labor organizers were characteristic features of the system...Lowell became the model of industrial feudalism, based on absentee ownership. (65)

Accepting a lot that Yankee women and labor organizers decried and deserted, the Irish seemed at odds with the reformist tendencies of a generation. The more "paternalistic" aspects of the Waltham system—including the strictly-organized boarding-houses—were gone; the new Irish proletariat was not altogether different from the working class in England—a situation that the original Waltham founders had tried to avoid.

The "detestation" of factory work felt by many middle-class New Englanders, including farmers and the original Yankee operatives, was coupled with a new attitude towards industrial workers on the part of the manufacturers themselves. A combination of exploitation
and social control, not altogether different from that attempted by the Middletown upper classes, became the new reaction of these industrialists to the Irish. The new Irish workers in Chicopee, another of the Waltham cities, faced a deterioration of the boarding-house system similar to that in Lowell.

While there had been overcrowding under the early boarding-house system, at least it had been the overcrowding of persons of one sex, who had been accustomed to a fairly comfortable standard of life ... The new workers were massed together, men, women, and children. (66)

Vera Shlakman points out that these Irish workers were completely at the mercy of Chicopee's manufacturers; unlike their predecessors, they had no family farm to return to if strikes led to dismissals or if times were bad. Shlakman describes these manufacturers' attempts to "reform" their Irish employees through the temperance movement.

Temperance work took up a great deal of the time of the Chicopee zealots, a group which probably included almost every Yankee of substance and respectability. This activity began with the influx of Irish workers and the development of a permanent factory population. (67)

Thomas Bender accurately summarizes the change in ideology that had taken place among manufacturers.

The men who gradually replaced the founders as managers of the corporations also began to reappraise the relationship between industrialism and urbanism. They began to appreciate the urban setting of their factories... The founders and early spokesmen for Lowell had assured Americans that manufactures would be safe in the United States because they were dispersed through the countryside instead of being in crowded cities as in Europe. By mid century, however, American industrial promoters apparently forgot earlier American reservations about the moral and political consequences of manufacturing cities. (68)

Manufacturers, and the American people, in large part, accepted the new urbanism, with all its trappings—sporadic boom-and-bust periods of employment, a permanent proletariat, overcrowded and dilapidated housing, tedious factory work with long hours and little pay, etc.,
etc.,--now that many of those working and living in this new urban society were Irish workers who could be controlled by the mechanisms of temperance movements, the new prisons and mental asylums, and the ever-present generosity of the manufacturers themselves.

Such was the larger American context in which the experiences of the Irish in Middletown took place. To the upper classes in the United States, as in Middletown, the Irish were the cheap labor supply necessary to build the new cities and industrial centers. They were also a strange foreign group plagued by many of the problems of urban life. Unlike those who attacked the immigrants' religion, the "'better sort,'" as Edward Pessen puts it, "were more likely to condemn the new immigrants on social than religious grounds." (69)

One response to this new proletariat in America was the development of penitentiary systems. Whereas public humiliation, whipping, and brief confinement in "jail" houses not unlike the other houses of a town had been sufficient for the tightly-knit communities of colonial America, the heterogonous urban society felt it necessary to isolate prisoners from the rest of the population for long periods of time --a penalty meant to benefit both the prisoner and the rest of society. Social forces themselves were viewed as the causes for criminality, and complete isolation from a society seen as dangerous to the individual became the antidote for these products of the new cities--an antidote that remains the foundation for the prison system today. In his fascinating The Discovery of the Asylum, David J. Rothman writes,

The functioning of the penitentiary--convicts passing their sentences in physically imposing and highly regimented settings, in moving in lockstep from bare and solitary cells to workshops, clothed in common dress, and forced into standard routines--was designed to carry a message to the community. The prison would train the most notable victims of social disorder to discipline, teaching them to resist corruption. The institution would become a laboratory for social improvement. By demonstrating how regularity and
discipline transformed the most corrupt persons, it would reawaken the public to these virtues. The penitentiary would promote a new respect for order and authority. (70)

Rothman's basic thesis is that the rise of the penitentiary system during the 1830's and 1840's was a reaction to the growth of America's industrial cities. As an attempt at organizing the world outside its walls, the penitentiary represented an attack against a perceived loss of old values in the United States. It also represented a fear of and reaction to those who did not conform to those values—most particularly, the new immigrants and working classes of the city.

Middletown's upper classes found it necessary to impose a certain order upon their new proletariat and tried to do so by instilling a respect in the Irish for their employers and benefactors. When these more subtle methods of control failed, there was always the penal system. Although Middletown may have used public whippings as late as 1805 for its criminal offenders (71), and definitely felt it sufficient to have only a "small wooden structure" or a "wooden building" as its two county jails for some forty years afterwards, in 1848, a new "stone structure, 44 by 26 feet," with "twelve cells" was constructed, at the public expense, to house the city's criminal population. (72) The County Commissioners, acting upon the recommendations of Judge John G. Palmer, decided that the 1817 family house-style jail was in disrepair and inadequate to the needs of the city. (73) Such a jail was no longer desirable; instead, "it was deemed advisable, that one of the Comm. should examine the County Prisons in New London County. In the City of N.L. there had been recently built a country gaol, said to be the most durable and secure prison in the state." The new Middletown jail was based, "with some improvements," on the New London prison. (74) The new heterogeneous population in Middletown had destroyed the sense of community
and public status that had made forms of punishment such as public beatings and temporary confinement in a small house so effective. The County Commissioners felt that a stone building, distinguished from all others in Middletown by its construction materials alone, based on the "most durable and secure prison in the state," was now necessary. This is not meant to claim that the new jail was built to specifically remove the Irish alone from Middletown society. The Irish were part of a new social order, based on industry and the work of a permanent proletariat class. The Middletown prison is one example of a nation-wide response to that social order.

If this response and others by the upper classes of Middletown to the Irish closely followed that of their brethren in the rest of New England, that of other native Americans in the city did as well. Unlike the combination of exploitation and control that made up the former group's response, that of the lower and middle class native Americans was one of fear and, quite often, hatred of the Irish. From the first years of the Irish immigrants' settlement in Middletown, the local press acted as a catalogue of the mythology and the perceptions of the Irish held by these native groups. Front-page newspaper stories detailed the "typical" qualities of the Irishman—laziness, intemperance, stupidity, poverty, an almost animalistic nature, and unswerving allegiance to His Holiness. Those Americans watching the beginning of the massive Irish immigration must have worried about their new neighbors after reading *The New England Advocate* in January of 1836.

...in some parts of Ireland the inhabitants are so poor that they are compelled to bleed their cattle and eat the blood, boiled, sometimes mixed with meal, but oftener without. (75)

Another article in the same newspaper from 1834 describes the Irish farmer's inherent laziness, talking always of doing work but not
accomplishing anything. (76) Such articles became more frequent as more immigrants entered the country, unaware of the mythic properties and characteristics already assigned them by the waiting American public.

One article from The Middletown Constitution of 1844 serves as an example of the articles written about the Irish throughout this period in Middletown papers. The author and narrator relates the story of how he and his wife, upon seeing a destitute Irish family on a ship voyage, became so enchanted with one of their children that they asked the parents if they might raise him. The parents consent but, then, decide to keep switching among their children the one they will give away. The narrator and his wife, seeing only the good they are doing the family by giving them one less mouth to feed, remain astounded by the Irish parents' loyalty to each child. Eventually, the Irish father tells the unbelieving pair that he and his wife will keep all their children, saying, "'No, sir,---no, we can bear the bitterness of poverty; but we can't part from our children, unless it's the will of heaven to take them from us!'" One exchange between the Yankee couple and the Irish father is worth repeating here as an example of native perceptions of these new immigrants.

"My good friend," said the lady, "you are very poor, are you not?"

His answer was peculiarly Irish: ---Poor! Me lady, said he. Be the powers of Pewther! If there's a poorer man nor meself throoublin' the wuld, God pity both of us for we'd be about aqual.

"Then you must find it difficult to support your children," said I, making a long jump towards our object.

Is it support thun Sir? He replied, "Lord bless ye, I never supported them--they git supported somehow or another; they've niver bin hungry yit--whin they are it'll be time enough to grumble."

Irish allover, thought I--to-day has enough to do, let to-morrow look out for itself.

Well then, I resumed, with a determined plunge, "would it be a relief to you to part from one of them?"

I had mistaken my mode of attack. He started, turned pale,
and with a wild glare in his eye, literally screamed out--
"A relief! God be good to uz, what d'ye mane? A relief."--Would it be a relief d'ye think, to have the hand chopped from me body, or the heart torn out of the breast?" (77)

The popular image of the Irishman as "peculiarly Irish" is well represented in this small piece--irresponsible, irrational, overly emotional, religious in his every spoken word, speaking English with an unintelligible brogue, etc. When considered as just one of many such short articles on the Irish, it is obvious that, in Middletown, as in the rest of the United States, there existed a distinct popular conception of what it meant to be "Irish allover."

The Middletown papers served also as the vehicles for anti-Catholic and nativist sentiments during this period. Stories of Jews and Catholics and their conversions to Protestantism abounded, as did criticism of the Pope and the rigid structure of the Catholic Church. The Sentinel in Middletown favorably reviewed The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, a confessional "account" of the lascivious goings-on between a Catholic monastery and convent, that may have been written by Hartford's Theodore Dwight. (78) Dwight did compose at least one poem warning native Americans of the increasing influence of Catholicism.

"If things are not checked the tide will soon change,
and introduce habits so strange--so strange;
Soon the world will all read, and what's worse, will all pray--
The Pope and the Priest, by each arrogant elf
Will all be seen thro', and laid on the shelf.
What a display!
The Bible plot brewing
Will drive us to ruin.
Oh Dear." (79)

Irish immigrants were viewed, with their "habits so strange," as part of a "plot" by a good many Americans, including those members of the Native American Party and the more nativist elements of the Whig party in Connecticut.
Although Shannon writes, and with some evidence, that anti-Catholicism "was probably an available, respectable pretext" for native workers and members of the middle class, while the "Irish workingman in the next block and not the Pope in Rome was the real enemy," it is impossible to discount the real fear and antipathy that many felt towards the Church and the Pope himself. (41) The Reverend Doctor Horace Bushnell of Hartford, noted for his sermons against Catholicism, felt it necessary to write to Pope Gregory XVI in April of 1846, asking Gregory to step down and denounce the Catholic faith. (81) Although Gregory died two months later, of unrelated causes, Bushnell's letter seems, at best, a symbolic gesture. Still, nativism was a movement against Catholics as much as it was one against the Irish and other immigrants. Orestes Brownson stressed the importance of anti-Catholicism in nativism, when he wrote in 1845,

"The Native American party is not a party against admitting foreigners to the rights of citizenship, but simply against admitting a certain class of foreigners...It is really opposed only to Catholic foreigners. The party is truly an anti-Catholic party, and is opposed chiefly to the Irish...If they were Protestants, if they could mingle with the native population and lose themselves in our Protestant Church, very little opposition would be manifested to their immigration or to their naturalization." (82)

Brownson's statement is crucial to an understanding of the experiences of the Irish in Middletown between 1830 and 1860.

"If they were Protestants, if they could mingle with the native population and lose themselves in our Protestant Church," all would be different. The Irish were not Protestants, they did not mingle, and they refused to lose themselves in Yankee Anglo-Saxon culture. These facts explain the forced and voluntary segregation of the Middletown Irish in settlement, their determined attachment to the Catholic Church, their ability to achieve only the lowliest and most difficult jobs, and their confused social status as both
harbingers and feared social deviants of the new industrialism. Manipulated and "reformed" by the upper classes, feared and ridiculed by other non-Irish citizens, the Irish created a separate Irish Catholic working class community in Middletown.

Perhaps the most revealing of the newspaper responses to the Middletown Irish—in terms of the conditions of life for the Irish and the non-Irish population's lack of understanding of those conditions—can be found in two articles in the February 2nd, 1844 issue of The Constitution. The first details the "Sad Story" of an Irish orphan, forced to sell the "penny papers" and live in a lumber yard, who was discovered nearly frozen to death the previous morning. The other is a plea for the poor, presented by the editors of this Whig newspaper, which suggests cautiously that "no doubt there are some even in the city of Middletown" who were poverty-stricken. The editors were either not reading their own articles or not noticing that, even in Middletown, a large Irish population occupied the lowest strata of urban life.
Notes

(2) Ibid., p. 38.
(3) Ibid., p. 31.
(4) Ibid., p. 39.
(5) Ibid.
(6) as quoted by Handlin, p. 51.
(12) *Centennial Booklet and Program of Exercises*, p. 20.
(13) Ibid., pp. 20-21.
(15) Ibid., p. 127.
(16) *The Constitution* (Middletown), March 27, 1844, p. 2.
(20) Ibid.
(21) *History of Middlesex County*, p. 517.
(22) "Life and Death of a Major Industry: Portland's Brownstone Quarries," *The Middletown Press*, August 1, 1975, pp. 4-5.
(23) *History of Middlesex County*, p. 519.
(27) Ibid.
(28) Ibid.
(31) as quoted by Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants*, pp. 71-72.
(33) Donahoe, "St. John's Church R.C.,", p. 145.
Notes (cont.)


(37) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(38) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(39) *Boston's Immigrants*, pp. 60-61.

(40) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(41) Ibid.

(42) *Boston's Immigrants*, p. 62.

(43) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(44) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(45) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(46) Ibid.

(47) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(48) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(49) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(50) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(51) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(52) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(53) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(54) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(55) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(56) Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(57) Ibid.

(58) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850 and Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, City of Middletown.

(59) *Boston's Immigrants*, p. 67.

(60) Ibid., p. 69.

(61) Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, City of Middletown.

(62) *The Irish in America*, p. 28.


(64) Ibid., p. 14.


(66) "Economic History of a Factory Town: A Study of Chicopee, Massachusetts," pp. 139-140.

(67) Ibid., p. 96.


(71) *History of Middlesex County*, p. 86.

(72) Ibid., p. 87.

(73) Report of John G. Palmer, Judge, Middlesex County (October 6, 1846), Connecticut State Archives in Hartford.

(74) Report of the County Commissioners, Middlesex County (Chatham: August 2, 1849), Connecticut State Archives in Hartford.


(76) Ibid., September 3, 1834.

(77) *The Constitution*, April 24, 1844.

(78) *The Sentinel and Witness* (Middletown), January 29, 1836.


(80) *The American Irish*, p. 41.


(82) As quoted by Noonan, p. 117.

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Census Records, Archives Material, etc.


Data on the birthplaces of Middletown's Irish during this period was recorded from tombstones in the cemetery of St. John's Church, Middletown, Connecticut.