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Five Points (as depicted in *Valentine's Manual*, 1855), was named for the points created by the intersections of Park, Worth and Baxter Streets. By the mid-1800s, Five Points was known as New York City's most notorious slum neighborhood. It was home to an infamous, overcrowded tenement - the Old Brewery - near Paradise Square.

The area was filled with immigrants trying to make a new life in a foreign city. (Later the Brewery was turned into a mission.) Five Points was also a place where politicians "bought" votes in "stolen elections" and gangs, like the Irish-immigrant "Dead Rabbits," flourished.

The Five Points area wasn't always a place of squalor.

In 1798, Collect Pond was a picturesque spot and the source of New York City's water supply. By the early 19th century, however, tanneries using the pond to process leather goods had so profoundly polluted it that the Common Council ordered the pond drained in 1808. (Tannery workers in the Pearl Street area of Five Points left behind tools of their trade which archeologists discovered in 1991.)

Approximately twelve years after Collect Pond had been filled in, the land began to sink. As the area became increasingly run down, it was known as one of the worst places in New York City.

Visitors from abroad, like Charles Dickens, often asked to see the area firsthand since they had heard so much about it in their own countries.

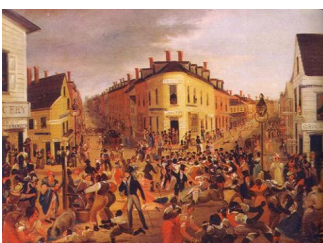
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Media Stream

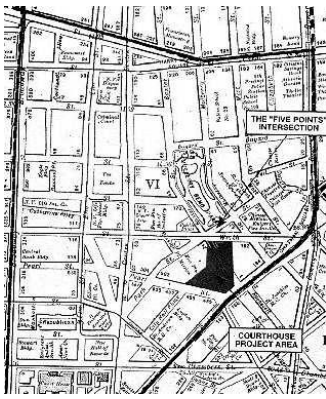


Five Points - New York's Most Notorious Slum Neighborhood

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Five Points - Notorious Slum Neighborhood in New York

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Old Brewery at Five Points

In this image, we see the Old Brewery in the Five Points neighborhood of New York City.

Created, circa 1853, the illustration, which is maintained at the New York Public Library and is part of NYPL's digital gallery, bears this caption:

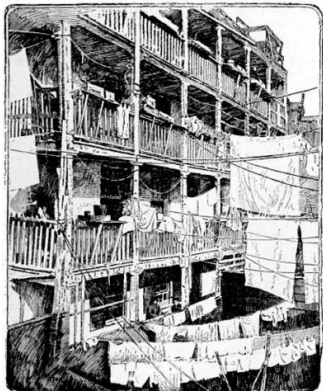
Representation of the Old Brewery, at the Five Points, New York.

Click on the image for a better view.

Image 801464, described above, from the NYPL Digital Gallery.

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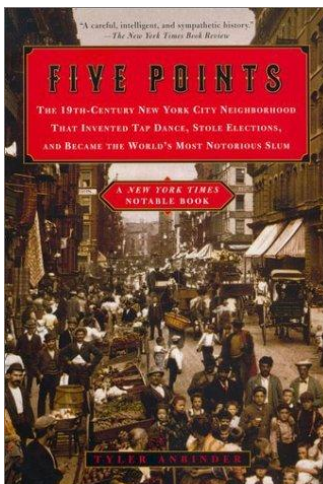
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Overcrowded Tenement

Image online, courtesy schoolnet.org website.

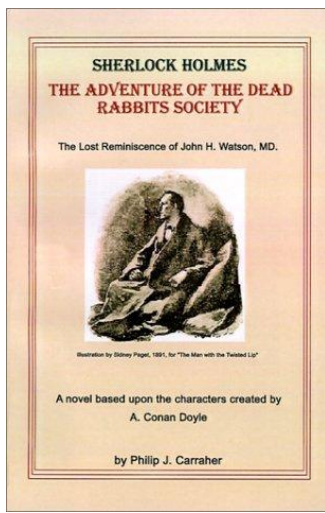
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Five Points - by Tyler Anbinder

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Irish-Immigrant Gang "Dead Rabbits" at Five Points

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Pearl Street Area of Five Points

Image online, courtesy [anthropologyinpractice](http://anthropologyinpractice.com) website.

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