

A PRELIMINARY OVERVIEW OF INTER-CENSAL CHANGES,  
KINSALE TOWN, 1901-11

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Change or development through time has been one of the central concerns of Geography from before its institutionalised beginnings right to the present. This issue of change is particularly relevant for Historical Geography, whether in relation to the evolution of a specific theme, or to spatial patterns. This element of dynamism is important not only for the phenomena under investigation (pattern), but also for the underlying reasons for change (process). These interlocking areas are vital in giving a real understanding of any past society.

The Census Enumerators' Manuscript Books and the Population Census itself are two useful sources for Irish Historical Geographers. Despite their comprehensive nature and uniformity these sources have often been criticised because of their 'snap-shot' nature. By examining the minutiae of an historical society when using the Census and source material, we are misleading ourselves (and others) because of the lack of a dynamic element. The people and places under scrutiny appear with all the elements of their world about them; e.g. socio-economic class, housing quality, etc. Very useful for profound judgements vis-à-vis the particular census date ; however, this does not reveal what was happening over time. A comparison of data for more than one census date can only serve to broaden the comprehension, and demonstrate the evolutionary nature of, past societies.

The central themes of this paper are the various aspects of change and how they can be seen in Kinsale, a small County Cork town, from 1901 to 1911. Society will be examined on several levels and under a range of topics, all of which will illustrate the varying role played by change as well as the manner in which continuity appears in some elements. The two dates were chosen because of the survival of Kinsale Town's Census Enumerators' Manuscript Books over the period.

The first area of interest is the commercial structure of the town as revealed by an examination of directories for the period. The directories used were Guy's Postal Directory for County Cork 1901 and 1911. The various listing in this source were arranged under four main categories principal residents ; professional people ; tradesmen ; and shops and businesses. The people in each category were linked by cross reference to the manuscript valuation records and maps for the

period to find their locations. The Valuation Records were developed by Local Authorities for the purpose of assessing and collecting local rates. Their principal advantage is that they are comprehensive and can be linked to locations, thus providing a spatial context to information on (in this case) occupancy and rateable valuation of each individual property within the town.

The cross referencing of the information from the directories for both 1901 and 1911 produced recognisable spatial patterns for all four categories. The first category of principal residents consisted of the clergy, high ranking public officials and military officers, professions, gentry and the vast majority of shopkeepers and business people. Approximately 25 percent of the towns total households were listed in this category. The main locations of these households were in the streets which formed the commercial core of the town. These streets (Fig. 1) were bounded by, and included : Long Quay, Guardwell, the lower end of Cork Street and the upper and middle sections of Fisher Street. The remainder of the principal residents were located in streets with a high rateable valuation, i.e. groups I and II in Figure One. The second category of professional people was similarly located upon the group I and II streets. These streets, addition to high values, were in the more exclusive and desirable areas of town with good quality housing. The third category of tradesmen exhibited a more scattered pattern of dispersal around the commercial core with some living on the outskirts especially : Barrack Street, Blind Gate, Butcher's Row, Newman's Mall and Cork Street. The final category of shopkeepers and businesses was naturally overwhelmingly located in the commercial area with some in the streets with high populations, such as Bandon Road, Cork Street, Fisher Street, Barrack Street, The World's End area and Scilly Village. Such outlying shops tended to be small and located at street corners and junctions where they supplied daily essentials such as bread, tea and sugar to people in the surrounding streets. More expensive and less often required goods and services were situated in the central commercial area.

The 1911 situation is, for all intents and purposes, identical to that of 1901. There was a very strong continuity both in terms of proportions in each category and spatially. For both periods there were no specific locations for different types of shops, e.g. publicans and grocers. Each of the commercial streets exhibited a mixture of shop types and services. The only difference being that the commercial

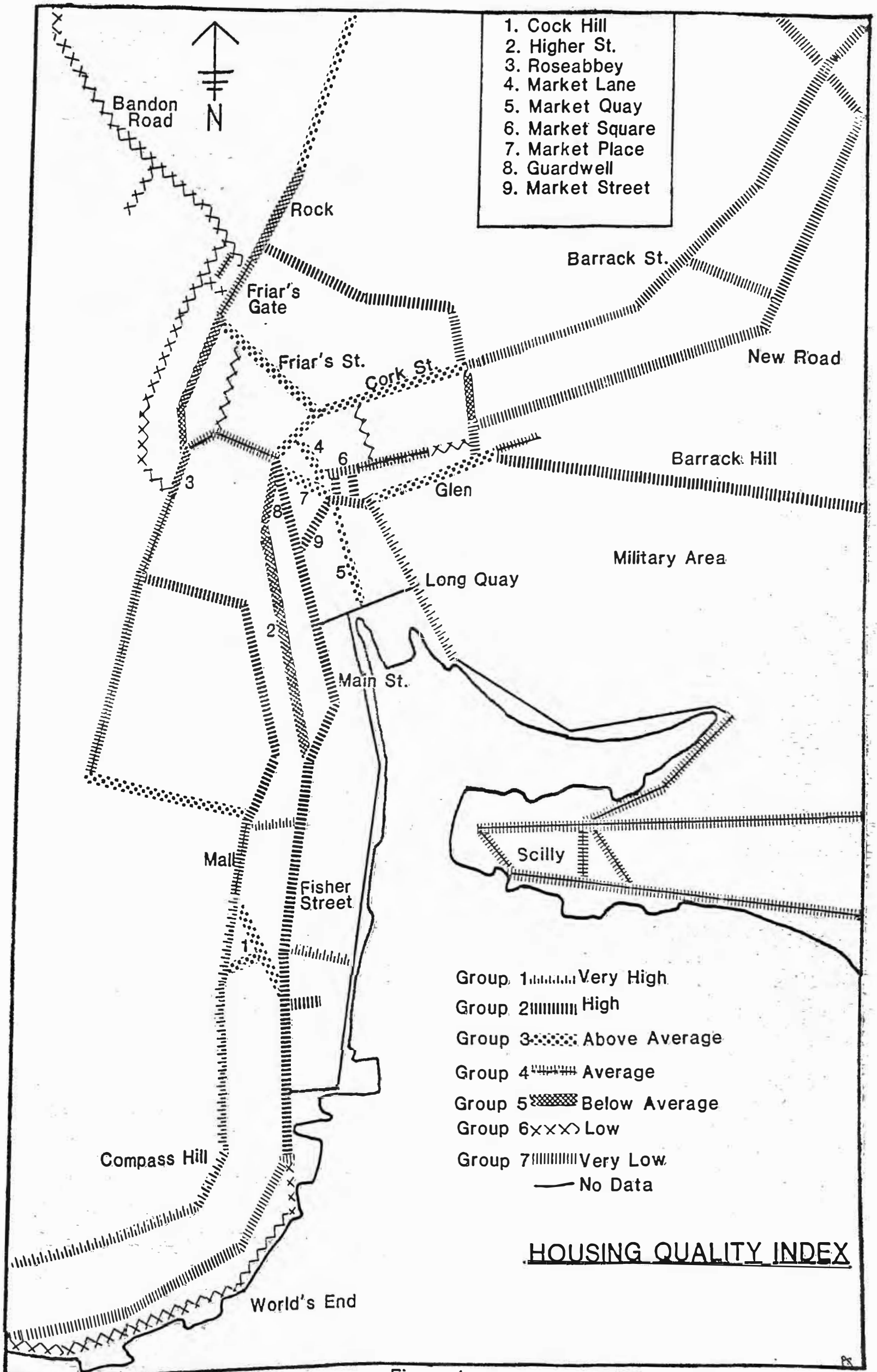


Figure 1.

streets of a higher quality (Fig. 1) tended to have the larger and more prosperous businesses in all types of shops and services. Therefore, streets such as Main street and the Long Quay, had more prosperous shops, generally than for example The Glen or Market Lane. Of course, there were some exceptions. Some small shops with low amounts of both stock and customers were located in the more prosperous streets. It must also be noted that all the streets within the commercial core were functionally mixed, that is, they contained both shops and residents. Normally, shopkeepers lived over their businesses or else rented rooms to lodgers if there was a separation of workplace and residence. There were also purely residential buildings in all the commercial streets.

The strong continuity in spatial patterns for the directory categories from 1901 to 1911 is echoed in the patterns of housing quality for the two years. By cross-reference between the census manuscripts and the rateable valuation records an index of housing quality was constructed (Fig. 1). This index took account of three factors : housing class ; density of persons per room ; and rateable valuation. The first of these is an amalgamation of building material, number of windows and rooms. The rateable values are related to the quality of repairs and the rent charged by the landlord. The three factors were calculated for each building and aggregated for each street to provide a more workable framework than a complex mass of several hundred individual buildings. There was very little variance about the aggregate values for each street, and multi-family occupancy of buildings was duly recognised. By uniting these three factors - a ranking of seven housing quality groups was constructed (Fig. 1), ranging from very high to very low housing quality. A recognisable spatial pattern resulted ; three of the main approach roads can be seen to have low and very low housing qualities, this is related to the segregation practised by the town authorities up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Before this period the commercial core and adjacent streets, located within the town walls, were almost entirely non-Roman Catholic. The generally poor Roman Catholic population existed in poorly built cabins and houses which stretched along the approach roads. By 1901, a version of this pattern still existed. The early centres of peripheral Roman Catholic habitations still appear as areas of below average housing. Areas in the North West, North East and South of the town are the best examples of this phenomenon.

There was a very strong continuity in the patterns of housing quality between 1901 and 1911. This similarity was primarily a consequence of continuous occupation of the same houses for each year, albeit sometimes by different families. In addition, there was a very low level of new house building. Therefore, almost the same buildings were used in the housing quality index for both 1901 and 1911. The strength of the patterns of housing quality is verified by their survival through time and space from 1901 to 1911. Thus, although a dynamic variable, time, has been introduced ; there are no apparent differences between 1901 and ten years later.

The continuity through time and space of both the town's commercial functions and its housing quality are reiterated in the locational patterns of selected occupations for 1901 and 1911. Four of the most important occupations in 1901 were selected and mapped by cross-referencing census data and valuation book information regarding occupancy. Very strong locational preferences for each occupation became apparent. These occupations were : labourers; servants (living in their own homes); fishermen; and sailors. The locations for servants and labourers tended to be somewhat similar, they were spatially biased in favour of the Barrack Street area, and the Bandon Road/Friar's Gate area, the Rose Abbey area, and Higher Street. Generally, the areas with the highest concentrations of each tended to be in the three lowest groups for housing quality. Therefore, people with these occupations lived in streets with low housing rents, a phenomenon consequent upon their income. The low rents can be seen by the low rateable valuations for these streets. Associated with this the number of persons per room was higher for these streets and housing class (as defined in the census) was lower than in all other streets. Another reason for this grouping of people of similar occupation was that many of them (such as labourers and servants) were inter-related. Naturally, with low income and unsteady occupations, such a kin network would invariably have been very valuable in times of need. Needless to say, all the labourers were male and the vast majority of servants were females who carried out the menial tasks of the wealthier households rather than functioning as 'higher' status servants such as cooks or governesses. The valuation books record many of the tenants of houses in these areas as 'lodgers' or 'weekly tenants', descriptions which began with Griffith's Valuation of 1851. This illustrates the transient nature of households in these streets especially those on low income, precarious occupations where the

well-being of a household could be jeopardised by an illness of the principal wage earner. The location of households with labourers and servants in streets outside the main areas is principally due to people living as boarders or in lodgings, a common phenomenon to raise family incomes at this time. Another reason was poor quality houses and hence low rent accommodation located in generally prosperous streets. Lastly, a source of livelihood such as a shop or trade was often not sufficiently remunerative to support several adults and thus some had to seek other employment, principally unskilled or semi-skilled.

The occupational locational patterns for fishermen and sailors resemble those of labourers and servants because of their spatial preference for certain areas of the town. In Scilly and the World's End over half of households contained fishermen in 1901 and 1911. Other areas of importance were : Higher Street; Cock Hill; the Mall; and the middle of Fisher Street; very rarely being located anywhere else. The locational preferences of sailors were not as pronounced as those of fishermen, although Scilly and the World's End again were the most important with the above mentioned streets showing strong trends also. The main reason for these patterns is tradition, for several hundreds of years the World's End and Scilly acted as 'de facto' self-contained villages of Welsh and Cornish fishermen and sailors with very little mixing between these and the remainder of the population. This anomaly still existed by the first decade of the twentieth century. The two areas contained unusual surnames not found anywhere else in Ireland and there were strong lower class Protestant populations within them. Using evidence of surnames and religion it appears that people from these areas 'colonised' nearby streets such as Cock Hill, because of congestion in their own areas. The areas recognisable as fishing and sailing areas were characterised in the two years by high density multi-family occupancy of large three and four storey houses, with several generations and branches of the same family living together. Typically, the valuation per house was high, but low if related per household. Many of the people lived as weekly tenants, thus causing insecurity and transiency within these areas ; factors directly consequent upon the seasonal nature of these occupations and the relatively poor income levels.

The locational patterns and spatial preferences of these selected occupations are important because a large proportion of the population was employed in them, and they also illustrate continuity within the town

once again in terms of time and space from 1901 to 1911, with little change being evident.

The initial decade of the new century did, however, witness changes in the occupational structure of Kinsale as a whole. For each year the occupational description of each individual over fifteen years was noted and totals of 2,795 and 3,000 occupied individuals were recorded for 1901 and 1911 respectively. The most important 'occupation' for both years was 'no-profession' or a blank space on the census form. Almost all of these respondents were married females, widows or daughters at home ; obviously they were employed as house-wives or house helpers at home. They were not unemployed, this was a separate description. Five hundred and nine people (17 percent) were described as having "no occupation" in 1901 and 1,012 (34 percent) in 1911. A very large increase probably related to a decline in domestic servants (who were predominantly female) from 302 (10 percent) in 1901 to 130 (4 percent) in 1911, and similar declines in charwomen/laundresses (49 to 10). It is clear that more of the town's females were describing as having no-occupation instead of stating that they were charwomen etc. This is strongly verified by a decline from 167 housewives in 1901 to 4 in 1911. Thus, the differences in these categories can be related to changes in occupational descriptions. Whilst the women in question continued their jobs as charwomen, etc, to supplement their family incomes, in addition to their household duties. They may have changed their job description to reflect their feelings that the twin roles of homemaker and wife were more important for them than additional yet often vital supplementary jobs.

Other major changes in occupations can be seen for schoolgoers, fishermen, shopkeepers and the army. Schoolgoers, over fifteen, grew from a 1901 figure of 93 (3 percent) to one of 156 (5 percent) ten years later. This reflects the declining importance in traditional jobs for young boys, such as fishing. Fishermen, indeed, experienced a decline in numbers from 258 (9 percent) for 1901 to 183 (6 percent) in 1911. This loss was primarily due to the declining fortunes of the Kinsale fishing industry which had its most prosperous era in the last few years of the nineteenth century. Declining stocks, due to over-fishing and movements of the fishing shoals to other regions, as well as the progressively worsening silting up of the harbour were contributory factors. Shopkeepers, publicans and merchants declined by 43 from 1901, (136) to 1911, (93). This reduction was a consequence of the decline in the town's fishing, the general depressing economic state and a decline in population.

The importance of the army in occupational terms grew from 1901 to 1911. It was second in importance as a source of employment for both years. Army numbers grew from 328 (11 percent) in 1901 to 428 (14 percent) in 1911, the vast majority of these lived within the confines of the military barracks and associated military housing on Barrack Hill. This increase was part of British Government policy of increasing troop numbers to cope with growing political tensions in Ireland in this period ; a similar growth in numbers was recorded for Charles Fort (over 600 troops) three miles away towards the sea on Kinsale Harbour.

By studying 1901 and 1911, it has been shown that differences occurred in occupational structure in the ten years, this was the first important change between the two dates. The second and far more vital difference was in terms of population. Population decline had been a constant feature of Kinsale's social geography since the Famine, and the 1901 to 1911 period was no exception. Population fell from 4,536 to 4,284 a 5.56 percent decline. There was very little change in household numbers and numbers of occupied houses over the period.

Interestingly, although the total population fell in the period the amount of non-catholics rose. These numbered 883 in 1901, (19.47 percent of the total), and 923 in 1911, (21.55 percent) an increase of 2.1 percent. This picture of population change is somewhat complicated by the inclusion of the military area and Scilly within the total figures, when these are excluded a different picture emerges. By 1901, Scilly had been excluded from the Kinsale Local Authority Area, but to all intents and purposes it was an integral part of the town. The important role of the Army is underlined by such figures, if the military area is excluded the actual numbers of households within the town declines and the actual population decline from 1901 to 1911 is 8.5 per cent. This figure, it could be argued, accurately reflects the 'real' population of the town as opposed to an artificial garrison population. The same is true to a lesser extent for Scilly, (Table 1).

Population change can also be seen at street level (Fig. 2). Twenty-eight streets recorded a loss of population from 1901 to 1911, while nineteen had increases and two had no change. The spatial variations of loss or gain by street bears no relationship to the housing quality index (Fig. 1). Streets of all groups from the very highest to the very lowest experienced gains ; the same was true of streets recording losses. Another important point is that the range of percentage loss or gain between one street and another varied greatly,



TABLE 1

## CHANGE IN SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, KINSALE, 1901-1911

	1901			1911			Change		
	Town	Town less Military	Town less Scilly	Town	Town less Military	Town less Scilly	Town	Town less Military	Town less Scilly
Occupied Houses	704	682	617	719	684	634	+15	+2	+17
Households	886	858	775	890	855	783	+4	-3	+8
Population	4536	4144	4070	4284	3791	3916	-252	-353	-154
Non-Catholics	883	515	818	923	483	862	+40	-33	+44
% Non-Catholics	19.47	12.43	20.1	21.55	12.71	22.0	+2.08%	+0.28%	+5.4%

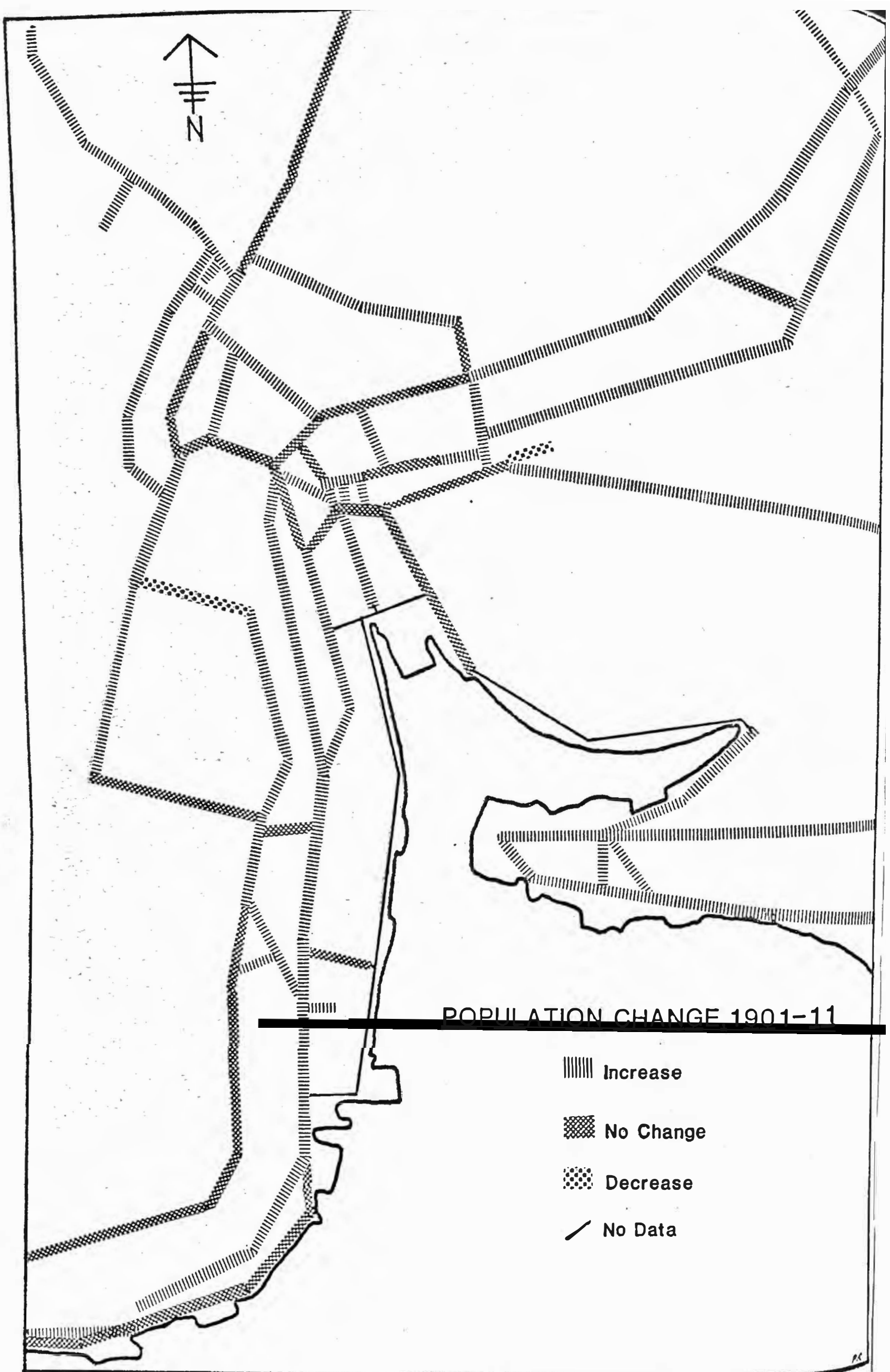


Figure 2.

e.g. 2 percent loss in Friar's Gate and 68 percent loss for the New Road. Also, 7 percent gain for Compass Hill and 55 percent increase for the Rock. However, most of the losses/gains were under 30 percent. Many streets which experienced an actual loss in population gained new households over the period, e.g. Higher Street lost 42 people (15 percent), but gained 4 new households. In addition, streets which experienced increases in households also usually had increases in the number of houses occupied. However, changes in number of households and occupied houses were very small, less than ten in all cases.

The dynamic element of change is at its strongest and most powerful at the level of the individual household. An examination of household change reveals a high degree of dynamism contrasting with the factors previously examined which illustrated continuity at low levels of macro-scale change. The household encapsulates the smallest scale of past change.

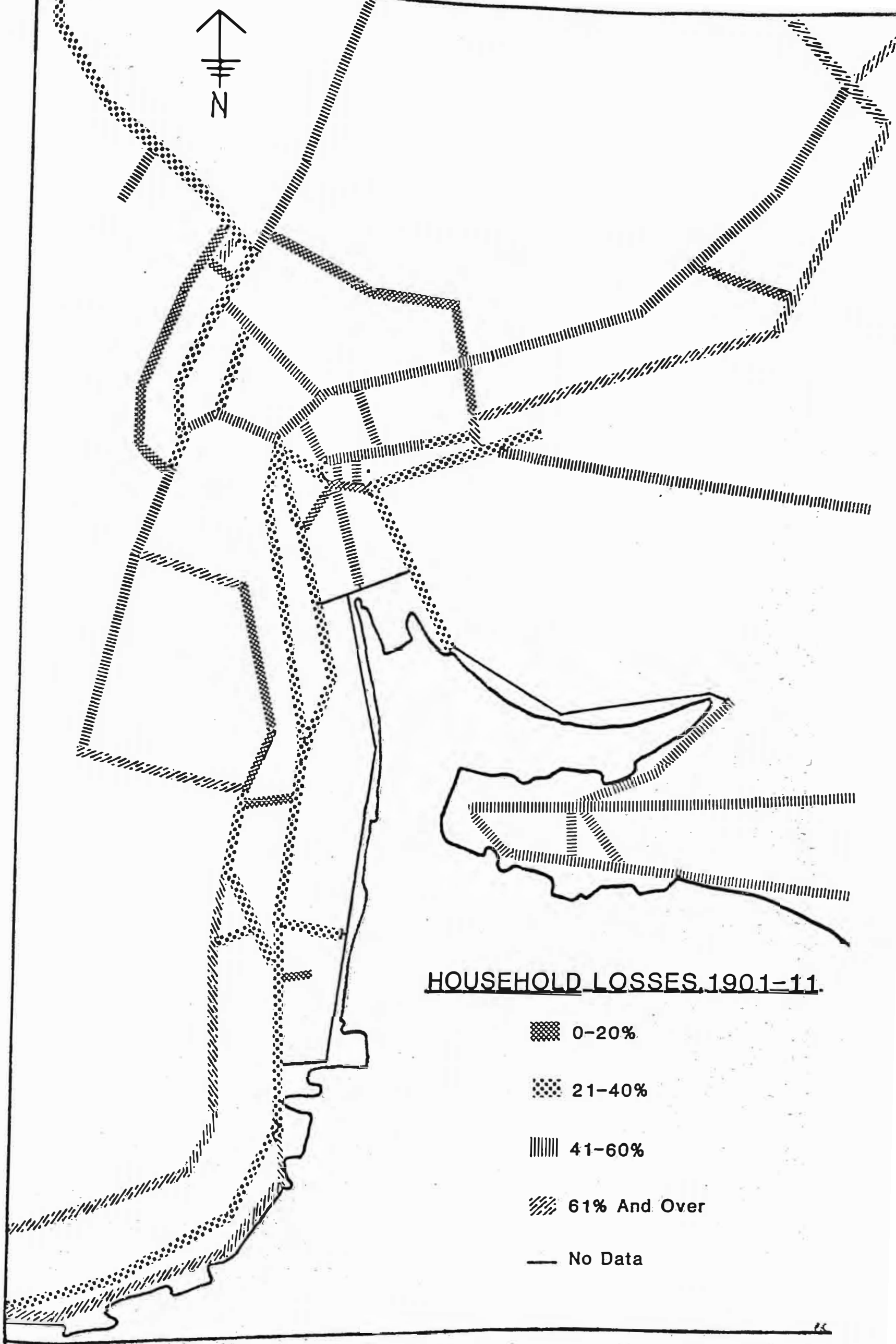
Each of the individual households for both 1901 and 1911 was painstakingly located with the use of the rateable valuation books and maps. The households listed for 1901 and 1911 were compared and any changes were noted, cognisance was taken of widows who may have succeeded to the head of household upon the death of a male householder in 1901.

In 1901 there were 884 households recorded for the town. Ten years later 511 remained. This represents a persistence rate of 60 percent. The loss of 40 percent is composed of some deaths and mostly migration, and represents the large degree of dynamism in society at this time. Of the 511 remaining households 72 percent remained within the same street in which they were situated in 1901. The rest (28 percent) stayed within the town but moved to other streets. Of those recorded as living in the same street in 1911 as for 1901, 65 percent lived in the same house. This indicates the various levels of household change for the 1901 to 1911 period. Only very detailed surveys of parish and death registers could provide details on the 40 percent of households that disappeared between 1901 and 1911. Of course, the household head may have died or left the town, leaving his/her offspring to marry and set up a new household. Although this warrants further research, a preliminary investigation shows that the number of cases where this occurs is relatively small and thus unimportant. The changes in the numbers of households remaining within particular streets and within the town have important implications (Fig. 3). Although a recognisable spatial pattern occurs, there is no relationship between the change in household numbers from 1901 to 1911

and the index of housing quality. Streets with very high and high housing quality experience different qualities of losses, the same is true for streets of lesser quality.

The pattern of new households recorded for 1911 is also interesting (Fig. 4). Again there is no definite relationship between the numbers of households appearing for the first time in 1911 and the index of housing quality. However, both diagrams illustrate the variety of experiences at street level for the individual households from 1901 to 1911. The town was far from a unified whole, and it is clearly evident that different areas had vastly differing experiences over the period and thus underline the importance of avoiding over-reliance upon generalisations. This being stated, the same streets tend to share the highest amounts of losses and the highest amount of gains from 1901 to 1911. Scilly had the largest loss of households from 1901 to 1911 (14 percent of the total) whilst second was Fisher Street (9 percent), also important were : Cork Street (8 percent) ; Barrack St. (7 percent) ; Higher St. (6 percent) ; and Friars' Street (5 percent). In regard to gains of households by 1911, Scilly had 14 percent of the total amount of new households recorded in 1911. Barrack St. was second in importance with 7 percent, also high were : Higher St. (7 percent) ; Cork St. (7 percent) ; Main St. (7 percent) ; Friars' St. (6 percent) ; and Fisher St. (6 percent). These streets have these patterns because firstly they had the largest street populations in the town, and secondly, there were large numbers of properties let to weekly tenants and many households sub-let to lodgers. Such streets had high degrees of transiency and this would have had a crucial impact on the character of these areas. In general, the commercial streets exhibited little change. This was because of the degree of permanency fostered by owning a shop or business.

A very important issue with regard to household movements are the households which remained within the town, but moved to different streets. As previously mentioned, these represented 28 percent (143 households) of those households persisting from 1901 to 1911. The tracing of their movements reveals some of the internal vibrancy of the town. The areas displaying the greatest levels of movement correspond to the streets which exhibited the greatest degrees of transiency, e.g. Barrack Street and Higher Street (Fig 5). Another interesting detail are the streets which 'traded' households between each other. Close ties appear between such areas as World's End, Fisher Street, Cock Hill, Mall and Higher Street. Such areas "swaped" households and only rarely



HOUSEHOLD LOSSES, 1901-11

- ▣ 0-20%
- ▣ 21-40%
- ▣ 41-60%
- ▣ 61% And Over
- No Data

Figure 3.

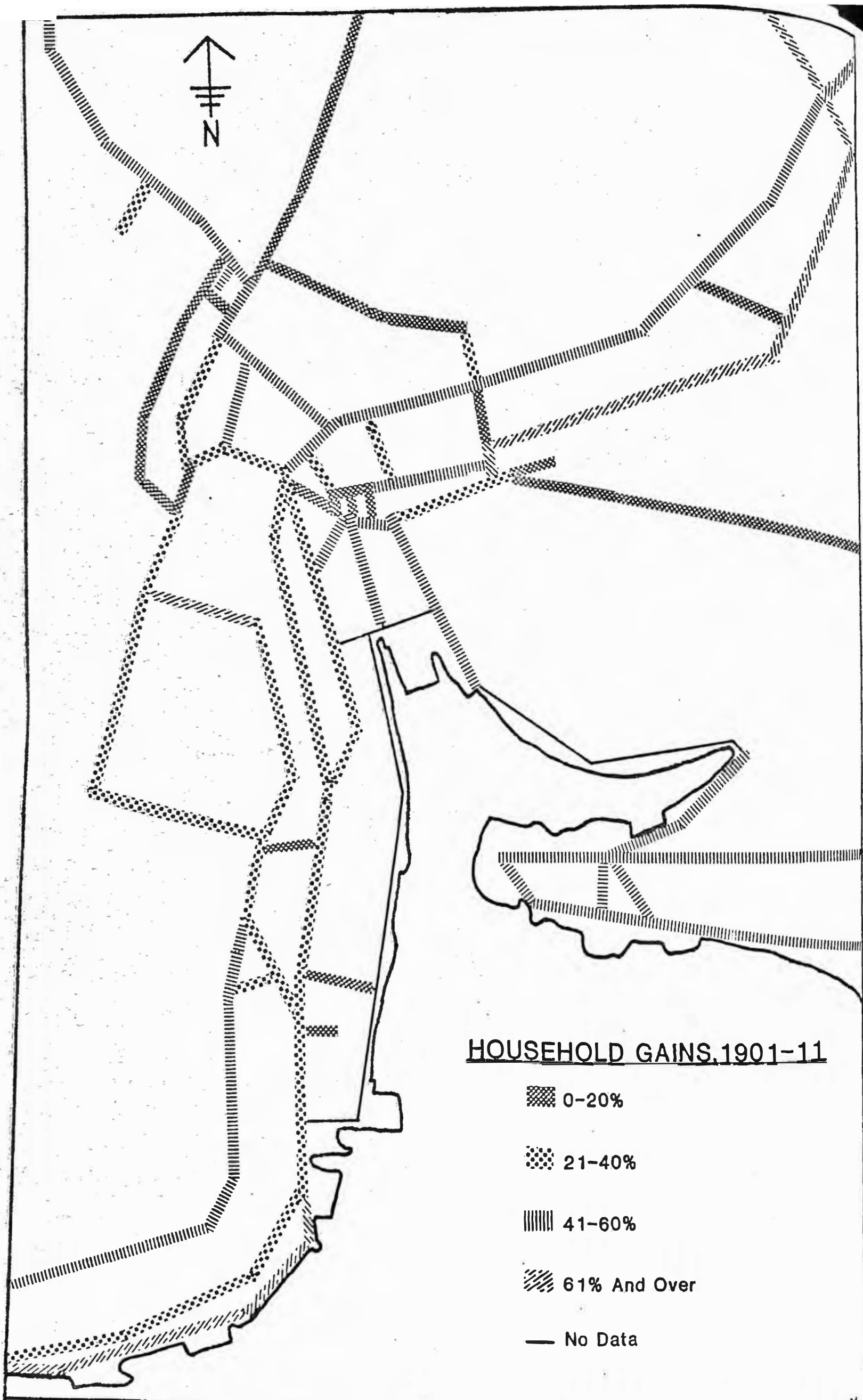


Figure 4.  
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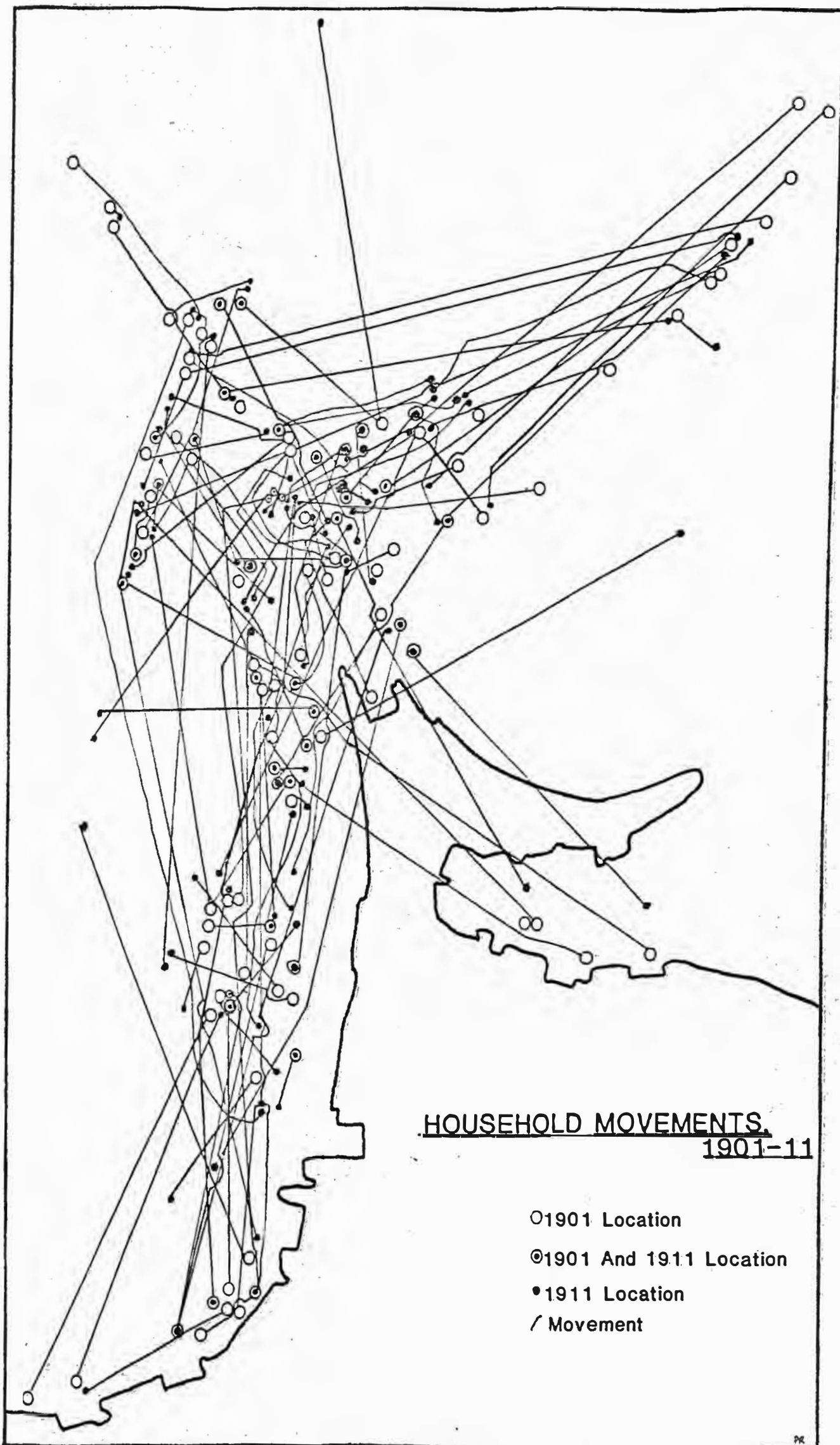


Figure 5.

interacted with the other areas of town. The lack of ties between Scilly and the remainder of the town is also quite clear. Therefore, in regard to household movements within the town between 1901 and 1911, there seems to have been some clearly defined 'migration fields' between several streets probably strengthened by friendship and kinship ties, and occupational links (e.g. fishermen and sailors).

One final area of concern in relation to household movements is social mobility. This was measured by comparing the movements with the index of housing quality (Fig. 1). Of the total amount of movement, 49 percent (69 households) improved their housing quality by moving into 'better' streets, 17 percent (25 households) experienced no change in their fortunes, and 34 percent (50 households) moved into streets of a lesser housing quality. The vast majority of moves either up or down the housing quality index involved movement from a group into the one directly above or below it, or else into a group two steps above or below it. This shows that most people improved or declined in their housing quality only very slightly. There were, of course, exceptions. Some households increased by four steps or similarly declined by four steps. But these were very rare. Most of the movements occurred in the middle and just below this level in the index, there was very little movement down from the higher levels to the middle ones and vice-à-versa. The same was true of movements from the very lower reaches of the index. No household recorded movement from the lowest levels, group 6 or 7, to the higher levels of the first or second groups. Therefore, social mobility as measured by housing quality existed, but was on a very limited scale, involving movement between streets which only differed slightly in quality.

It should be clearly evident that this examination of change in the social geography of an early twentieth century town illustrates both continuity and very real development over time. It is only by examining all levels within a town that the totality of relationships can be seen and the nearest resemblance towards a picture of reality, as it existed in the past, can be revealed.



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