

O'Neill

Patrick H. O'Neill, the founder of the O'Neill Hayes Funeral Home on Spring Street was the son of John O'Neill, a native of Dingle, County Kerry, Ireland. John emigrated to the United States in 1847 at the age of twenty one and came to Newport in 1852. When he died at age eighty-four in 1910, he was one of the oldest and most respected citizens of the Fifth Ward.

Patrick H. O'Neill, one of John's seven children, spent his entire life here in Newport. When a young man he worked in the carpenter's trade and later worked for the postal services as a railway mail clerk. In 1889, he established himself as a furnishing undertaker and embalmer at 463 Spring Street. He and his wife Ellen Brady had six daughters.

Patrick O'Neill died in 1920 and management of the successful funeral home passed to Mr. Joseph A. Nolan, a son-in-law. Mr. Nolan directed the Funeral Home for over forty years.

Mr. Nolan was succeeded as Funeral Director by his nephew John F. Hayes, Jr., son of Anna O'Neill and John F. Hayes. At the present time the business is being managed by Charles Hayes, son of John F. Hayes.

For almost one hundred years, this well known business has been managed by descendants of an Irish immigrant. Charles Hayes is a member of the fifth generation of an Irish-American family operating a business begun in the nineteenth century.