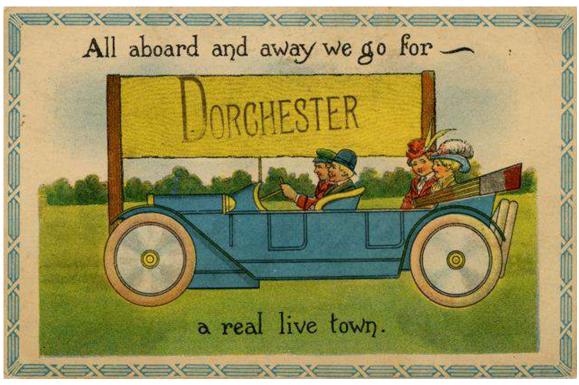
MURPHY

Research Report



Dorchester Historical Society, Dorchester, Massachusetts, postcard, Postmarked Dorchester, Oct. 3, 1913; digital image, (www.dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org: accessed 26 March 2014).

Client: J. T. M.

Subjects: John Murphy and Mary Keefe, ancestors of the client

Background: Client wants to learn the origins his emigrant ancestor John Murphy who emigrated from Ireland, married Mary Keefe, and settled in Boston.

Client has supplied the link to his Murphy family tree on Ancestry.com as well as copies of death certificates for Thomas J. Murphy (1968) and wife Katherine V.

(Murphy) Murphy (1967), son and daughter-in-law of John Murphy.

Client has also supplied a two-page summary of information on John Murphy, Thomas John Murphy and Katherine Veronica Murphy; these typewritten copies are undated, created by the client's grandmother. It appears the information is based on family tradition and includes birth, marriage and death dates for some

of their descendants.

Goals: Determine where and when John Murphy was born.

Identify when John Murphy emigrated to the United States.

Identify members of John Murphy's household and include details on residence,

occupations, associations, etc.

Limitations: Authorization for ten hours for the initial research survey, analysis, and client

report.

Common Surname

The Murphy surname is the most common surname in Ireland. In a survey taken between 1851and 1853, over 2500 Murphy households were identified in County Cork alone. And New York and Boston were the top destinations for 19th century Irish emigrants. In fact, Boston was known as "the next parish over." The 1860 U.S. census listed over 45,000 residents of Irish origins in Boston and over 20,000 in Dorchester. There were over 2200 people with the Murphy

surname in Boston and Dorchester in the 1860 census.

Immigration Records

Early passenger lists before 1892 contain very little information, typically names, age, sex, and occupation. Relationships are usually not indicated and family groups are not necessarily listed together. The ability to locate the correct individuals depends on accurately identifying who traveled together and when they traveled. A family may not have traveled together but may have emigrated in

one or more groups over several years.

Time allotment may limit depth and comprehensiveness of analysis.

Repositories: Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree

Boston Public Library

Massachusetts State Archives, Boston

Milton Historical Society Archives, Milton Public Library

AmericanAncestors.org (New England Historic Genealogical Society site)

Ancestry.com

Boston Streets: Mapping Directory Data (Tufts University)

FamilySearch.org

Fold3.com GenealogyBank

Note: Images of all documents discussed are located in the Appendix.

Summary of Research Findings

John Murphy was born about 1850 in Ireland to Edward Murphy and Catherine Halloran. John, his mother, and at least one sibling, Julia, emigrated to Boston and settled in Dorchester. Their date of immigration was not determined but they were living in Dorchester before 1870.

Julia was born about 1847 in Ireland and died in 1872 in Boston.²

Julia Murphy married John Murray, a blacksmith on 3 May 1870 in Boston. They had one daughter, Nellie, who married Jeremiah Hurley in 1897.³

John Murphy married Mary A. Keefe on 19 August 1886 at St. Peter's Church in Dorchester. She was born about 1864, the daughter of Thomas Keefe and Mary King of County Galway, Ireland.⁴ John worked as a laborer, a coachman and a gardener.

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¹ Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Deaths, 1914/10:36, John Murphy; digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

² 1880 U. S. census. Suffolk county, Massachusetts, Boston, population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 777, dwelling 346, family 435; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 4 April 2014), Catherine Murphy. Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Deaths 249:56 (1872); Julia (Murphy) Murray; digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

³ Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Marriages, 228:52 Murray-Murphy (1870) and 471:128 Hurley-Murray (1897). Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Births, 225:17 Nellie Murray (1870); digital images, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

⁴ Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Marriages 372:143 Murphy-Keefe (1886) and 539:179 Keefe-Scarry (1903); digital images, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives. St Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Marriages, 1872-1897," p. 33, Murphy-Keefe marriage, in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

Itemized Research Findings

Family Documents

The client-supplied summaries were two one-page copies, typewritten and undated, compiled by the client's grandmother. One was focused on Thomas John Murphy (1889-1968) and the other was focused on Katherine Veronica Murphy (1891-1967), his wife. The summary for Thomas Murphy is most pertinent to this report. The key items, some of which are presumed, are extracted in this timeline.

Date	Event
1809	Mother Mary Hurley (or Murray) was born in County Cork, Ireland
Before 1839	Mary married unknown Murphy in Ireland
1839	Son John Murphy was born in County Cork, Ireland
1848	Mary and son John emigrated to the United States
After 1848	Mary and son John settled in Harrison Square section of Dorchester
After 1848	Mary worked as a domestic
1854-1914	John worked as a gardener at Milton Hill estates for the Forbes family (60 years)
1864	Mary Keefe was born in County Galway, Ireland
1886	John, age 49, married Mary Keefe at St. Gregory's Church, Dorchester
1886-?	Resided in Fields Corner, Dorchester
1887-1893	Children Edward, Thomas, and Catherine are born
1905	Mary, John's mother died, age 96
?-1914	Family resided at Avondale Court, Lower Mills
1914	John Murphy died, age 75
1922	Catherine Murphy, daughter, died, age 29
1936	Mary (Keefe) Murphy died, age 72

This account contains some internal inconsistencies. If John was born in 1839, he would have been 47 when he married. If he was 49 in 1886, he would have been born about 1837. If he was 75 when he died he would have been born about 1836.

Historic Dorchester

Dorchester was founded in 1630, before Boston, and encompassed six square miles. Land from the original boundaries of Dorchester formed the towns of Milton in 1662 and Hyde Park in 1868. The 1870 population of Dorchester was 12,000; by 1920, it had exploded to 150,000.

The first town meeting in the Massachusetts Bay Colony was held in Dorchester making it the first in America. Dorchester was also the site of the first public elementary school and the first chocolate mill in America, Baker's Chocolate Factory (1765).⁶ Dorchester was part of Norfolk County until it was annexed to Boston in 1870.⁷

John Murphy and Mary Keefe

John Murphy and Mary Keefe were married 19 August 1886 at St. Peter's Church in Dorchester by Rev. Ronan. Witnesses to their marriage were John Murphy and Catherine Ward. Both the bride and groom were born in Ireland and both resided in Boston, most likely Dorchester, which had the status of a neighborhood. John, age 35, was a laborer, the son of Edward and Catherine; Mary, age 22, had no occupation and was the daughter of Thomas and Mary. Marriage records at this time did not provide the maiden name of the mothers of the spouses. It is very likely that John Murphy, the witness, is a relative, maybe an uncle, cousin, or nephew.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF DORCHESTER⁵



John and Mary had three children between 1887 and 1893: Edward, Thomas, and Catherine. Edward was born 19 March 1887 at 57 Greenwich Place in Lower Mills. His father's occupation was coachman. At his baptism the following day at St. Peter's Church, John Cunningham and Catherine Halloran were named as godparents. The godmother is likely related as Halloran was John's mother's maiden name.

Their second son, Thomas was also born at 57 Greenwich Place on 24 July 1889. John's occupation is listed as servant. Thomas' godparents were Dennis Leary and Catherine Keefe, possible a maternal aunt or an in-law.¹⁰

⁵ Wikipedia, "Dorchester, Boston." (www.wikipedia.org: accessed 24 March 2014).

⁶ Wikipedia, "Dorchester, Boston."

⁷ Michael J. Leclerc, editor, *Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research*, 5th ed., (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2012), 187.

⁸ St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Marriages," p.33 and Massachusetts Marriages 372:143 (1886).

⁹ Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Births, 378:114, Edward Murphy (1887); digital image, American Ancestors(www.americanancestors.org: accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives and St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Baptisms, 1872-1887," pp. 194-5, Eduardus Murphy (1887) in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

¹⁰ Massachusetts Vital Records 1841-1910, Births, 396:189 Thomas Murphy (1889); digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives. St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Baptisms, 1887-1895," p. 22, Thomas Murphy (1889), in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

By the time daughter Catherine arrived on 30 November 1893, the family had moved to 197 Freeport Street. Her father John is a coachman. William Walsh and Mary Murphy were her godparents. Again, there is likely a familial connection to Mary Murphy.

The children's names also show a connection to their grandparents:

- Edward was the name of John's father
- Thomas was the name of Mary's father
- Catherine was the name of John's mother

Residence

Where did John and Mary live in Boston before their marriage? Since Mary arrived in the United States about 1883 or 1884 according to her census information, she will not appear in the 1880 census. As an unmarried woman she probably lived with relatives or with a private family as a servant. In either case she would not be listed in a city directory. An examination of the 1885 Boston city directory listed over 100 entries for Keefe but none lived in Dorchester, ¹² making it impractical to pursue without further identifying information.

John, however, was probably living in Dorchester from the time he emigrated. To track the family in this time period, city directories are used. Directories at this time only listed adult males unless a female was the head of household.

In 1870 the area of Dorchester was assigned to Boston's ward 16; the 1870, 1872, and 1875 directories identify residents by including the ward in the address. In later editions the abbreviation Dor. was used for Dorchester. Both Murphy and Halloran (Holleran/Holloran) listings in Dorchester were extracted for the period from 1868 to 1885 as shown in the first table below. The second table (after the maps), shows John Murphy's residences after his marriage, from 1889 to 1901.

¹¹ Massachusetts Vital Records1841-1910, Births, 432:305 Catherine Murphy (1893); digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives. St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Baptisms, 1887-1895," p. 83, Catharina Murphy (1893) in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

¹² Sampson, Murdock and Company, compilers, *The Boston Directory for the Year Commencing July 1, 1885* (Boston: Sampson, Murdock & Co.) 604; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : 4 April 2014), entries for Keefe.

SELECTED SURNAMES IN DORCHESTER IN DIRECTORIES, 1868-1885¹³

Year	Surname	First Name	Address	Occupation
1868	Halloran	Timothy	h. Commercial, Glover's Corner	laborer
1868	Murphy	Dan'l	h. Commercial, Glover's Corner	laborer
1868	Murphy	Edward	house on High	carriage maker
1868	Murphy	Edwin	h. Commercial near Neponset	gardener
1868	Murphy	John	h. Commercial, Glover's Corner	laborer
1870	Holloran	Michael	h. Commercial n. Linden ward 16	laborer
1870	Holloran	Timothy	house Commercial near Linden ward 16	laborer
1870	Murphy	Catherine	house Commercial near Linden ward 16	widow
1870	Murphy	Daniel	house Commercial near Linden ward 16	laborer
1870	Murphy	Edward	h. Commercial n. Linden ward 16	carriagemaker
1870	Murphy	John	h. Commercial n. Linden ward 16	laborer
1870	Murphy	Julia	house Commercial n. Linden ward 16	widow
1870	Murphy	Timothy	house Commercial near Linden ward 16	laborer
1872	Murphy	Catherine	house Commercial opp. gas house ward 16	widow
1872	Murphy	Daniel	house Commercial opp. gas house ward 16	laborer
1872	Murphy	Edward	h. Commercial, n. Linden, wd. 16	carriagemeker [sic]
1872	Murphy	John	house Commercial opp. gas house ward 16	laborer
1872	Murphy	Julia	h. Commercial, near Linden, ward 16	widow
1875	Murphy	Catherine	h. Greenwich pl., wd. 16	widow
1875	Murphy	Daniel	house Commercial opp. gas house ward 16	laborer
1875	Murphy	Edward	h. Commercial, near Linden, ward 16	carriage maker
1875	Murphy	John*	bds. Greenwich pl. ward 16	laborer
1875	Murphy	John P.	b. Com'l, opp. gas house, wd. 16	milkman
1876	Murphy	Catherine	house Greenwich place H.S. [Harrison Sq.]	widow
1876	Murphy	Catherine	house Commercial opp. gas house Dorch	widow
1876	Murphy	Daniel	house Commercial opp. gas house Dorch	laborer
1876	Murphy	Edward	Greenwich H.S. house do. n .Linden ward 16	carriage maker
1876	Murphy	John	boards Greenwich place H.S.	laborer
1876	Murphy	John P.	b. Com'l, opp. gas house, Dorchester	milkman
1885	Murphy	Catharine	h. Greenwich pl., Dor.	widow
1885	Murphy	Daniel	h. Com'l, opp. gas house, Dor.	laborer
1885	Murphy	John	h. Greenwich pl., Dor.	laborer
1885	Murphy	John	bds. Com'l, opp. gas house, Dor.	clerk
1885	Murphy	Julia	h. Com'l, cor. Linden, Dor.	widow

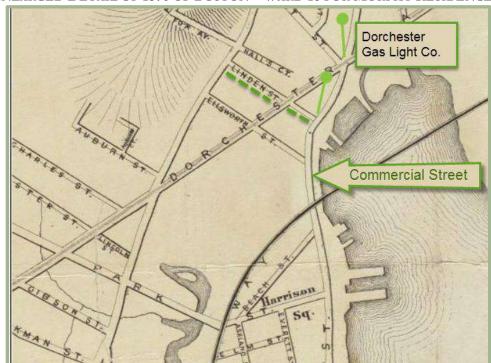
^{*}There are two identical listings for John Murphy in 1875; it may be an error or there may be two people with the same and occupation living at the same address.

¹³ Dudley and Greenough, compilers, *The Dorchester and Quincy Directory for 1868-9*, (Boston: 1868); digital image, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 5 April 2014) 64, 84. Sampson and Murdock Company, compilers, *The Boston Directory for the Year Commencing July 1, 1870*, (Boston: Sampson and Murdock Co.,); *Boston Streets: Mapping Directory Data*, transcript online at Tufts University Digital Collection and Archives; also subsequent years for the same title: 1872, 1875, 1885 (http://dca.lib.tufts.edu: accessed 4 April 2014). Sampson, Davenport and Company, compilers, *The Boston Directory for the Year Commencing July 1, 1876* (Boston: Sampson, Davenport and Company) 652; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com: 4 April 2014. Sampson Murdock, *Boston Directory* for (1885) 605.

The first set of listings from 1868 does not include Catherine (Halloran) Murphy. Perhaps she immigrated with her husband, who had died by 1870. Or perhaps she did not initially settle in Dorchester. Still, Hallorans resided at the same place as Murphys; there is some connection.

Of the twenty Murphy listings for Dorchester in 1870, six were at the same address and no other address included a John or Catherine in addition to other names. While we cannot identify all the relationships with current information, it is highly likely that the Murphys living at Commercial Street near Linden were closely related. After 1870 these individuals moved to other locations but still with someone from the original group. Both the Commercial Street and Greenwich Place addresses are just north of Harrison Square and convenient to the railway.

There are two listings for Catherine Murphy, a widow, in 1876. The Catherine living at Greenwich place is probably the mother of John Murphy; the Catherine living on Commercial Street is probably related to John who is a milkman. And it is possible that all four of them are related as well.

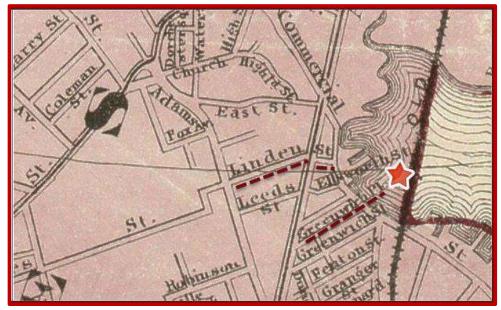


ENLARGED DETAIL OF 1870 OF BOSTON - WARD 16 FOR MURPHY RESIDENCES¹⁴

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¹⁴ Sampson, Davenport & Co., *Map of Boston from the Latest Surveys* (Boston: 1870), scale not given; digital image, *Boston Public Library* (maps.bpl.org/: accessed 5 April 2014), enlarged and annotated by author; Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library, Call Number: G3764.B6 1870.S3.

ENLARGED DETAIL OF 1876 MAP OF BOSTON – WARD 16 FOR MURPHY RESIDENCES¹⁵



John and Mary Murphy lived in four different locations in Dorchester over the course of their 28 years of marriage.

JOHN MURPHY RESIDENCES AFTER MARRIAGE 1889-1901¹⁶

Year	Address	Occupation
1889	h. Greenwich pl.,	laborer
1890	h. Greenwich pl.	laborer
1892	h. Greenwich pl.	coachman
1893	h. 197 Freeport	coachman
1894	h. 197 Freeport	coachman
1895-1899	h. St. Gregory's ct.	coachman
1900	h. 22 Avondale pl.	coachman
1901	h. 22 Avondale pl.	coachman

Census Data

A John Murphy appears in the 1880 census on Greenwich Street with mother Catherine and niece Nellie Murray.¹⁷ Nellie Murray's parents were born in Ireland. The fact that Nellie is living with her grandmother and uncle suggests that her mother, and maybe her father, is deceased. Sharing the dwelling with the Murphys were the family of Patrick and Joanna Cunningham and their four

¹⁵ A. Williams & Co., *Map of Boston 1876* (Boston: 1876), scale not given; digital image, *Boston Public Library* (maps.bpl.org : accessed 5 April 2014), enlarged and annotated by author; Norman B. Leventhal Map Center, Boston Public Library, Call Number: G3764.B6 1876 .A9x.

^{Sampson, Murdock and Company, compilers, The Boston Directory for the Year Commencing July 1, 1889 (Boston: Sampson, Murdock and Company) 928, also subsequent years for the same title (1890) 948 (1892) 997 (1893) 1012 (1894) 1022 (1895) 1062 (1896) 1122 (1897) 1138 (1898) 1150 (1899) 1160 (1900) 1199 (1901) 1216; digital images, Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com : 4 April 2014).}

¹⁷ 1880 U. S. census, Suffolk Co., Mass., Boston, pop. sch., ED 777, dw. 346, fam. 435; Catherine Murphy.

children, one of whom was John. A John Cunningham was the godfather for John Murphy's elder son, Edward in 1887.

CATHERINE MURPHY HOUSEHOLD IN THE 1880 CENSUS - BOSTON

Name	Relation	Marital status	Age	Birthplace	Occupation
Murphy, Catherine Head		Married	64	Ireland	Keeping house
John	Son	Single	30	Ireland	Gardener
Murray, Nellie	Granddaughter	Single	9	Massachusetts	

This appears to be the correct family for the following reasons:

- John's mother is Catherine per his marriage record
- John and Catherine are the appropriate ages to be the correct family
- John and Catherine are born in Ireland
- The family is living on Greenwich Street, a known family address
- John is working as a gardener and is unmarried
- Catherine's granddaughter's name is Murray, a name provided in the family summary
- John is supporting his mother and niece; this may explain why he was not married.

Since Nellie's surname is different, she must be the child of a daughter of Catherine. Nellie Murray was born 18 November 1870 to John and Julia Murray who were living at Commercial Street in Boston. Both her parents were born in Ireland and her father John Murray worked as a blacksmith. An 1870 marriage record for Julia Murphy, 23, and John Murray, 28, lists Julia's parents as Daniel and Catherine. Page 19

Julia W. Murray died while Nellie was still a baby, on 29 March 1872 at age 25. She was listed as wife of John and her parents as Edgar and Catherine Murphy. Despite the inconsistency in the father's name, the marriage and death record appears to refer to the same person. Her residence was Glover's Corner, an address connected to the Murphys and Hallorans. It is likely that Julia is John's sister.

In 1897 Nellie G. Murray, age 27, married Jeremiah J. Hurley, age 29, in Boston. Nellie was born in Dorchester, the daughter of John and Julia. Jeremiah was a steamfitter from Somerville; she was employed as a dressmaker. Again, a name from the family documents (Hurley) is shown to be connected to the Murphys.

While the United States has taken censuses every ten years since 1790, unfortunately, the 1890 U.S. census for most states, including Massachusetts, no longer exists.²² The first census that enumerates

¹⁸ Massachusetts Births, 225:17 (1870).

¹⁹ Massachusetts Marriages, 228:52 (1870).

²⁰ Massachusetts Deaths, 249:56 (1872).

²¹ Massachusetts Marriages, 471:128 (1897).

²² Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargeaves Luebking, editors, *The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*, rev. ed. (Salt Lake City: Ancestry Inc., 1997) 116.

John and Mary Murphy's household is in 1900. The family has just moved to 22 Avondale Place in Boston's Ward 24.²³

MURPHY HOUSEHOLD IN THE 1900 CENSUS - BOSTON

Name		Relation	Age	Birthdate	Immigration	Birthplace	Occupation
Murphy	7 John	Head	45	Jun 1854	1870	Ireland	Coachman
	Mary A.	Wife	35	May 1865	1884	Ireland	
	Edward	Son	13	Mar 1887		Massachusetts	at school
	Thomas	Son	10	Jul 1889		Massachusetts	at school
	Catherine	Daughter	6	Nov 1893		Massachusetts	at school
Keith	Augustine	Brother-in-law	23	Feb 1877	1895	Ireland	Day laborer
Murphy	Catherine	Mother	86	1814	1870	Ireland	

John and Mary rent their house which was typical of their neighborhood. Neither John nor his mother can read or write. John has not become a citizen; he is listed as an alien, which means that his wife Mary is also not a citizen. A wife's citizenship status was derived from her husband according to the law in force at the time.²⁴ Mary has three living children out of three born, and Catherine Murphy has five living children out of five born (although this does not account for the death of daughter Julia). Although we don't know who the informant is, we can guess it was not Catherine, who would know how many children she had surviving.

Although John's brother-in-law's surname is listed as Keith, it is likely he is Mary Keefe's younger brother. Keith is sometimes a variation for Keefe or it is possible the census taker misheard or made an error.

Ten years later, in the 1910 U.S. census, the household consists of John, Mary, married 24 years, and their three children; they are renting the house at 22 Avondale Place. John is a gardener for a private family, Edward and Thomas are both salesmen, and Catherine still attends school. John has been out of work 12 weeks in the past year. His immigration year is 1870 consistent with the previous census. Mary's immigration year is 1883.²⁵

MURPHY HOUSEHOLD IN THE 1910 CENSUS - BOSTON

Name	Relation	Age	Immigration	Birthplace	Occupation
Murphy John	Head	55	1870	Ireland	Gardener, private family
Mary A.	Wife	44	1884	Ireland	
Edward J.	Son	23		Massachusetts	Salesman, Grocery store
Thomas J.	Son	20		Massachusetts	Salesman, Dry goods
Catherine V.	Daughter	16		Massachusetts	

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²³ 1900 U.S. census, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Boston, Ward 24, Precinct 6, enumeration district (ED) 1530, sheet 12A, dwelling 187, family 257, John Murphy; digital image *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com : accessed 26 March 2014), NARA film T623, roll 688.

²⁴ Marian L. Smith, "Women and Naturalization, ca. 1802-1940," *Prologue*, Summer 1998, Vol. 30, No 2; article online at Archives.gov (www.archives.gov : accessed 31 March 2014).

²⁵ 1910 U.S. census, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Boston, Ward 24, Precinct 6, enumeration district (ED) 1632, sheet 3A, dwelling 42, family 61, John Murphy; digital image *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 March 2014), NARA film T624, roll 625.

As John Murphy did not become a citizen there are no records of naturalization which usually provide date of birth and sometimes identify the county in Ireland. This also means he is not listed in voter records. The family were renters so there are no property records of real estate ownership.

John Murphy died of stomach cancer on 23 March 1914 at his home. He had been ill for four months. He was buried in New Calvary Cemetery, Mattapan.²⁶

MURPHY HOUSEHOLD IN THE 1920 CENSUS - BOSTON²⁷

Name	Relation	Age	Immigration	Birthplace	Occupation
Murphy Mary	Head	54	1883	Ireland	None
Catherine	Daughter	26		Massachusetts	Seamstress, dry goods shop

In the 1920 U.S. census, Mary, John's widow, lives with daughter Catherine and has moved to 58 Greenwich Street. Catherine works as a seamstress at a dry goods shop.

Catherine Halloran Murphy

2014), NARA film T625, roll 727.

John's mother, Catherine Murphy died 27 January 1907, at 22 Avondale Place, at the age of 95. This would make her birth year about 1812. Her death record lists her as widowed and her husband as Edward Murphy; her father is Edward Holleran. The information for her mother is blank. The form does not specify who the informant was but it is likely it was her son John.²⁸

The fact that Catherine Murphy had five children according to the census, coupled with the family tradition that she emigrated before 1850, strongly suggests that most or all of her children emigrated with her.

A search for obituaries for Catherine Murphy in 1907 and John Murphy in 1914²⁹ resulted only in death notices giving minimal information. Both funerals were held at St. Gregory's Church. Several Boston newspapers and one Dorchester weekly paper were reviewed.³⁰ It is possible that an obituary may be located in one of the smaller Boston or Dorchester publications.

An initial search for probate records in Suffolk County did not yield any wills in the appropriate timeframe for either Catherine Murphy or John Murphy in Dorchester.

No records examined to date identify the county of origin in Ireland for John Murphy.

Massachusetts Vital Records, 1910-1915, Deaths, 1914/10: 36, John Murphy; digital image, American Ancestors (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.
 1920 U.S. census, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Boston, Ward 18, Precincts 6-7, enumeration district (ED) 453, sheet 17B, dwelling 185, family 342, Mary Murphy; digital image Ancestry.com (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 March

²⁸ Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Deaths, 1907/7:260, Catherine Murphy; digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

²⁹ Massachusetts Deaths, 1914/10: 36.

³⁰ Brief death notices for Catherine Murphy appeared in the *Boston Globe*, *Hearsts Boston American*, and *Milton Record* and for John Murphy in the *Boston Herald*, *Boston Globe*, and *Dorchester Beacon*. Also examined were the *Index to the Obituary Notices in the Boston Transcript*, 1900-1930, Vol. 1, G-O, with no results.

When was John Murphy born?

Several sources give conflicting information on the birth year of John Murphy, a span of eighteen years from the earliest to the latest birth date, without any record (like a birth or baptism certificate) created at or near the time of the event.

IOHN MURPHY'S YEAR OF BIRTH FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

Year	Source	Age	Birth Year	Informant
			(presumed)	
1848	Emigration per family tradition	9	1839	Murphy family
1880	1880 U.S. census	30	1850	John or mother Catherine
1886	Civil marriage record	35	1851	John or Mary Keefe
1886	Catholic marriage record	35	1851	John or Mary Keefe
1886	Marriage age per family tradition	49	1837	Murphy family
1900	1900 U.S. census	45	1854 June	unknown
1910	1910 U.S. census	55	1855	unknown
1914	Death record	68	1846	Not specified but likely wife Mary

Other factors that may contribute to the discrepancies:

- John may not have known his exact birthdate or his precise age.
- He was illiterate as were many immigrants; documentation was not important in daily life.
- He worked at physical labor all his life; he may have looked older than he was.

Was John Murphy older than 35 when he married? The earliest documented record of his age is the 1880 census where his age is listed as 30. While this may be inaccurate, it is unlikely it is off by more than a few years on either side. It is consistent with his age of 35 for the marriage records. If he emigrated in 1848 at age nine, he would be 41 in 1880. Ten years' difference at that age seems like too much of a discrepancy to be credible.

If John did emigrate as a child it is more likely he arrived around the late 1850s. A child is less apt to remember a specific year but probably remembers his age at the time of such a momentous event as crossing the Atlantic.

Finally, whatever John's birth date, his mother Catherine lived through at least some of the Great Famine (*An Gorta Mór*) between 1845 and 1852 in Ireland. She may not have wanted to remember those times; what she passed on to her son may have been deliberately vague.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are several directions for further research. Locating a particular record is less time consuming than researching an individual. Understanding the family in context is the most reliable way to answer research questions, especially with a common surname. Locating the passenger arrival information will require a more comprehensive picture of the family.

1. Locate the 1870 marriage record of Julia Murphy and John Murray at the Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston.

Estimate: 1 hour Fees record search fees

2. Locate the 1870 **baptism** record of **Nellie Murray** at the Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston.

Estimate: 1 hour Fees record search fees [if combined with #1 no additional time/fee]

3. Request the **burial** records from the Boston Catholic Cemetery Association for **Catherine Murphy** (Calvary Cemetery, Roslindale) and **John Murphy** (New Calvary Cemetery, Mattapan). The fee provides the grave location, deed holder name, all interments in that grave or lot, interment dates, last address, age at time of death, card copies if available.

Estimate: 1-2 hours Fees: \$25 per request

4. Research the three children of John and Mary Murphy, **Edward, Thomas,** and **Catherine** for clues to his origin.

Estimate: 4 hours

5. Research the adult male Murphys who lived together at Commercial Street in Dorchester in 1870: **Daniel, Edward, and Timothy**. If any of them became citizens it might verify the birthplace in Ireland.

Estimate: 4-6 hours

6. Locate **Murphy** listings in Dorchester and Boston **directories** for other years at the Massachusetts State Library.

Estimate: 2 hours

7. Research **Nellie Murray** and **Jeremiah Hurley** and family for information about siblings John and Julia Murphy.

Estimate: 2 hours

8. Research the **Forbes family** records on estate administration at the Massachusetts Historical Society for possible connections to **John Murphy's employment**.

Estimate: 4 hours

- 9. Research the associates of the family, witnesses to baptisms and marriages, including
 - John Cunningham
 - Catherine Halloran
 - Catherine Keefe
 - Dennis Leary

- John Murphy
- Mary Murphy
- William Walsh
- Catherine Ward

Estimate: tbd

10. Search **probate** indexes in Suffolk County for administration and other records that might reveal **Murphy family** relationships.

Estimate: 2 hours

Appendix

Record images are listed in chronological order. It is not always possible to enlarge an excerpt and retain the clarity, especially for microfilmed images.

Table of Images

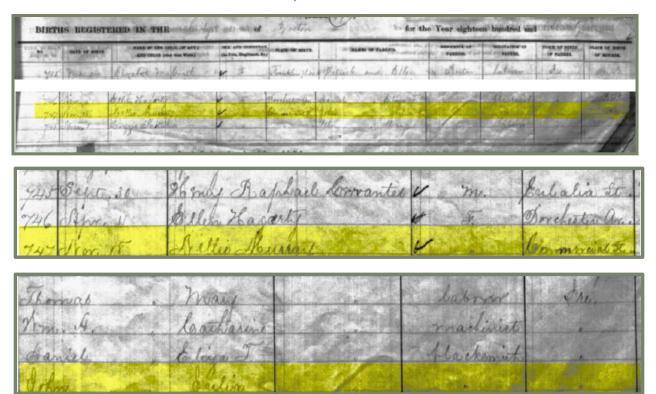
- 1. 1870 Marriage Record of John Murray and Julia Murphy
- 2. 1870 Birth Record of Nellie Murray
- 3. 1872 Death Record of Julia (Murphy) Murray
- 4. 1880 U. S. Census for Catherine Murphy Household
- 5. 1886 Marriage Record of John Murphy and Mary Keefe
- 6. 1886 Marriage Record of Joannes Murphy and Maria Keeffe
- 7. 1887 Birth Record of Edward Murphy
- 8. 1887 Baptism Record of Eduardus Murphy
- 9. 1889 Birth Record of Thomas Murphy
- 10. 1889 Baptism Record of Thomas Murphy
- 11. 1893 Birth Record of Catherine Murphy
- 12. 1893 Baptism Record of Catharina Murphy
- 13. 1907 Death Record of Catherine (Halloran) Murphy
- 14. 1900 U.S. Census, Suffolk County, for John Murphy Household
- 15. 1910 U.S. Census, Suffolk County, for John Murphy Household
- 16. 1914 Death Record of John Murphy
- 17. 1920 U.S. Census, Suffolk County, for Mary Murphy Household

1. 1870 Marriage Record of John Murray and Julia Murphy

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Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Marriages, 228:52 Murray-Murphy (1870); digital images, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

2. 1870 Birth Record of Nellie Murray



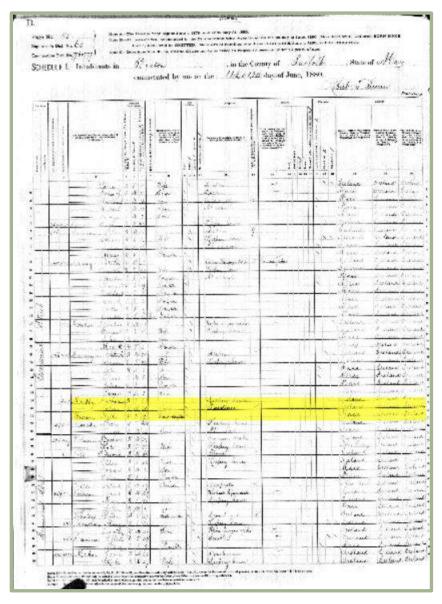
Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Births, 225:17 Nellie Murray (1870); digital images, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org : accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

3. 1872 Death Record of Julia (Murphy) Murray

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Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Deaths 249:56 (1872); Julia (Murphy) Murray; digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

4. 1880 U. S. Census, Suffolk County, for Catherine Murphy Household



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1880 U. S. census. Suffolk county, Massachusetts, Boston, population schedule, enumeration district (ED) 777, dwelling 346, family 435; digital image, *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 4 April 2014), Catherine Murphy.

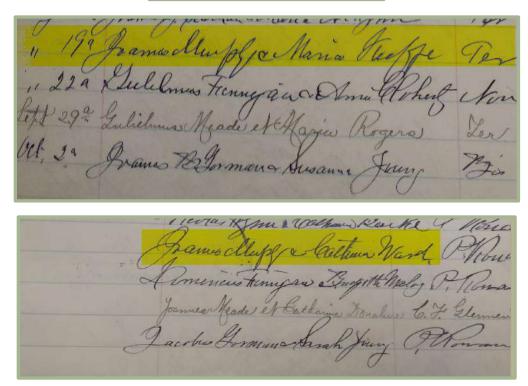
5. 1886 Marriage Record of John Murphy and Mary Keefe

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Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Marriages 372:143 Murphy-Keefe (1886) and 539:179 Keefe-Scarry (1903); digital images, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

6. 1886 Marriage Record of Joannes Murphy and Maria Keeffe

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St Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Marriages, 1872-1897," p. 33, Murphy-Keefe marriage, in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

7. 1887 Birth Record of Edward Murphy

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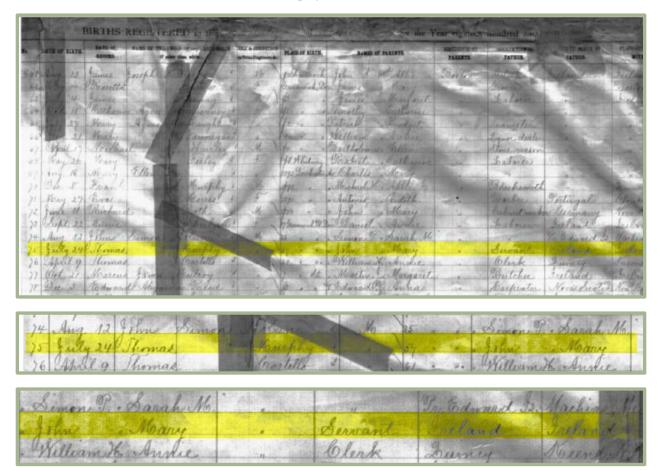
Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Births, 378:114, Edward Murphy (1887); digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 5 April 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

8. 1887 Baptism Record of Eduardus Murphy

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St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Baptisms, 1872-1887," pp. 194-5, Eduardus Murphy (1887) in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

9. 1889 Birth Record of Thomas Murphy



Massachusetts Vital Records 1841-1910, Births, 396:189 Thomas Murphy (1889); digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

10. Baptism Record of Thomas Murphy

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"24" Dunysius Lary et Cathuria Keefe	C.F. Glennen

St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Baptisms, 1887-1895," p. 22, Thomas Murphy (1889), in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

11. 1893 Birth Record of Catherine Murphy

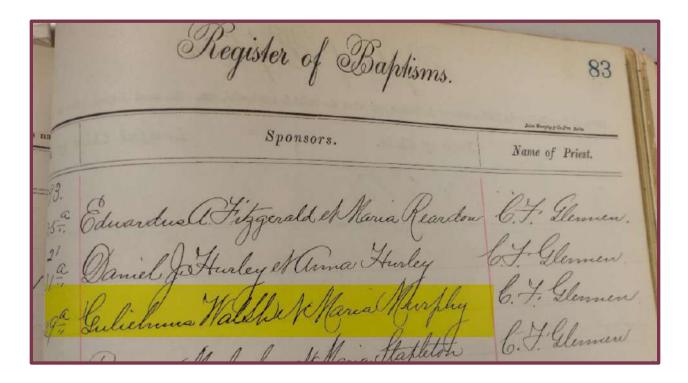
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Massachusetts Vital Records1841-1910, Births, 432:305 Catherine Murphy (1893); digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

12. 1893 Baptism Record of Catharina Murphy

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" 3ª	Catharina Murphy	Joannis et Mariael Yeef
" 3# C	Martha Mullaney	Joannie et Marthu Johnson



St. Peter Church (Dorchester, Mass.), "Baptisms, 1887-1895," p. 83, Catharina Murphy (1893) in Latin; Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston, Braintree, Massachusetts.

13. 1900 U.S. Census, Suffolk County, for John Murphy Household

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1900 U.S. census, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Boston, Ward 24, Precinct 6, enumeration district (ED) 1530, sheet 12A, dwelling 187, family 257, John Murphy; digital image *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 March 2014), NARA film T623, roll 688.

14. 1907 Death Record of Catherine (Halloran) Murphy

	COMMONWEALTH	OF MASSACHUSETTS.
FULL NAME	RETURN OF	A DEATH-1907. BOSTON.
Place of Death and Residence		No. 956 Prontale Place
Date of Death	7 09	1907. Age 95 year days
	ATISTICAL DETAILS.	PRYSICIAN'S CERTIFICATE.
P W	Single Marries, WID., DIV. W	I HEREBY CERTIFY that I attended deceased during last illness, from 1907, to 1907, to 1907,
Husband's Name	Edward Eurphy Ireland	date stated above, and that the CAUSE OF DEATH was as follows: Primary: Arterio-Solerosis - 3 yrs
Name of Father	Edward Holleran	
Birthplace of Father	Ireland	Contributory /
faiden Name f Mother		(Destine) VII 880
irthplace f Mother	Ireland	(Signed). Chas R Cavanach
ccupation		Jen 92
formant		SPECIAL INFORMATION from Hospitals, Institutions, Translants, or Recent Buildents.
ace of Burial removal	Calvary	Usual Residence Boston
dertaker	Chas B Delan	Filed Jan 30 1907. Arrest CWM Glener

Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Deaths, 1907/7:260, Catherine Murphy; digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

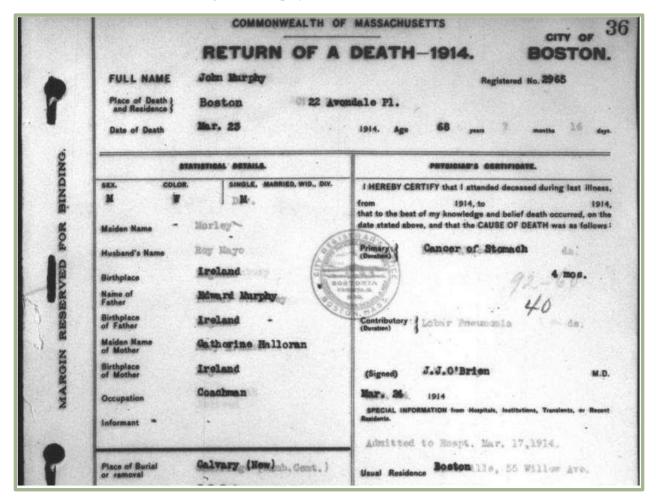
15. 1910 U.S. Census, Suffolk County, for John Murphy Household

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1910 U.S. census, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Boston, Ward 24, Precinct 6, enumeration district (ED) 1632, sheet 3A, dwelling 42, family 61, John Murphy; digital image *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 March 2014), NARA film T624, roll 625.

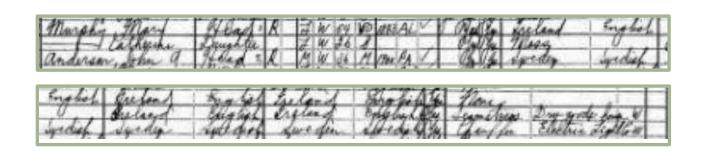
16. 1914 Death Record of John Murphy



Massachusetts Vital Records, 1841-1910, Deaths, 1914/10:36, John Murphy; digital image, *American Ancestors* (www.americanancestors.org: accessed 24 March 2014); original records from Massachusetts State Archives.

17. 1920 U.S. Census, Suffolk County, for Mary Murphy Household

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1920 U.S. census, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Boston, Ward 18, Precincts 6-7, enumeration district (ED) 453, sheet 17B, dwelling 185, family 342, Mary Murphy; digital image *Ancestry.com* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 March 2014), NARA film T625, roll 727.