

Island Annex

Architects

H

WFW

WW

DN

JL

EW

EK

JB

AS

JG

CB

GM

JP

SB

JF

Common Burying Ground

AM

ENTER

Island Cemetery Newport Rhode Island

Architects and Real Estate Tycoons Tour

The word architect comes from the Greek and means “chief carpenter.” Prior to the middle of the 19th century, America had no architects as we think of the term today. The earliest men who erected buildings simply copied or adapted the plans or drawings of others.

In Newport, Richard Munday, who is credited with the building of the Colony House and Trinity Church, actually used the plans of Christopher Wren, who designed the buildings for London after the Great Fire of 1666.

A few years later, Peter Harrison, who built the Redwood Library, Touro Synagogue and Brick Market, adapted his plans from his vast library of architectural books, many of them with the designs of Italian architect Andrea Palladio.

In fact, most of the men we think of as the architects of the buildings in Newport prior to 1860 were master builders and stone masons.

Joe Bailey (November 11, 1802-January 19, 1877) at map location JB

Joe Bailey was member of a family that owned acreage in Newport for multiple generations. He is listed as a farmer in the 1850 census, a merchant in 1860 and a retired merchant in 1870. He was involved in buying and selling properties with Alfred Smith. Joe Bailey and his family lived at 20 Kay Streetⁱ.

Charles Lovatt Bevins (1844-1925) at map location CB

Bevins was born in England and emigrated to the United States in 1878. He initially worked for Peabody and Sterns in Boston but relocated to Newport where he opened an office. He became the architect of choice for wealthy Philadelphia Quakers building summer homes in Jamestownⁱⁱ. His most notable project, known as Horsehead, was built for industrialist Joseph Wharton.



-Seth Bradford (1801-1878) at map location SB

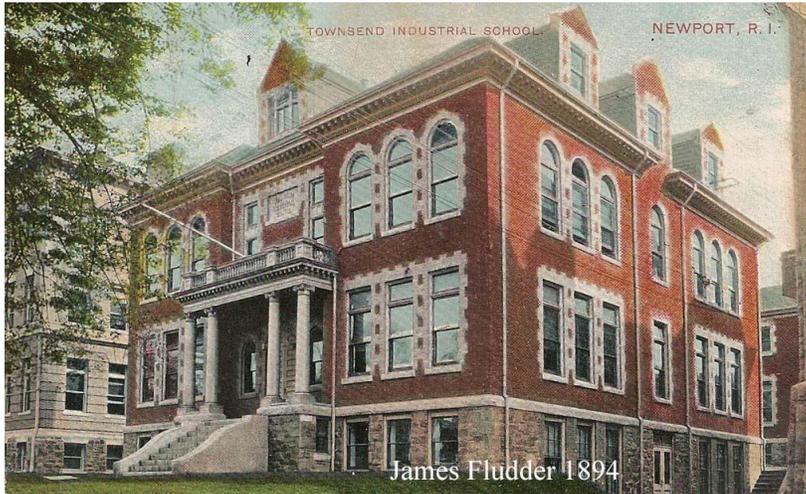
Seth Bradford was born in either Rhode Island or Massachusetts, as his place of birth is noted on different US censuses. His first son Joseph was born in 1830 in Massachusetts, but his second son Augustus was born in Newport in 1837. The Newport City Directory lists his occupation as a carpenter between 1847 and 1859.

His existing structures are mostly in stone and the oldest one, Rockry Hall on Bellevue Ave, was designed for Albert Sumner in the Gothic Revival style. From 1851 to 1853 he built a cottage for Mary Bruen at Howe Avenue near Bellevue, but more importantly, he completed Chateau-sur-Mer for William S. Wetmore. The structure, featuring Fall River granite, was altered between 1869 and 1880 by Richard Morris Hunt for George Peabody Wetmore. Bradford's buildings altered by later owners using other architects include Fairlawn built in 1852 for Levi Morton, and Belair built in 1850 on Old Beach Road. Porter Villa, built in 1856 at 23 Greenough Place, is relatively unaltered as is the Izard Cottage (1850) at 10 Pell Street.



James C Fludder (1847-1901) at map location JF

James Fludder was born in Newport to a stone mason from England.ⁱⁱⁱ After high school, he chose to become an architect and studied the subject in the practice of George Champlin Mason.^{iv} After completing his work with Mason, he studied further with Henry Hobson Richardson in Boston before returning to Newport to open an office of his own at the corner of Bellevue and Catharine streets across the street from the Viking.^v The Fludder building is now a boutique hotel called the Inn on Bellevue. In addition to a few houses in the Kay-Catherine neighborhood, he designed a number of buildings for the City of Newport including fire station #2 on Young Street (1877), the Lenthal School on Spring Street (1886), and the Townsend Industrial School (1893-94) near Newport City Hall. His last project, the Carey School, was completed after his death in 1901 at the age of 54.^{vi}



John Noble Alsop Griswold (1822-1909) at map location JG

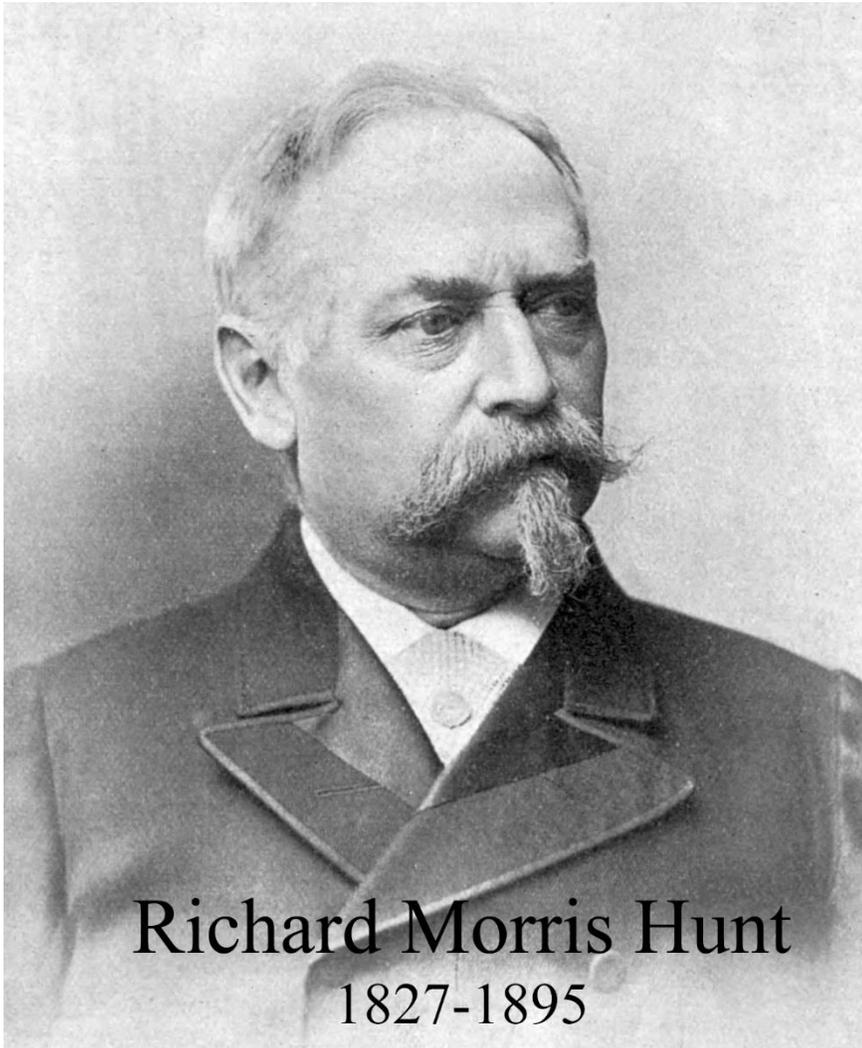
J.N.A. Griswold made his fortune in the China Trade between 1847 and 1854 when he was a partner in Russell and company, the largest American company shipping goods to and from China. When Griswold returned to the United States, he invested his money in railroads and real estate in New York City.^{vii}

In 1860 while on his honeymoon, he and his bride met with Richard Morris Hunt and sked him to build them a house in Newport. Griswold's house, completed in 1864, was Hunt's first Newport commission.^{viii}

According to Newport property records and the *Newport Mercury*, between 1860 and 1878, Griswold was involved in at least 60 instances of buying and selling property, mainly on or near Bellevue Avenue as well as along Ocean Drive.



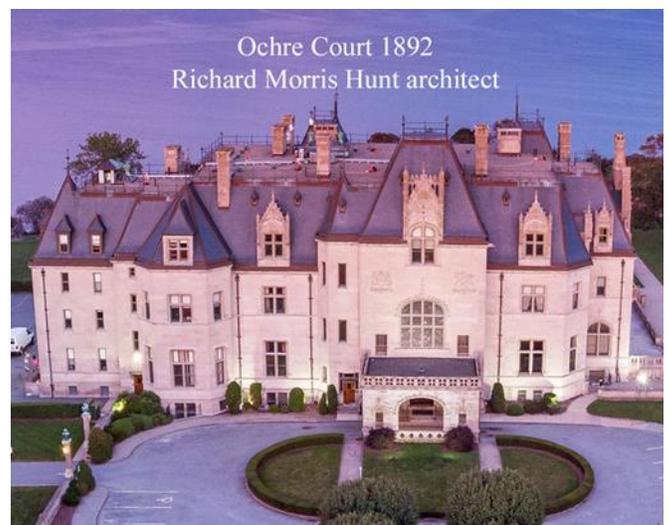
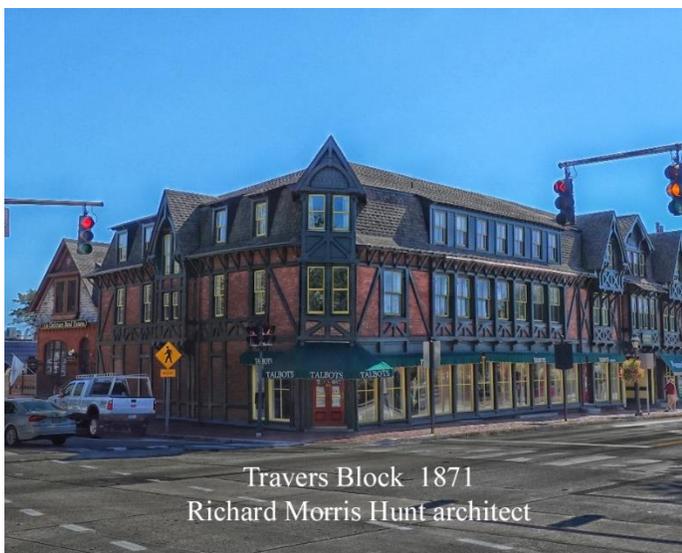
Richard Morris Hunt (October 31, 1827-July 31, 1895) at map location H



Richard Morris Hunt was born in Brattleboro, Vermont to a prominent family. His father Jonathan died while serving as United States Congressman in 1832, and in 1843 Richard's mother Jane moved the family to Europe. Richard enrolled in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts school of architecture in 1846 and was involved with the construction of the Louvre Museum. Upon his return to the United States in 1856, he worked with Thomas Usted Walters in the construction of the United States Capitol Building. He was a founding member of the American Institute of Architects, introduced the atelier system in America, trained other notable architects and designed a large number of cherished buildings. Hunt was America's best architect.

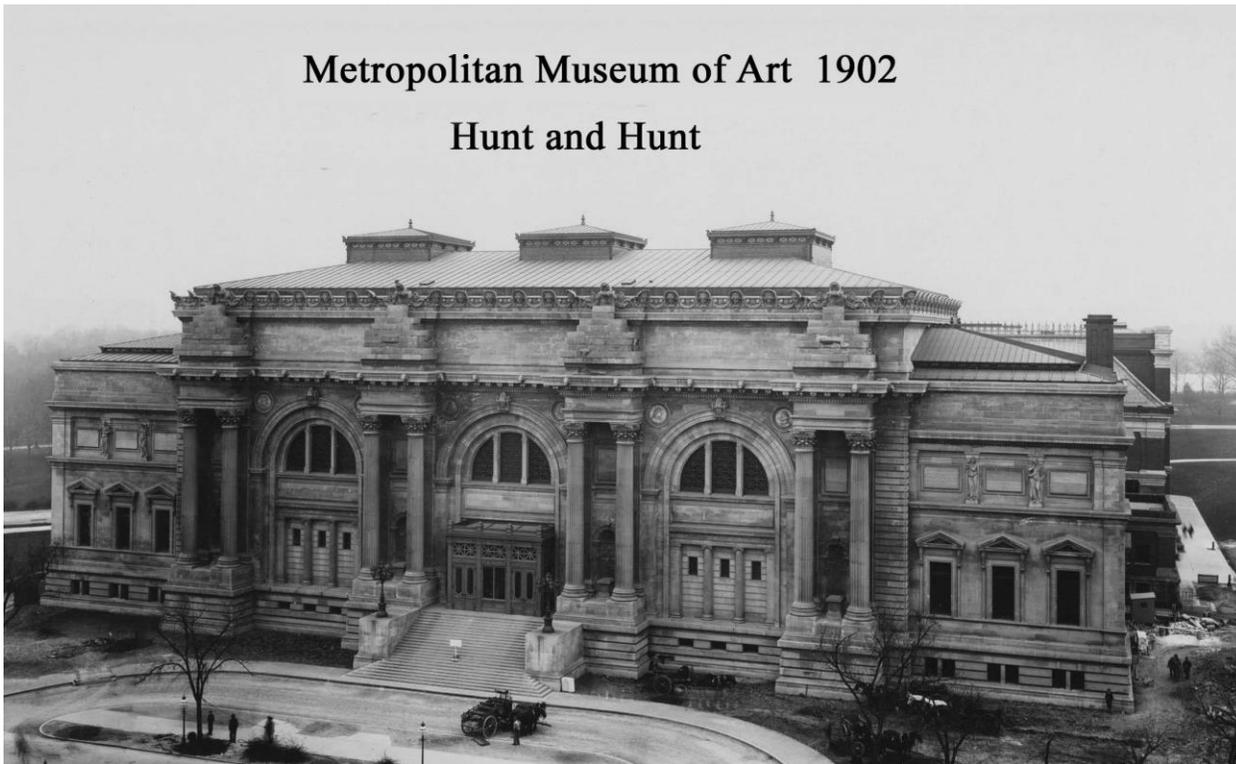
Hunt designed about 40 buildings in the city with the Travers Block, Marble House, Belcourt, Ochre Court and the Beakers, the most notable. He also designed the base of the statue erected in Touro Park for Matthew C. Perry.

The most complete biography of Richard Morris Hunt was written by Paul R. Baker and published in 1986.



Richard Howland Hunt (March 14, 1862-July 12, 1931) at map location H

Richard Howland Hunt, son of Richard Morris Hunt, was born in Paris, graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. He worked with his father and served as the president of the Architecture League and the AIA in New York City^x. Following the death of his father, he and his brother, **Joseph Howland Hunt (March 6, 1870-October 11, 1924)**, continued the family firm under the name of Hunt and Hunt. The most notable project they completed was the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1902. Their Newport project was the Chinese Tea House (1912-1914) for Alva Vanderbilt Belmont on the Marble House property. The firm also added a bedroom to Belcourt for Mrs. Belmont.^x



Edward King (1815-1875) at map location EK



EDWARD KING 1815-1875
(From the Portrait by Jalabert in the possession of Mrs. G. G. King.)

Edward King was the third of four sons born to Dr. David King and Ann Gordon King in Newport. He was educated at Brown University and went on to become a partner in Russell and Sons, the largest firm in the China Trade. At that time large shippers like Russell and Company brought tea and silks which commanded high prices when sold in the United States.

King became a supervisor of cargo on a ship taking a number of trips to Canton, and each trip took eighteen months. The work was grueling while in Canton but paid so well that the men who functioned as supervisors of cargo could retire by the age of 30 having made a fortune.^{xi}

In a truly prophetic letter from Canton to his family in Newport, Edward King wrote:

“I am of the opinion that real estate in Newport will increase in value considerably in the course of a few years, and, if I were Papa, I would not sell my land except at a good price at present. Strangers will build cottages, and if factories succeed considerable addition to the population will take place. The government will no doubt in a few years have a navy yard there; perhaps not a large one at first but by degrees it will be

extended...before this can come to pass, business must thrive and commerce must flourish, her wharves must be crowded with merchandise and her harbour with vessels...”^{xii}

King retired in 1842 when he was just 29 and had amassed a fortune close to today’s equivalent of \$10 million. He hired Richard Upjohn to build his Italianate mansion on a hillside along Bowery Street with a fine view of the harbor. This was the first but certainly not the last Italianate structure built in Newport and replaced the previously popular gothic style country house.^{xiii}

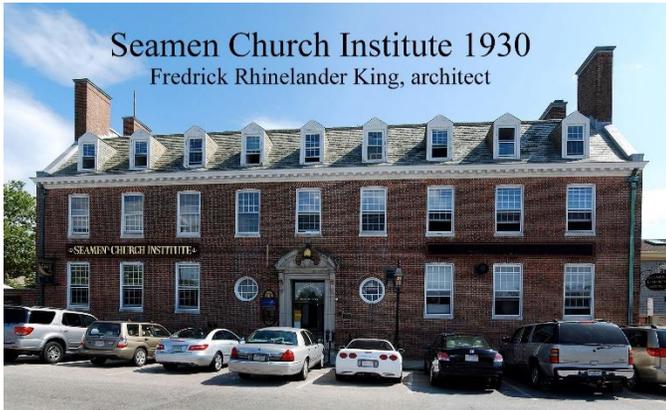
King invested heavily in real estate in Newport and was a business partner of Alfred Smith when Smith needed capital to expand Bellevue Avenue south.^{xiv} Between 1844 and his death in 1875, King was involved in about 180 real estate transactions in the city of Newport, many with his fellow Newporter, JNA Griswold.

King died at the age of 60 in 1875 leaving his family well-provided for. The house remained in the family until 1912 when the family gifted the mansion to the city. It was used as the Newport Library until 1968 when it became the city’s senior center.



Frederick Rhinelander King (April 13, 1887 – March 20, 1972) at map location EK

The grandson of Edward King was born in Newport at his parents' home at Bellevue and Berkeley Avenues. He attended St. Georges and then Harvard, Columbia University School of Architecture and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He



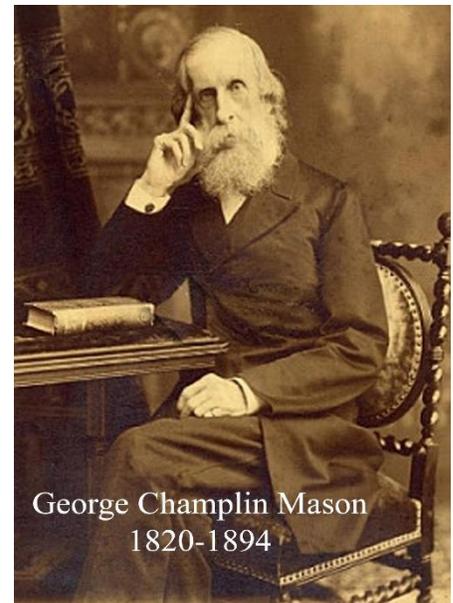
interned with McKim, Meade and White until 1918 when he joined the war effort and worked for Army Intelligence. When he returned to the United States, he interned with Carrere and Hastings before going out on his own.^{xv} Most of his early commissions were for family members, but in 1928, Edith Wetmore hired him to design a garden house for her at Chateau-sur-Mer. The following year she hired him to design the Seaman's Church Institute. King's final Newport commission was Honyman Hall in 1955 for Trinity Church. King also designed Sea Cliff at 562 Bellevue Avenue,^{xvi} which was purchased most recently by Larry Ellison for \$11 million.

John G. Ladd (1807-1890) at map location JL

The earliest known project for Ladd was the Greek Revival designed structure for Capt. Littlefield on Pelham Street in 1836. With its Egyptian themed columns, it has a striking presence on the street even to this day and is best known as the home of Rhode Island Governor Charles van Zandt. He is credited with designing 12 Catherine Street^{xvii}. The 1850 US census describes Ladd as a carpenter but in 1860 he was identified as an architect. City directories list Ladd as an architect in starting in the 1850s and later ones indicate his home, Ladd Villa, on Bath Road (currently Memorial Blvd.) near Middleton Ave. His obituary^{xviii} states he designed or built the best of the older summer cottages.

George Champlin Mason (1820-1894) at map location GM

George C. Mason was born and raised in Newport. By 1835 he was selling dry goods in New York city^{xix} but by 1844 left for Europe to improve his health^{xx}. While in Rome, Florence, and Paris, Mason trained as an artist and when he returned to Newport, he considered himself a landscape painter. He married in 1858 and is listed as a portrait painter in the 1850's census. In addition to painting, the 1856 city directory states that Mason is also a drawing teacher and became the editor and publisher of the *Newport Mercury* that year. The first mention of his career as an architect is 1858,^{xxi} but the 1860 US Census lists him as a real estate agent. His first architectural project, By-the-Sea for August Belmont, dates to 1860 as well as Chepstow, Starboard House, Gravel Court, and Narragansett Hall (all on Narragansett Avenue). These projects confirm 1860 as the start of his career as an architect. While the Belmont structure no longer exists, the ones along Narragansett Avenue provide wonderful examples of Mason's designs. His structures are often Italianate boxes with mansard roof lines. By the end of his life, Mason is credited in designing more than 60 buildings^{xxii}, many with his son. George Champlin Mason, Jr. joined his father as an architect in 1867 and the firm was renamed George Champlin Mason and Son in 1871. His best-known buildings that stand today include those on Narragansett Ave as well as the Eisenhower House at Fort Adams and his home on Sunnyside Place. The last project completed was the 1886 chapel in Island cemetery for the Belmont family. In



addition to designing buildings, Mason trained younger aspiring architects in his office, the most notable being his son, George Champlin Mason Jr. and Dudley Newton.

Mason's contributions to Newport were larger than the buildings he designed. In addition to serving as editor of the *Newport Mercury* (1851-1858) he was also a founding member of the Newport Historical Society in 1854, a trustee of the Newport Hospital beginning in 1873, a director of the Redwood library for 30 years^{xxiii}, and an involved member of Trinity Church. He published *Newport and Its Environs* (1848) which featured 11 engravings of his landscape views of Newport. This is considered one of the earliest books about Newport to showcase its potential as a vacation destination. Mason also published *The Annals of Trinity Church: Newport, Rhode Island, 1698-1821* (1890), *Newport*



Eisenhower House 1874

George Champlin Mason architect



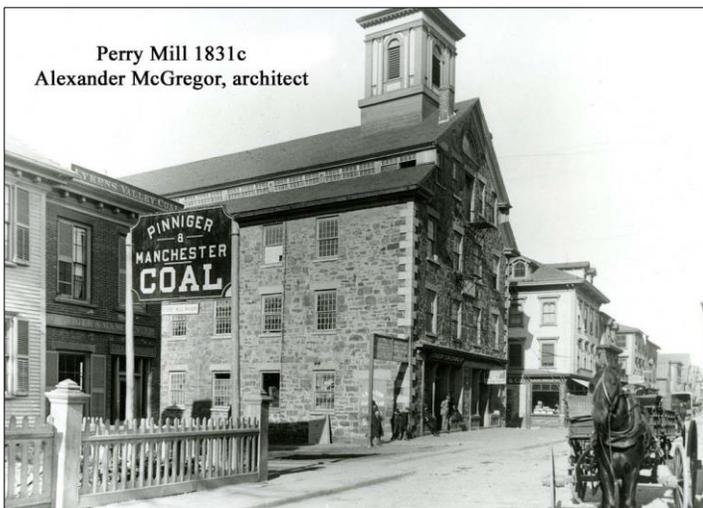
Sunnyside 1874

George Champlin Mason architect

Illustrated (1891), and was working on a history of the Newport Artillery Company when he died in 1894.

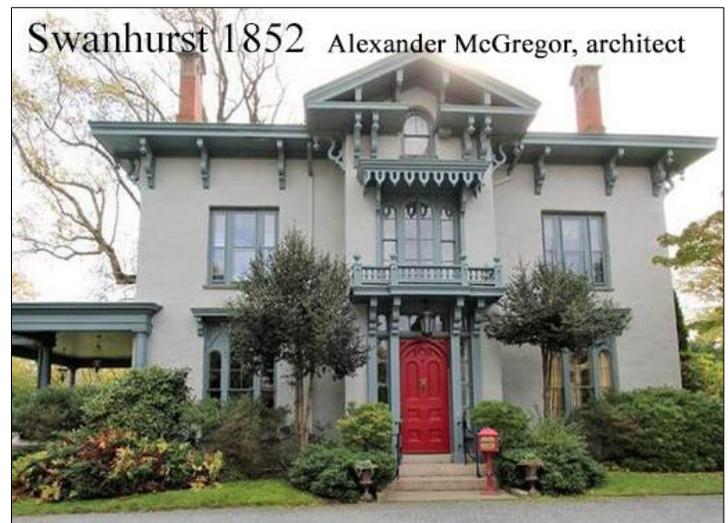
Alexander McGregor (1796-1870) at map location AM

One of the earliest builders of 19th century structures in Newport was Alexander McGregor, a stone mason by trade. He was born in Scotland in 1796 and immigrated to the United States about 1825. In 1826, he married Newporter Mary Gray.^{xxiv} His first job was overseeing the construction of Fort Adams. He went on to build what we know now as Perry Mill (1831) at the intersection of Thames, America's Cup Avenue and Memorial Blvd. A few years after that McGregor built the Armory of the Newport Artillery Company on Clarke Street. He also erected stone walls throughout Newport and built the first breakwater on the north end of Goat Island.^{xxv}



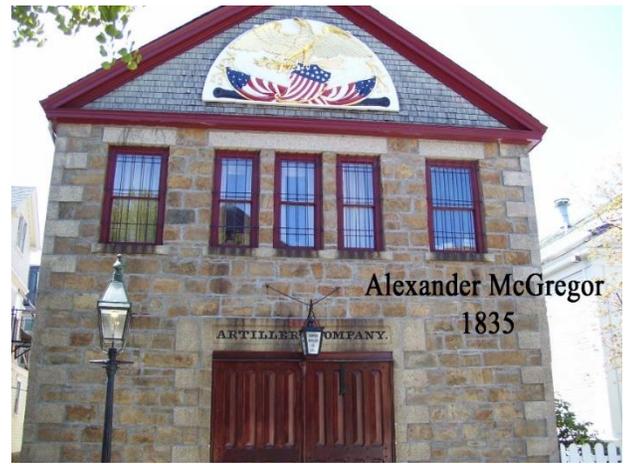
Perry Mill 1831c

Alexander McGregor, architect



Swanhurst 1852 Alexander McGregor, architect

In the 1840's and beyond, he turned his attention to constructing homes in the predominant style of the time, Italianate. His first residence of record was Stone Villa (1845). McGregor lived in the house with his family until 1850, when he sold it to Henry Middleton of Charleston, SC. It was subsequently owned by, among others, James Gordon Bennett, publisher of the *New York Herald*, and later New York politician, William F. Whitehouse. In 1957 Whitehouse heirs sold it to a developer, who tore it down and erected the Bellevue Shopping Center.^{xxvi}

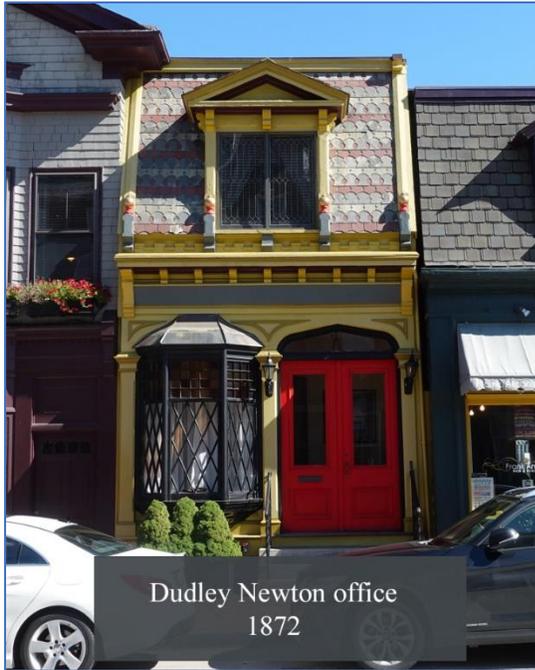


Prior to leaving Stone Villa, McGregor built a house for himself at the corner of Thomas and John Streets in 1850.^{xxvii} The following year McGregor built a house at 441 Bellevue Avenue for Judge Swan of Ohio.^{xxviii} Then he built Lansmere on Webster Street for the Eliots of Boston, and later Stoneleigh at Narragansett and Spring Streets.^{xxix} All those houses still exist in their original locations.

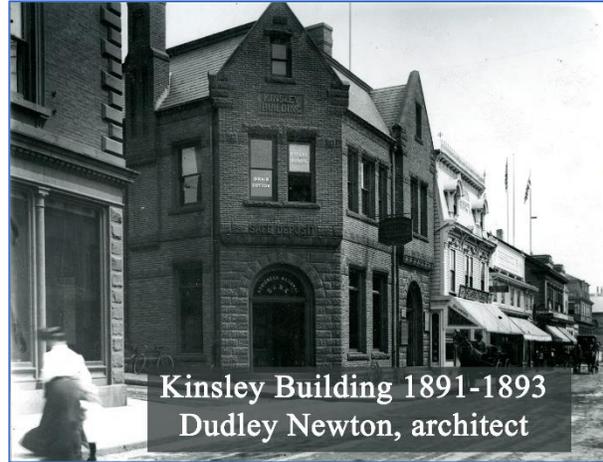
Dudley Newton (January 4, 1845-March 28, 1907) at map location DN



Dudley Newton was born in Newport. His father James was a doctor who purchased the Malbone house on Thames Street in 1844. Newton grew up in Newport and trained to be an architect under George Champlin Mason. His first known project (1865) was a church at the corner of Thames Street and Brewer Street, near the Newton home. In 1870, Newton created an office for his father that stands south of the Malbone house on Thames Street. His practice flourished in the 1870s and projects included his office at 20 Bellevue Avenue. Many of his residential designs exhibit stick style elements with mansard roof lines. The King-Birkhead house at 20 Catherine Street is an excellent example of this design. Newton's projects indicate he was talented in a number of architectural styles. The 1882 Weld house on Bellevue Ave exhibits Dutch or Flemish elements, and Wakehurst (1888) is a wonderful English architectural style structure. Newton also undertook commercial projects. One of note was the Kinsley Building on Thames Street built in the Romanesque Revival style. Newton's son, Dudley Newton Jr. would join his father in the architectural firm in Newport, but the family left the city after the death of Newton in 1907^{xxx}.



Dudley Newton office
1872



Kinsley Building 1891-1893
Dudley Newton, architect

Job Almy Peckham (1807-1885) at map location JP

Peckham owned a lumber yard in Newport and built Italianate style homes in Newport^{xxxi}. Some of his work stands today on Kay Street- house 28, 30, and 33 (his home).

Alfred Smith (1809-1886) at map location AS



Alfred Smith was born in Middletown Rhode Island^{xxxii}. He trained to tailor men's clothing in Newport with Isaac Gould^{xxxiii} and moved to New York city to earn his living. One of his wealthy New York clients was interested in purchasing a property in Newport and asked Smith to make the purchase when he next visited his family. Realizing that real estate might be a more lucrative occupation, Smith left New York and returned to Newport in 1839^{xxxiv} to start his new career. Six years later he formed a partnership and developed the Kay-Catherine Street neighborhood. Smith had the vision to divide the land into building lots and create attractively landscaped streets and avenues to encourage potential customers. In 1852 he teamed with Joseph Bailey and purchased 140 acres of land south of Dixon's Lane to Bailey's Beach. City Council approved the construction of a fine road connecting the site to the Kay-Catherine neighborhood, and Bellevue Avenue, as we know it today, was born. Smith was also a major force in building Ocean Drive to connect Bellevue Avenue to the downtown area. By the end of his life, Smith was a wealthy man who handled real estate transactions, mortgages, and rentals.

Jeffrey Ladd Staats (1947-) at map location JS

What's unique about this gravesite is that at the time this is being written, Staats is not yet dead. He is noted because of his architectural contributions to Newport, the fact that his gravestone exists and identifies him as an architect, and his current age. His projects include "Three Little Sisters", three boathouse-looking structures on Wellington Avenue across from King Park (1985c), and Wellington Square, a mixed-use development located where Thames and Wellington Avenue meet. The Mary Street bathroom, restoration work at Cardines Field and the restoration of the Chinese Tea House at Marble House are some of his other projects.^{xxxv}

Whitney Warren (1864-1943) at map location WW2



Whitney Warren was born in New York City, educated as an architect at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and worked mainly in New York. His projects included hotels and Grand Central Station. As a cousin to the Goelets and Vanderbilts, he had a connection to Newport, and in 1894 designed the Newport Country Club, the site of the first US Open in 1895.

Newport Country Club 1894

Whitney Warren architect

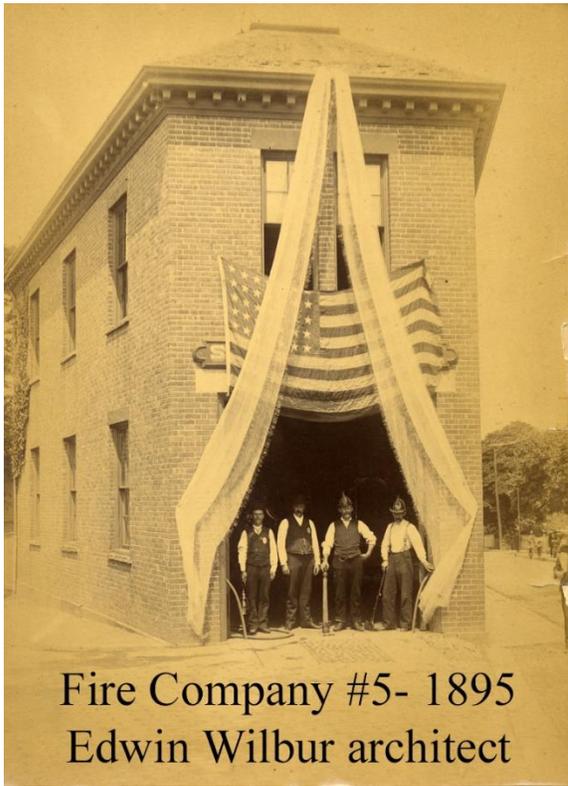
William F Wilbor (1836-1904) at map location WFW

Wilbor was a carpenter and builder in Newport. For many years he was associated with Phillip Simmons and later Frank Manchester. Houses at 7 and 9 Rhode Island Avenue. were two of his projects as well as the Calvert-Cranston school. He served as a city councilman for eight years.

Edwin Wilbur- (1867-1943) at map location EW

Born and raised in Newport, Wilbur went on to study architecture at MIT and then began his practice in Newport. He designed and supervised the building of the Newport Guard Armory Building on Thames Street,^{xxxvi} Engine Co. #5 on Touro Street,^{xxxvii} and the receiving vault at Island Cemetery.^{xxxviii} He spent the rest and the majority of his career in New York City and died at the age of 76 in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. He was brought back to Newport for burial.





Fire Company #5- 1895
Edwin Wilbur architect

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- ⁱ *Newport City Directory* 1870, 1865. Accessed on Ancestry.com.
- ⁱⁱ "Jamestown Plans" *Newport Mercury* (30 June 1888), 1.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Ancestry.com.
- ^{iv} James Yarnall *Newport through its Architecture: A History of Styles from Postmedieval to Postmodern* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2005), 67.
- ^v "Death of a Well-Known Architect and Citizen," *Newport Daily News* (9 October 1901).
- ^{vi} Yarnall, 202.
- ^{vii} Application for National Landmark Status for "GRISWOLD, JOHN N.A., HOUSE." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2011. [Http://npgallery.nps.gov](http://npgallery.nps.gov).
- ^{viii} Baker, 128.
- ^{ix} "Richard H. Hunt, New York, Dies", *The Brattleboro Reformer* (14 July 1931), 1.
- ^x Michael C. Kathrins, *Newport Villas* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2009), 95.
- ^{xi} Yarnall, 50-51.
- ^{xii} *Journal and Letters of Edward King 1835-1844*. Ed. Ethel King Russell. (New York, 1934), 82-83.
- ^{xiii} Yarnall, 50.
- ^{xiv} Stensrud, 315-316.
- ^{xv} "Frederick Rhineland King" obituary, *New York Times*, (22 March 1972), 50.
- ^{xvi} Yarnell, 206.
- ^{xvii} Kay Street-Catherine Street-Old Beach Road Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/national_pdfs/newport/newp_kay-catherine-old-beach-rd-hd_text.pdf.
- ^{xviii} "Death of John G Ladd" *Newport Mercury* (15 November 1890), 1.
- ^{xix} "George Champlin Mason," *Biographies of Notable Americans, 1904*. Ancestry.com.
- ^{xx} US passport issued. Ancestry.com
- ^{xxi} "George Champlin Mason," *Biographies of Notable Americans, 1904*. Ancestry.com.
- ^{xxii} Yarnall, 208-209.
- ^{xxiii} "George Champlin Mason," *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography, 1600-1889*. Ancestry.com.
- ^{xxiv} Yarnall, 291.
- ^{xxv} Onorato, *AIA Guide to Newport*, 291.
- ^{xxvi} Miller, *Lost Newport* (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 2008), 49.
- ^{xxvii} Onorato, *AIA Guide to Newport*, 138.
- ^{xxviii} Miller, 54-55.
- ^{xxix} James F. O'Gorman, *Accomplished in All Departments of Art—Hammat Billings of Boston 1818-1874* (Boston, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998), 113.
- ^{xxx} "Dudley Newton, Jr., 67 Dies in Sacramento", *Newport Mercury* (30 April 1948), 3.
- ^{xxxi} Yarnell, 58.
- ^{xxxii} "Death of a Millionaire.: Alfred Smith, Newport's Big Real Estate Agent, Dies Suddenly." *New York Times* (27 October 1886), 8.
- ^{xxxiii} Ibid.
- ^{xxxiv} Yarnell, 49.
- ^{xxxv} "Jeffrey Staats." [Http://jeffreystaatsarchitect.com/](http://jeffreystaatsarchitect.com/)
- ^{xxxvi} "Edwin Wilbur obituary," *Newport Daily News* (29 March 1943), 7.
- ^{xxxvii} "The City of Newport Proposal for New Engine Company," *Newport Mercury* (9 March 1895), 4.
- ^{xxxviii} Common Burying Ground- Island Cemetery Register for Historic Places application. https://preservation.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur406/files/pdfs_zips_downloads/national_pdfs/newport/newp_farewell-street_common-burying-ground-and-island-cemetery.pdf.