

the Cain Family

Winifred CONNELLY.^{7,8} (see *The Connelly Family*) She had also been born in Ireland⁹ and arrived in America about 1847¹⁰ with her parents Dennis and Winifred Connelly.¹¹ They were married seven months before their first child John was born (1 November 1852)^{12,13} and by 1860 they had had 5 more children (Sarah, Winifred, Dennis Edward and Julia, who might have been twins, and Amy) and were living in Warwick. Sometime in early 1860 John, Sarah, Winifred and Julia went out west to Chilton, Calumet County, Wisconsin¹⁴ to live with their mother's parents who had settled on a farm there in the early 1850s. Amy and Dennis had stayed home in Rhode Island with their parents.¹⁵ At this time Martin was working as an operative,¹⁶ and the family was probably living in a mill village in Centerville.

It is possible that the Cains were sending their children out to Winifred's parents in Wisconsin so they could receive a better education. Many Rhode Islands mill schools were of poor quality at this time. Factory owners considered them to be a waste of money since the children in the mill villages were suppose to be working in the mills helping to make the owners and stockholders rich, not in schools wasting their time with book learning. Many parents also held the same view at the time, but for them it was a matter of necessity that their children work to help support the family.

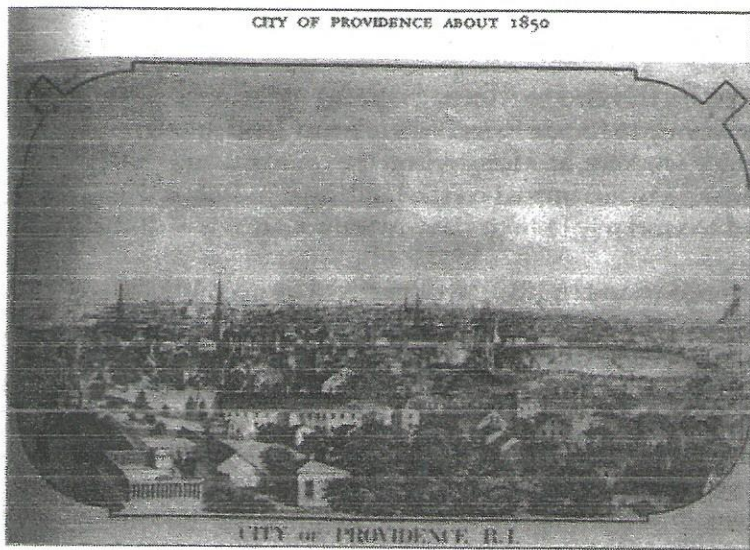
While Martin worked his long days in the factory Winifred stayed home and raised the children. Like most of the other women in the neighborhood their home probably would have been a one-story, four-room 'house', lit by kerosene lamps and heated by open fireplaces. She would have drawn water from a common well or pump several times a day for cleaning, drinking, and cooking. Privy's were a communal affair and plumbing of any kind did not exist in any of the homes. There were some social activities and organizations offered by the factory owners, but these were merely attempts to keep the workers and families quiet and happy, less likely to go work for someone else or cause problems, like strikes. The workers often created their own entertainment and social clubs, such as sewing clubs for the women.

Martin and Winifred had two more children after Amy, James, who did not survive to see two years of age dying in January of 1863,¹⁷ and their last child, who remained unnamed and died along with Winifred due to complications during childbirth on July 12, 1863 in Centerville They were both buried in the St. Mary's cemetery in West Warwick in unmarked graves.¹⁸

After the death of his wife it must have been difficult for Martin to suddenly be responsible for all of these young children and still need to go out and earn a living. Especially at this time, as it was right in the middle of the Civil War which was having a definite impact on Rhode Island. The war was disrupting the flow of raw goods to the factories that needed them to produce products to sell. A few of Winifred's relatives were still in Rhode Island and might have been able to help Martin. No doubt the other women in the neighborhood would have also lent a hand until his second marriage a little over a year later on 5 September 1864²⁰ to Bridget Nolan. She was the daughter of John and Ann Nolan of Kent and about three years older than Martin.

There is currently no evidence that Martin enlisted in any of the Rhode Island regiments during the war. It is possible that like many of his fellow Irish countrymen Martin was resentful of the fact that the Irish needed to be land owners to vote while blacks were not subjected to the same discrimination; that same resentment left little sympathy for the freed slaves who could become their rivals for the low paying jobs that were prevalent in the factories. But then again, maybe he just didn't care, as we can find no evidence that Martin made any attempt to become a naturalized citizen in Rhode Island, which he would have had to do in order to cast his ballot at the polls. It is indicated in the 1875 state census that he was a voter.²¹ Illegally?

Eventually Martin and Bridget had at least two children of their own: Thomas²² and Martin,



Picture illustration from a Rhode Island history book.¹⁹